

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Killeen Downtown Historic District

Other name/site number: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: Roughly Bounded by Avenue A on the north, Santa Fe Plaza on the south, N. 4th Street on the west, and N. 8th Street on the east.

City or town: Killeen

State: Texas

County: Bell

Not for publication: ☐Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this

☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:

☐ national ☐ statewide ☒ localApplicable National Register Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer

Signature of certifying official / Title

1/29/14

Date

Texas Historical Commission

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other, explain: _____

for Edison H. Beall

Signature of the Keeper

3.31.14

Date of Action

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private, Public-Local

Category of Property

	building(s)
X	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
45	32	buildings
0	1	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
45	33	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Commerce/Trade: specialty store, department store, professional, restaurant, financial institution
Religion: religious facility (church)
Domestic: multiple dwelling (hotel)
Transportation: rail-related (depot); road-related (bus station)
Recreation and Culture: theater
Social: meeting hall

Current Functions: Commerce/Trade: specialty store, department store, professional, restaurant, financial institution
Religion: religious facility (church)
Transportation: rail-related (depot); road-related (bus station)
Religion: religious facility (church)
Government: government office

7. Description

Architectural Classification: Late Victorian: Romanesque Revival
Modern Movement: Postwar Modern
Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Classical Revival
Other: 1- and 2-part Commercial Blocks

Principal Exterior Materials: Stone, brick, stucco

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-7 through 7-30)

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

☒	A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
☐	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
☒	C	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
☐	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Community Planning & Development; Military; Architecture

Period of Significance: 1895-1964

Significant Dates: 1942, 1950

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-31 through 8-42)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet 9-43)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other -- Specify Repository:

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 18 acres.

Coordinates (either UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 31.122872° | Longitude: -97.727608° |
| 2. Latitude: 31.122567° | Longitude: -97.726401° |
| 3. Latitude: 31.120904° | Longitude: -97.725198° |
| 4. Latitude: 31.119306° | Longitude: -97.727432° |
| 5. Latitude: 31.119684° | Longitude: -97.729206° |
| 6. Latitude: 31.121711° | Longitude: -97.728559° |

Verbal Boundary Description: See page 44

Boundary Justification: See page 44

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Terri Myers
Organization: Preservation Central, Inc.
Street & number: 823 Harris Avenue
City or Town: Austin State: Texas Zip Code: 78705
Email: terrimyrs@preservationcentral.com
Telephone: (512) 478-0898
Date: September 18, 2012

Additional Documentation

Maps (See page 46)

Figures (See pages 47-51)

Photographs (See pages 5-6)

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Photographs

Killeen Downtown Historic District

Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Photographed by Terri Myers, July 2012

Photo 1

200 block Avenue D, north side

Camera facing northeast

Photo 2

Santa Fe Railroad Depot, 200 block Santa Fe Plaza Dr.

Camera facing northeast

Photo 3

First United Methodist Church

Camera facing northeast

Photo 4

Typical curbs throughout downtown, corner of Avenue C and 4th Street

Camera facing northeast

Photo 5

Typical curbs throughout downtown

213 E. Avenue C, ca. 1939

Camera facing north

Photo 6

224 E. Avenue D (Early Period representative property)

Camera facing north

Photo 7

321 N. Gray Street (Early Period representative property)

Camera facing east

Photo 8

211 E. Avenue D (Simple Prewar representative property)

Camera facing north

Photo 9

312 N. Gray Street (Simple Prewar representative property)

Camera facing east

Photo 10

412 N. 8th Street (Simple Postwar representative property)

Camera facing west

Photo 11

322 N. Gray Street (Simple Postwar representative property)

Camera facing west

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Photo 12

Modern TV and Appliance, 401 N. 8th Street (Modern Postwar representative property)
Camera facing east

Photo 13

American Amicable Building, 402 N. 8th Street (Modern Postwar representative property)
Camera facing west

Photo 14

215-217 E. Avenue D (Noncontributing)
Camera facing north

Photo 15

200C E. Avenue D (Noncontributing)
Camera facing south

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Section 7: Narrative Description

The Killeen Downtown Historic District is an approximately 18-acre area located in central Killeen, Texas. The district is almost completely commercial in nature, with contributing commercial buildings built between 1895 and 1960. Properties run from a late 19th century Romanesque Revival bank, to early 20th century stone and brick dry goods stores and general commercial buildings to early postwar Modern offices and stores. The district is dominated by commercial properties which are concentrated along Avenue D, Avenue C, and their cross streets. In addition to the commercial buildings and residential hotel, several churches of various religious denominations lie within the district. They date from a 1912 Greek Revival-style church to mid-20th century and early 21st century storefront churches where congregations took over buildings that were previously commercial buildings. The historic Santa Fe Railroad depot which has been restored to its iconic appearance marks the southern end of the commercial district. The Killeen Downtown Historic District is noteworthy for its large number of historic-age properties (76) in relation to nonhistoric-age properties (2). A number of the historic-period properties have suffered incompatible alterations in the past 50 years, such that they no longer possess integrity to contribute to their district. Even most contributing resources have sustained some alteration over time, but most of these alterations are reversible.

Killeen is in western Bell County, Texas, approximately seventy miles north of Austin, and about 20 miles west of Belton along US Highway 190. It lies near the western end of the Blackland Prairie and the eastern edge of the Balcones Escarpment that breaks away into the region known as the Texas Hill Country. The largest city in Bell County, Killeen has a land area of 35 square miles and a population of over 100,000. Killeen is bordered on its north and west by Fort Hood, the largest military post in the United States. The town of Harker Heights abuts Killeen on the east.

From its inception with the railroad in 1882, to the beginning of World War II, Killeen lay at the heart of a large, productive cotton-farming region. The town was platted by the railroad into a 70 block rectangle with the railroad tracks and depot just south of the town proper. It was designed with narrow lots on the streets closest to the depot to encourage commercial growth in that area. Downtown Killeen is located in the north-central portion of the city and is roughly defined as the area between Rancier Avenue on the north, the Highway 190 Business Loop (Veterans Memorial Boulevard) on the south, 10th Street on the east, and Root Avenue on the west. The Killeen Downtown Historic District is a smaller bound area within this downtown zone. The District includes blocks along North Gray Street, North 8th Street, Avenue B, Avenue C, and Avenue D.

Downtown Killeen has streets laid on a mostly regular grid. Blocks are short, and many have elevated sidewalks with stepped concrete curbs. The historic commercial district contains a higher density grouping of buildings than found elsewhere in downtown Killeen. Outside the core district area are more vacant lots, parking lots, and nonhistoric infill buildings. Blocks with fewer lots lay at the edges of the commercial zone to accommodate industrial uses in those areas along the railroad siding. Residential blocks lay to the north of the downtown businesses and industrial blocks to shield residents from the noise and activity generated by restaurants, saloons, cotton gins, and stock pens. The streets were laid out generally on a north-south, east-west axis with the east-west streets of Avenue D, closest to the railroad tracks, becoming the principal business street. When lots were built out on Avenue D, builders turned to N. 6th Street, which runs perpendicular to Avenue D, to construct new businesses in the early 20th century. After a long hiatus from about 1914 to 1942, construction started anew in the downtown area and more modern brick buildings appeared on Avenue C and the side streets.

The vast majority of resources in the Killeen Downtown Historic District date from the late 19th century to approximately 1965. Most are one- and two-story commercial buildings. A small number of resources in the district were not originally commercial in nature: a railroad depot, a park, a lodge hall, and a church. The rest of the resources are commercial in nature and include stores, offices, and banks. Once the U.S. Government designated Camp Hood as Fort Hood in 1950, acknowledging its permanent status, people flocked to Killeen to work in construction, establish businesses, and provide

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

services to the new, fully funded military installation. The types of buildings that filled vacant spots downtown, or replaced older buildings on their sites, were decidedly Modern in style. Most are one-story brick volumes and some feature canted entrances with flanged awnings supported by lally poles or decorative stantions. Because so much new construction appeared in the 1950s, the downtown business zone is almost equally divided between early 20th century one- and two-part commercial buildings and one-story postwar Modern edifices. Despite differences in style, buildings in the downtown commercial zone share significant characteristics that contribute to its identification as a district. In general, they are small scale brick or stone buildings, although some have been covered with stucco. Almost all have flat roofs. While some windows have been replaced, the openings have not been enlarged or truncated, for the most part. They share a common setback that lends uniformity to the streetscapes. Although a few are vacant, most are occupied with businesses or offices that add vitality to the district. Streets are two-way, making the district accessible. Finally, the streets are lined with sidewalks, many sections of which have distinctive concrete stairways, a feature that further defines the district and ties it together.

Survey and Evaluation Methods

Research Methodology

Each survey project follows a methodology of research, field documentation, and evaluation. For Killeen, the investigators collected documents such as National Register and Texas Subject Markers at the Texas Historical Commission. They looked in internet files for Bell County and Killeen, especially from the Handbook of Texas Online. They also downloaded historic Sanborn Fire Insurance maps to compare development from 1926 to 1937 and the present survey. They also borrowed books and perused files at the City of Killeen Public Library. In addition, the principal investigator conducted formal interviews with five long-time residents of Killeen. Finally, the survey team used an earlier survey (March 2008) project to compare current conditions.

Windshield Survey

The survey team, consisting of Terri Myers and architect, Karen McGraw, first conducted a windshield survey to identify concentrations of historic-age properties. They found that the previous boundaries (March 2008) were drawn so broadly that a resulting district would barely meet the 50% contributing recommendation. They also saw that the “outlying” buildings were of marginal integrity. As a result of this study, they reduced the proposed boundaries somewhat for the sake of having a tight-knit cluster of historic-period properties with as few nonhistoric properties as possible. In doing so, the team had to leave out some marginal historic-period buildings, but the decision improved the ratio of contributing to noncontributing and included the best examples of historic age buildings, thus creating a more viable district.

Intensive-Level Survey

On February 7, 2012, Ms. Myers and Ms. McGraw traveled to Killeen to document the current condition of the previously-defined project area. Over four days, they conducted an intensive-level survey of the properties once again, finding where changes may have occurred or buildings had been demolished since the last project. Starting on the east-west streets of Avenue A (Santa Fe Plaza), and parallel streets of Avenue D, Avenue C, Avenue B, and Avenue A, the team completed a Texas Historic Sites Form for each property. When finished with the alphabetical streets, the team started with the low numbered streets (4th), (Gray), and (8th).

The pedestrian survey documented aspects of the resources including the current address of each resource, preservation priority (assigned in the field), original and altered date, Historic Use, Plan Type/Roof Form, Stylistic Influence, exterior materials, condition, # of Stories, and any additional Notes. This information helped to assess the significant attributes of each resource. In the field, Ms. Myers assigned High, Medium, and Low preservation priorities to each resource. In

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

subsequent trips to Killeen and in analysis at the office, some priorities were changed. Those on the inventory of properties and the map of the district show the final contributing/noncontributing assessments.

Contributing district properties are those that date to the period of significance and have levels of integrity sufficient to convey their historic style, use, and character. Noncontributing district properties are those that were either built after the period of significance or those that have had significant alterations such that their historic character is no longer evident.

Evaluation

The key to evaluating Killeen's resources is to compare them with others of the same age and architectural type within the city. Thus, late-19th/early-20th century commercial buildings were compared with one another and postwar Modern edifices were compared with others of their type. Killeen's late- 19th and early-20th century properties are similar to 1- and 2-part commercial buildings found throughout central Texas. Some feature segmental arched windows, decorative cast iron pilasters, and decorative brickwork along the cornices. Those with the fewest alterations generally convey the best sense of history. Typical alterations in Killeen include painted brick walls and replacement windows. According to our system of evaluation, a 1-story brick commercial building with brick cornice work and cast iron pilasters would be considered a Medium priority, and thus a contributing property, even though it had painted brick and replacement windows. These are common alterations found in Killeen.

Some of the best examples of turn-of-the-century buildings in Killeen are the City Hall Annex at 200A Avenue D and the three-building complex including Estevan's (220 Avenue D) and Tank's Pub (224 Avenue D) at the corner of Avenue D and N. Gray Street (representative property). The one-story stone rubble City Hall Annex features a low-stepped parapet along the roofline. It has metal coping, two double-door entries from inset storefronts, a band of transoms over the storefronts, and a cast iron pilaster. Estevan's, Tank's, and the rooming house between them (220-222-224 Avenue D) share brick construction, party walls, segmental arch windows, lintels, operable shutters, and decorative brick cornice work. In addition, Tank's features two large round-arched windows on Gray Street and a filled in, but similar arch on the Avenue D side, as well as a chamfered entry with transoms and sidelights. All three buildings have been painted and some windows are obscured. Nevertheless, the City Hall Annex, and the Tank's complex represent the best of Killeen's early commercial fabric; two are considered High priorities and all three are contributing elements in the district.

More common in Killeen are the 1-story, narrow commercial buildings that line the 300 block of N. Gray Street. Dating from the 1920s, 310 and 312 N. Gray are small brick buildings with stepped parapets and modest decoration. The building at 310 N. Gray has had its façade altered by the introduction of large plate glass windows and an aluminum door at one side. Still, the parapet remains with its three linear panels. The building at 312 N. Gray (representative property) has had its window openings truncated and the windows replaced. However, it still retains its inset entry flanked by two decorative pilasters. Diamond and triangular shaped figures relieve the parapet wall. Up the street, at 321 N. Gray Street (representative property) an earlier brick building features corbelled brick along the cornice. A series of five arched window openings covers the front façade. Although they are obviously apparent, the openings have been boarded up. Despite this alteration, the elaborate frieze board, corbelling, and ribbon of arched window surrounds makes this building distinctive in Killeen.

After World War II, Modern architecture made its way to Killeen where the city was engaged in tremendous building campaigns to upgrade its retail zone and build new subdivisions. Postwar Modern commercial buildings are numerous in the downtown area, especially along Avenue C and along N. 4th, N. Gray, and N. 8th, above Avenue D, that is to say, north of the traditional commercial district. Some of the most noteworthy are the massive, one-story brick Beal's Department Store at 401 N. 8th (representative property) and the American Amicable Business across the street at 402 N. 8th Street (representative property). Both buildings are low-slung red brick with horizontal massing and footprints that dwarf the early 20th century commercial buildings. Both buildings contribute to the district.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Several of the postwar Modern buildings, such as Beall's Department Store (now Modern TV and Appliance), which covered most of a city block, and the American Amicable Building, with its broad, cantilevered aluminum awnings must have been eye-popping and forward thinking for the day. They were certainly modern compared with the city's traditional building stock. The best of these were denoted as High priorities with the more ordinary among them, as Medium priorities. Both High and Medium priority properties are considered contributing in the Killeen Downtown Historic District.

Two simple postwar Modern buildings in the commercial zone include 412 N. 8th Street, a c. 1955 buff brick edifice with a plain parapet, awning, and intact storefront. This building is very modest with an inset entry flanked by two sets of vertical plate glass. It has an original metal awning secured to the brick façade by metal tie rods. Nearby is 322 N. Gray Street, a ca. 1955 large commercial building with ample storefronts. It features a somewhat offset entry that is inset with a transom and sidelights – a holdover from Prewar years. The building is shaded by a wide, low-hanging wraparound metal awning. The offset entry, plate glass windows and broad metal awning, tie the building to the postwar Modern era. Both are Medium priority properties that contribute to the modern elements of the district.

Further Research

At the survey progressed, Ms. Myers worked with Jill Hall, Preservation Planner, with the city of Killeen, to identify potential candidates for oral histories. The interviews were essential to our development of the historic context information. All five of the candidates selected had lived in Killeen since World War II and were very familiar with the changes in the downtown core since the 1930s. These interviewees included Annie Roe Buckley, Mrs. Faucett, Bill Yowell, Cleo Bay, and Billy Mills. Questions focused on businesses of yesteryear, and the results helped the research team identify and understand the functions and uses of postwar buildings. In September 2012, the Lead Investigator prepared a written historical context, and presented her findings to the Killeen City Council. The following month, Ms. Meyers returned to downtown Killeen to take additional photographs, primarily to focus on character-defining features, and to fill in gaps in the survey. Some resources were further analyzed for integrity.

Survey Results

The district is notable for its many intact midcentury commercial buildings, many of which have modern design elements. The district contains a total of 78 resources, 45 (58%) of which are contributing. One resource, the nonhistoric Pocket Park, is a noncontributing site. The district's resources demonstrate the periods of Killeen's growth. Eighteen of the 78 resources were built prior to 1920 and another 14 were built between 1920 and 1940. Forty-five of the resources, however, were built within 18 years of Fort Hood's opening in 1942. Again, the numbers indicate the great building boom of the immediate postwar era, with more than half of the city's historic period properties built between 1942 and 1963. As a result of this postwar construction, the district is notable for its many intact midcentury commercial buildings, most of which have modern design elements. It is also noteworthy to mention that downtown Killeen has an extraordinary ratio of historic-age resources with 76 dating to the historic period and only one building built within the past 50 years.

Integrity

An essential part of the evaluation process is determining the level of integrity of the individual components of a district as well as its overall sense of place. Despite alterations to individual buildings, the Killeen Downtown Historic District has a good level of overall integrity. Together the buildings and their surroundings present an appearance similar to that of the Period of Significance. Since downtown Killeen had distinct building phases both before and after World War II,

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

the district does not contain homogenous resource styles. Rather, the variety of ages and styles visually tell the story of Killeen's growth and lend significance to the district.

Location: The Killeen Downtown Historic District is located in central Killeen, on a grid of streets between the railroad tracks and Avenue A near Gray Street. This has been the location of Killeen's commercial core from the earliest days of the city's history. Therefore, the district's integrity of location is High.

Design: The district's block sizes, street widths, and building setbacks are unchanged. The buildings within the district have heights and massing consistent with historic patterns. Downtown Killeen is, as it has always been, a pedestrian-scale district with flat streets and sidewalks. However, the integrity of the noncontributing buildings within the district is poor. Because of this, the district has a Medium level of design integrity.

Setting: The downtown commercial core has the same setting as it has throughout history. It is located near the railroad tracks and railroad depot. The highest density of buildings is found along Gray Street and Avenues B, C, and D. Surrounding the district are blocks with lower density, and property types such as banks, churches, civic buildings, and gas station. Since the setting is unchanged, its integrity is High.

Materials: The district has good integrity of materials. Its streets have been repaved but feature concrete historic curbing, retaining walls, and steps. The buildings within the district have good integrity of materials, also. Most of the buildings remain clad in their original brick or stone, and many have their original awnings, storefront doors, and storefront windows. Some buildings have nonhistoric windows, doors, or stucco exterior coatings. Despite this, district retains a High overall integrity of materials.

Workmanship: The historic brickwork and cut stone common throughout the district show high levels of workmanship unchanged since the period of significance. There are virtually no building additions found in the district. However, alterations to a number of storefronts have obscured the original levels of workmanship at many buildings. Because of this, the district's integrity of workmanship is at a Medium level.

Feeling: The feeling in downtown Killeen is much the same as it has been throughout history. The streets are narrow, with low speed limits, so traffic is quiet. The presence of the train tracks brings the sound of trains and train whistles. The short blocks, consistent building setbacks, and large number of one-story buildings present give the district a distinctly pedestrian scale. The majority of buildings in the district are used for daytime activities such as shopping, office work, or church. This daytime use pattern is the same as during the height of commercial activity in the district. The district's integrity of feeling is High.

Association: The good levels of integrity of the previous six aspects lend a strong historic association to downtown Killeen. This commercial core is, and always has been, the highest-density concentration of buildings in the city associated with commerce and business. The distinct architectural styles found in the district strongly evoke their time periods. The early, 1890s and 1900s examples hark to the early days of Killeen rail service, and the midcentury buildings speak to the city's growth spurred by Fort Hood. In both examples, it is easy to associate each building type to its time period and use. Because of this, the integrity of association is High.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Representative Properties

There are four distinct stylistic categories in the Killeen Downtown Historic District. Other than outliers such as the Greek Revival 1st United Methodist Church, the majority of resources found in the district can be roughly categorized into two Prewar types (early and later) and two Postwar types (simple and Modern).

Early period:

The early period of Killeen's existing architecture dates from 1895 until the early 1900s. These buildings are commercial in nature and have a level of detail not found in later buildings. Their design is characterized by brick construction, symmetrical facades or facades organized into regular bays, and decorative parapets with corbelled bricks and other details. Buildings from this time period have tall, narrow window openings with stone sills and stone or segmental-arch headers. Windows are double hung wood. Entry doors often have transoms, and chamfered corner entries are found. An example of this property type is 224 E. Avenue D, built in 1897. It is a two-story brick bank building with a chamfered corner entry. Its storefront windows are beneath large brick arches and upper floor windows are topped by rusticated stone headers. The parapet features corbelled brick dentils. Other details include stone stringcourses and a stone water table. Another early period example is 321 N. Gray Street, a one-story commercial building built in 1900. It too is of brick construction with corbelled brick at parapet level. Its storefront, although slightly altered, still features tall arched openings topped by transoms.

Simple Prewar:

After the early building phase in Killeen, a number of buildings were constructed dating from the early 1900s to the 1920s. The Killeen Downtown Historic District does not contain buildings dating from the 1930s. The majority of simple Prewar buildings in the district date from the 1910s and 1920s. These commercial buildings are one-story in height and are primarily of brick construction. Stylistically, they are characterized by flat facades with minimal detailing. Details are usually minor brick corbelling or paneling in low relief. Storefronts comprise much of the front façade, and have either central entries flanked by windows, or one large storefront window next to one entry door. Shallow awnings are common. Segmental arched openings may be found; for example on secondary doors or windows. An example of this building type is 211 E. Avenue D, built in 1910. It is a brick building with two inset entries topped by segmental arches. Its low parapet has three rows of brick corbelling. One strip of shallow dentils is the only other façade decoration. Another example of the simple Prewar style is 312 N. Gray Street, a commercial building built in 1910. This red brick building has a taller parapet with brick sawtooth and diamond-shaped designs. Its storefront is altered. A secondary entry at the rear of its side elevation is topped by a brick segmental arch. The district contains several buildings from the 1920s with similar massing and minimal decoration. Unfortunately, however, all 1920s buildings in the district are currently noncontributing due to lack of integrity.

Simple Postwar:

After World War II, commercial building design changed dramatically, utilizing new building materials and simpler, more modern motifs. Clean lines and utilitarian designs were common. Some buildings look cues from high-style modernism and incorporated creative decorative details. The majority of Postwar commercial buildings, however, were simple in nature and had minimal detail. The Killeen Downtown Historic District has a large number of this simple Postwar building type dating from 1940 to about 1960. These buildings are one story in height and are largely commercial in nature. Building materials include brick, stucco, concrete, and tile. They have low, unadorned parapets that rise only a short distance above the roof line. Storefronts are ample, with large expanses of glass. Entry doors are usually made of glass and aluminum. Flat awnings extend from the building just above storefront level. The awnings are either cantilevered or supported by cables. A good example of this simple Postwar style is 412 N. 8th Street, a one-story commercial building built in 1955. It is a buff brick building with a low unadorned parapet. A flat metal awning spans the length of the front façade and is supported by hanger rods. It features a large storefront that takes up the majority of the front elevation. the storefront has large windows and a glass and metal entry door with sidelights and transom.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Another example of this building type is 322 N. Gray Street, built in 1955. This large commercial building is located on a corner and has ample storefronts on both elevations. Its flat cantilevered awning runs along both facades also. The brick building has an unadorned parapet and glass and metal entry doors.

Modern Postwar:

While most Postwar buildings remained simple in form, some incorporated the design motifs of high-style Midcentury Modern architecture. These design motifs were easily translated to any building size or type. The eye-catching nature of Modern design made it perfect for use in commercial buildings. Killeen contains a small number of this Modern Postwar building type. The district buildings of this type are characterized by long, low proportions and an increased emphasis on horizontality through the use of stringcourses, narrow awnings, or bands of windows. Also found in the style is a mix of building materials designed to introduce texture, color, and pattern to the façade. Storefronts are large. Signage is often used as a design feature, with modern sign materials and fonts. In some cases, signs are large and fin-like, with Googie or space-age design. A good representative of this style is the Modern TV & Appliance Building at 401 N. 8th Street, built in 1955. It is located on a corner and has glass and metal storefronts on each elevation. The building is red brick, but other materials provide decoration. Just under the flat parapet, a wide band of contrasting grey limestone runs along both facades. On the pilasters between windows is buff-colored shellstone. This buff stone is also found in decorative inset squares on a windowless stretch of wall. Below the storefront windows are horizontal buff-colored bricks. A flat cantilevered awning features narrow horizontal bands along its edge. The building's sign is plastic and metal with a scripted font. Another example of a Modern commercial resource is the American Amicable Building at 402 N. 8th Street. This building dates to 1950. Its large storefront features ample use of metal, with wide mullions between the storefront windows, transoms, and glass doors. The corner entry has glass doors on each side. The building's thick cantilevered awning has two horizontal bands along its edge. Atop the parapet is a narrow brick coping.

Noncontributing representatives:

While not representative properties per se, the district's noncontributing buildings have similarities in the types of alterations that are found. For the most part, noncontributing historic buildings in Killeen have had significantly altered storefronts, incompatible awnings, stuccoed facades, and/or infilled openings. A good example of a noncontributing building is at 215-217 Avenue D, built in 1920. This commercial building, presumably once brick, has been stuccoed. Any decorative details have been obscured. Its storefronts were rebuilt and are no longer recognizable. Another noncontributing example is the City Hall annex building at 200C Avenue D. This 1901 building has also been stuccoed, apart from its stone headers. Storefront windows and doors have been replaced, and incompatible fabric awnings have been installed.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Inventory of Properties

Address	Date	Status	Description	Historic Name	Current Name
307-311 N. 8th St.	c. 1960	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	China Restaurant/ Farmer's Ins.
313 N. 8th St.	c. 1955	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Kirby & Kerr LLP
401 N. 8th St.	c. 1955	C	Modern 1-Part Commercial	Beall's Dept. Store	Modern TV & Appliance
402 N. 8th St.	c. 1950	C	1-Part Commercial	Amicable Building Also Post Office	Vacant
408 N. 8th St.	c. 1960	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Ohnnuri Community Church
409-413 N. 8th St.	c. 1960	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Dapron Records/ Johnson School
410 N. 8th St.	c. 1955	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
412 N. 8th St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
414 N. 8th St.	c. 1955	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Korean & Oriental Food/Gifts
415 N. 8th St.	1953	NC	1-Part Commercial	Store	Armed Services YMCA
417-425 N. 8th St.	1953	C	1-Part Commercial; Modern sign	Store	Acupuncture & Chinese Herbs
216 E. Ave. B	c. 1940	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Christell's Flowers
218 E. Ave. B	c. 1970	NC	Nonhistoric 1-Part Commercial	Store	H&R Block
308 E. Ave. B	c. 1940	C	Hipped hotel annex; Stone	Hotel Annex	World Travel & Tours
310 E. Ave. B	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Dr. John Padgett
200 block E. Ave. C	c. 1950	NC	Altered Bus Station	Bus Station	Killeen Amtrack Bus Station
201-205 E. Ave. C	c. 1950	C	Commercial; Multiple storefronts	Store	AA Liberty Bonds / Church of JC House PrayerApostle
207 E. Ave. C	c. 1950	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Blades Barber Shop
211-213 E. Ave. C	c. 1950	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Free Bird Bail Bonds
216 E. Ave. C	c. 1950	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Killeen Bus Station

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Address	Date	Status	Description	Historic Name	Current Name
218-222 E. Ave. C	c. 1950	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
309-311 E. Ave. C	c. 1920	NC	Altered 2-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
313 E. Ave. C	c. 1920	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Garage	Unknown
315 E. Ave. C	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Blacksmith	Modern TV
322-326 Ave. C	c. 1945	C	Commercial; Multiple storefronts	Retail	Law Office
200A E. Ave. D	c. 1895	C	Stone 2-Part Commercial; Now City Hall Annex	Bus Station	City Hall Annex
200B E. Ave. D	1901	C	Stone 1-Part Commercial; City Hall Annex	Store	City Hall Annex
200C E. Ave. D	1901	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial; City Hall Annex	Store	City Hall Annex
200 block E. Ave. D	1986	NC	Pocket Park (<i>site</i>)	N/A	Pocket Park
201 E. Ave. D	c. 1950	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Bell County Human Services
205 E. Ave. D	c. 1900	C	2-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
207 E. Ave. D	c. 1910	C	1-Part Commercial	5 & Dime Store	Designer Awards
211 E. Ave. D	c. 1910	C	1-Part Commercial	Wood Rexall Drug	Unknown
215-217 E. Ave. D	c. 1920	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Pagel's Jewelry	Unknown
218 E. Ave. D	c. 1910	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Dry cleaner	Office
219 E. Ave. D	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Faith City of Refuge
220 E. Ave. D	1907	C	2-Part Commercial	Restaurant	Estevan's
222 E. Ave. D	1907	C	2-Part Commercial	Store	Rooming House
224 E. Ave. D	1897	C	2-Part Commercial; Chamfered entry	First National (Rancier's) Bank	Tank's Bar
305 E. Ave. D	c. 1920	NC	Altered 2-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
306-308 E. Ave. D	c. 1915	C	1-Part Commercial	Auto Repair	Junk Shop
307 E. Ave. D	c. 1920	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
311 E. Ave. D	c. 1950	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Blood Donor Center
315 E. Ave. D	c. 1950	NC	Altered Commercial; Buildings combined	Store	Settle Counseling Service
327 E. Ave. D	c. 1955	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
329-333 E. Ave. D	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Solution One
200 N. Gray St.	c. 1945	C	1-Part Commercial; Rock façade	Store	True Light House of Prayer
200 block N. Gray St.	c/ 1960	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
200 block N. Gray St.	c. 1920	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
201 N. Gray St.	c. 1925	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Young Health Foods

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Address	Date	Status	Description	Historic Name	Current Name
202-206 N. Gray St.	1899	C	Stone 1-Part Commercial	Undertaker	Vacant
300 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
302 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Neecee's Catering
306 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
308 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
308 1/2 N. Gray St.	c. 1925	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Kathy's Kitties Spay Clinic
310 N. Gray St.	c. 1915	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Let's Get Real Counseling
311 N. Gray St.	c. 1925	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Security Finance
312 N. Gray St.	c. 1910	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Isabel Properties & Mgmt.
315 N. Gray St.	c. 1925	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Carol's African American Art Gallery
316 N. Gray St.	c. 1945	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Unknown
318 N. Gray St.	c. 1945	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Balfour's Menswear
320 N. Gray St.	c. 1915	C	Lodge Hall w/ 2-part comm. configuration	Lodge Hall/ Chick Hatchery	Hack's Western Wear
321 N. Gray St.	c. 1900	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Killeen Amateur & Professional Boxing
322 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	
400-412 N. Gray St.	c. 1925	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Killeen Herald	Solution One
403 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Vacant
407 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial; Narrow building	Store	Unknown
409 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	NC	Altered Movie Theater	Movie Theater	Christian House of Prayer
413-419 N. Gray St.	c. 1955	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Neil Clinkenbeard, Attorney
416 N. Gray St.	c. 1950	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Killeen Eyecare Center
418 N. Gray St.	c. 1945	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	
420 N. Gray St.	c. 1945	C	2-story stone Hotel	Greystone Hotel	World of Life Treatment Center
421 N. Gray St.	c. 1945	C	1-Part Commercial	Store	Tharpe's Boot & Shoe Repair
425 N. Gray St.	c. 1945	NC	Altered 1-Part Commercial	Store	Bishop Don Brokers

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Address	Date	Status	Description	Historic Name	Current Name
500 block N. Gray St.	1912	C	First United Methodist Church; Greek Revival	Methodist Episcopal Church	Same
507 N. Gray St.	1960	C	Modern Bank	First National Bank	First National Bank
200 block Santa Fe Plaza Dr.	1913	C	Santa Fe Depot	Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railroad	Killeen Chamber of Commerce

Resource Descriptions

**307-311 N. 8th St.
1960**

Noncontributing Building

One-story commercial building with a flat roof, metal mansard-type awning, and nonhistoric stone veneer.

**313 N. 8th St.
1955**

Noncontributing Building

One-story commercial building with a partially enclosed storefront.

**401 N. 8th St.
1955**

Contributing Building

This Modern commercial building occupies the northwest corner of Avenue C and 8th Street and has storefronts along both elevations. It has excellent integrity. It is a one-story brick building with a flat roof and inset corner entry. The storefronts feature aluminum doors and windows separated by limestone-clad pilasters. A boxy column at the corner entry is also clad in limestone. Below the storefront windows are several courses of narrow cream-colored bricks, and above the storefronts is a cantilevered flat awning. At parapet level is a wide horizontal band of limestone, and on the south elevation are several decorative limestone panels. The building houses Modern TV and Appliance.

**402 N. 8th St.
1950**

Contributing Building

The American Amicable Building is a Modern one-story brick commercial building on the northeast corner of Avenue C and 8th Street. Its main storefront faces 8th Street and features aluminum doors and windows with wide aluminum mullions. Above the storefront is a cantilevered flat awning. Smaller windows with large transoms are also found on the building—one on the west elevation and two on the south elevation. Also on the south elevation is a secondary entrance consisting of a single door with sidelights and transom. A brick coping runs along the top of the parapet.

**408 N. 8th St.
1960**

Contributing Building

This brick 1-Part commercial building has a symmetrical arrangement. Two sets of inset double doors are located in the center of the building. The two entries feature angled walls and are separated by a wedge-shaped brick pilaster. To either

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

side of the entries are aluminum ribbon windows located approximately halfway up the façade. At each corner of the front façade are three stack-bonded brick columns. A brick coping runs along the top of the parapet.

409-413 N. 8th St.

1960

Contributing Building

This small brick commercial building has twin inset single entry doors flanked by rectangular storefront windows. A nonhistoric awning runs the length of the front façade.

410 N. 8th St.

1955

Noncontributing Building

This small commercial building has a central single entry door with transom and sidelights and replacement storefront windows. A large nonhistoric metal awning dominates the façade.

412 N. 8th St.

1955

Contributing Building

This commercial building has good integrity. The entire front elevation is glass, with large storefront windows, an inset glass entry, and a glass door with sidelights and transom. Buff colored bricks are found at the building corners, under the storefronts at sidewalk level, and in the unadorned parapet. A flat awning is supported by hanger rods.

414 N. 8th St.

1955

Noncontributing Building

This one-story commercial building has an altered storefront and a nonhistoric metal mansard roof.

415 N. 8th St.

1953

Noncontributing Building

This Modern commercial building features a highly textured façade with materials of contrasting colors and textures. Razor stone, brick, and limestone run in horizontal bands at parapet level. The original awning was removed, however, and most of the decorative stonework is currently obscured behind a large nonhistoric metal awning.

417-425 N. 8th St.

1953

Contributing Building

This Modern commercial building is a continuation of the altered portion found at 415 N. 8th Street. It is located on the corner of 8th Street and Avenue B. The building is clad in both brick and pinkish razor stone. At parapet level are wide bands of contrasting materials—darker brown razor stone, and limestone. Just below parapet level, a cantilevered flat awning runs along both elevations. The north, secondary, elevation has single entry doors and ribbon-like windows. The main elevation has two storefronts. The storefront at 417 N. 8th features an angled glass wall and a single aluminum and glass entry door. The storefront at 425 N. 8th has a broad storefront window and single glass entry door surrounded by expansive sidelights and transoms. Above this storefront, the awning differs. Here the awning is thicker and shaped like a shallow “V.” A metal pole supports the V at its low center point. The pole extends up through the top of the awning to become part of a large Modern sign. The fin-like sign extends from the awning back toward the building, intersecting perpendicularly above parapet level. The sign’s space-age design is comprised of interlocking lines and cubes. The panels that once held the business name are missing. The building also contains a storefront addressed 312 E. Avenue B.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

216 E. Ave. B

1940

Noncontributing Building

This one-story razor stone commercial building has two single entry doors, each flanked by two storefront windows. The building's parapet-level siding material has been removed. The awning has also been removed.

218 E. Ave. B

1970

Noncontributing Building

This nonhistoric one-story building has an altered fenestration pattern and awning.

308 E. Ave. B

1940

Contributing Building

This building was historically, and is today, associated with the hotel building at 420 N. Gray Street. The building has a high hipped roof and random ashlar stone walls. Its front elevation has a single entry door and three wood windows with transoms. A nonhistoric metal awning spans the façade.

310 E. Ave. B

1955

Contributing Building

This small commercial building has good integrity. The flat-roofed building is clad in coursed ashlar stone and has a metal coping along the parapet. A central single aluminum and glass entry door is flanked by two square windows each with stone sills. Above the windows is a cantilevered flat awning.

200 block E. Ave. C

1950

Noncontributing Building

The Killeen bus station is located on the southeast corner of Avenue C and 4th Street. It has a large rectangular footprint. Once a flat-roofed building, it now has a very shallow gabled roof attached. At storefront level, the building's siding material and fenestration pattern has been significantly altered.

201-205 E. Ave. C

1950

Contributing Building

This one-story commercial building on the northeast corner of Avenue C and 4th Street has a high level of integrity. The building has multiple storefronts on both elevations, each with a double glass and aluminum entry door. The storefront windows have an unusual design where a broad rectangular window is inset between protruding glass display windows. Coupled with the inset entries, this produces an undulating effect. Brick is found below the storefronts, at the parapet level, and at the building corners. A broad cantilevered flat awning runs the entire length of each façade.

207 E. Ave. C

1950

Contributing Building

This one-story brick commercial building has a flat roof and a brick coping along the parapet. The double entry doors are aluminum and glass and have a narrow transom overhead. On either side of the entry is a broad rectangular storefront window. A flat awning is supported by hanger rods.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

211-213 E. Ave. C

1950

Contributing Building

This one-story, buff brick commercial building has two single entry doors separated by a brick pilaster. Each glass door has a narrow transom. Two storefront windows flank the doors. A cantilevered flat awning spans the façade. Remnants of a metal sign extend from above the awning to several feet above parapet level.

216 E. Ave. C

1950

Contributing Building

This red brick building has one single entry door with transom and one storefront window. Above the storefront, a shallow angled lip runs across the façade. It extends only a short distance from the building, similar to a stoop roof, and directs rain away from the door and window openings. The parapet is stuccoed. The west elevation, which faces a parking lot, has one small rectangular window.

218-222 E. Ave. C

1950

Noncontributing Building

This long, one-story building has three single entry door and three rectangular storefront windows. The building has been stuccoed over with all ornament obscured.

221 E. Avenue C

1955

Contributing Building

This large buff-colored brick commercial building appears to have been a department store or similar. The elevation which faces Gray Street, has a very side storefront window with glass recessed entry and a flat awning supported by hanger rods. Above the awning, the upper portion of wall has been covered with nonhistoric siding material all the way up to the top of the parapet. The corners of the front elevation are still brick. The long side elevation that faces Avenue C has an expanse of windowless brick at its east (front) end, and two smaller storefronts toward the west (rear). These two storefronts each have wide aluminum windows, inset glass entry doors, and cantilevered flat awnings. As on the front elevation, the wall sections just above the awnings have been covered with nonhistoric siding material. A narrow concrete coping runs the around the entire building at parapet level.

309-311 E. Ave. C

1920

Noncontributing Building

This altered 2-Part Commercial building has two single doors, one of which leads to the second floor and the other of which serves the storefront. A single storefront window is on the ground floor, and two windows are on the second floor. The building has been stuccoed over, and its doors and windows have been replaced.

313 E. Ave. C

1920

Noncontributing Building

This one-story building has a recessed arched entry. The building has been stuccoed over, and a large metal awning dominates the front façade.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

315 E. Ave. C

1955

Contributing Building

The Modern TV and Appliance building features an intact Googie sign that extends above the building over the decorative awning. The rectangular sign has corrugated white plastic panels that when lit from within, showcase the black lettering reading "Modern TV and Appliance." The sign is supported by a chunky rectangular post that extends through the top of the sign and is topped with two metal cylinders with perforated light holes. The building itself has two single entry doors, each flanked by two storefront windows. The western storefront is larger, and its door has sidelights and transom. Above the storefronts is a pagoda-like, swooping metal awning.

322-326 Ave. C

1945

Contributing Building

Located at the southwest corner of Avenue C and 8th Street, 322-326 Avenue C is a large one-story brick commercial building with multiple storefronts. The storefronts have vertical windows separated by wood mullions and wood paneling underneath. All storefront windows have replacement sash. Storefronts are separated by two-tone brick pilasters. The building has a chamfered corner with a corner entry consisting of a double entry door flanked by two narrow vertical windows at the angled corners. The 8th Street elevation has two storefronts at its southern end, each with a single entry door and two storefront windows. The Avenue C elevation has five storefronts, two of which have single entry doors and three vertical storefront windows. The other three storefronts on this elevation appear to have been altered. Instead of wood door and window surrounds, they have large floor-to-ceiling glass windows. The building also contains storefronts addressed 315-319 E. Avenue C.

200A E. Ave. D

1895

Contributing Building

City Hall Annex is a stone 2-Part Commercial building at the southeast corner of Avenue D and 4th Street. The building has rough coursed ashlar walls and a stair-stepped parapet. The secondary elevation, which faces 4th Street, has very little fenestration. There is a single window at the northern end and a double door and two windows at the southern end. All windows and doors on this elevation have been replaced. On the main, Avenue D, elevation are two storefronts. Each has a recessed wood double entry door, several storefront windows with replaced sash, and transoms. A third set of double entry doors provides access to the rest of the building. Surrounding the storefronts are wood mullions and wood paneling. One fluted cast iron pilaster is found in the center of the storefront. A nonhistoric awning hides the transom windows from view. On the second floor are two small wood windows with arched brick headers.

200B E. Ave. D

1901

Contributing Building

Also used by the City Hall Annex, 200B is a one-story stone commercial building with a flat roof, coursed ashlar masonry, and an unadorned parapet. Its central entry door has been converted to a window. Flanking this are two small storefront windows, separated by pilasters that have been rebuilt or stuccoed over. Above the door and window openings are thick stone headers.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

200C E. Ave. D

1901

Noncontributing Building

The third building in the City Hall Annex group is also a one-story stone building, but its front elevation has been almost entirely stuccoed over. Only the stone headers remain visible. The double front entry doors have been replaced. The east elevation has a second set of entry doors.

200 block E. Ave. D

1986

Noncontributing Site

A small nonhistoric pocket park at this location features a flagpole, concrete pathways, and several deciduous trees.

201 E. Ave. D

1950

Noncontributing Building

The storefront of this one-story building has been completely rebuilt, and a massive metal awning dominates the front elevation.

205 E. Ave. D

1900

Contributing Building

The brick 2-Part Commercial building at 205 E. Avenue D has an altered storefront with truncated storefront windows. Brick pilasters between the windows remain. On the second floor are three vertical windows with painted concrete sills and arched brick headers. A stringcourse runs across the façade just above the second-floor windows. At parapet level, a row of spaced soldier bricks creates a decorative, perforated frieze.

207 E. Ave. D

1910

Contributing Building

This one-story brick commercial building has a recessed entry flanked by decorative cast iron pilasters. The storefront windows on either side of the pilasters have been partially infilled and have replacement windows. The brick parapet features three rows of corbelled bricks.

211 E. Ave. D

1910

Contributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has two recessed single-door entries and no windows. Above each entry is a shallow brick arch. A decorative frieze midway up the parapet has a dentil-like relief. At the top of the parapet are three rows of corbelled bricks. Entry doors have been replaced.

215-217 E. Ave. D

1920

Noncontributing Building

This one-story commercial building has been stuccoed over. The doors and windows at each of its two storefronts have been replaced.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

218 E. Ave. D

1910

Noncontributing Building

The storefront of this one-story building has been completely rebuilt, and a massive metal awning dominates the front elevation.

219 E. Ave. D

1955

Contributing Building

This brick commercial building has an unadorned parapet, a glass and aluminum double entry door, and ribbon-like windows with brick sills. The flat awning that spans the façade is supported by hanger rods.

220 E. Ave. D

1907

Contributing Building

The brick 2-Part Commercial building at 220 E. Avenue D has a symmetrical arrangement. On the first floor are two recessed entry doors, each next to one rectangular storefront window. One of the entries has been enclosed with plywood. A smaller door leading upstairs was once located between the storefronts but has been permanently enclosed. Above each storefront is a wide concrete header. On the second floor are four vertical windows, each with concrete header and sill. At parapet level is a decorative frieze of corbelled brick dentils and sawtooth brick design.

222 E. Ave. D

1907

Contributing Building

This brick 2-Part Commercial building has two single entry doors and one storefront window on the ground floor. Under the window is a rusticated water table, and above each door and window opening is an arched brick header. On the second floor are three vertical windows, each with a concrete sill and arched brick header. At parapet level is a decorative frieze of corbelled brick dentils and sawtooth brick design.

224 E. Ave. D

1897

Contributing Building

This brick 2-Part Commercial building faces N. Gray Street, but its address is on Avenue C. Its main entrance is located in a chamfered corner. The entry features a round supporting column at the corner. The single entry door and sidelights are not original. On the Gray Street elevation, two storefront windows are located beneath large semicircular brick applied arches with corbelled spring points. Below the windows is a rusticated stone water table. The storefront windows themselves have been replaced. The Avenue C (north) elevation has a fully enclosed entry door at its western end; the brick arch above this door remains. Two single windows, each with stone sills and headers, sit above a rusticated water table. Below the headers are “brackets” made from corbelled bricks to match the brickwork found at the springpoint of the window arches. On both elevations, the second floor has two stone string courses—one just below the second floor windows, and one that intersects, and is interrupted by, the windows. Three second floor windows are found on the Gray Street elevation, and four on the Avenue C elevation. Each of the windows has a stone header with corbelled brick “brackets.” The parapet has a frieze of decorative bricks that includes a double row of sawtooth bricks and a tall row of dentils made from corbelled bricks.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

301 E. Avenue D

1955

Contributing Building

This small one-story commercial building has rusticated coursed ashlar walls and brick quoining around all door and window openings and at the building's corner. The front elevation along Gray Street has one single entry door and one rectangular window. The side elevation, which faces Avenue D, has two enclosed door openings and two partially-enclosed window openings. A single row of bricks is found along the top of the parapet.

305 E. Ave. D

1920

Noncontributing Building

This 2-Part Commercial building has been altered beyond recognition, with a rebuilt storefront and corrugated siding applied to the upper floor.

306-308 E. Ave. D

1915

Contributing Building

This brick one-story building has two storefronts separated by a brick pilaster. Matching brick pilasters are found at the building corners. The east storefront has been altered significantly, but the west storefront is largely intact, with a glass entry door and glass windows. The original awning has been removed and a replacement awning is found over the west storefront. At parapet level are several courses of corbelled brick.

307 E. Ave. D

1920

Noncontributing Building

This building has been altered beyond recognition by the application of a windowless brick skin. One single entry door is the only opening on the façade.

311 E. Ave. D

1950

Contributing Building

This 1-Part Commercial building has a razor stone first floor and a stuccoed parapet. It has a recessed central entry, ribbon-like storefront windows, and a flat awning supported by hanger rods.

315 E. Ave. D

1950

Noncontributing Building

This altered building was formed by combining a two-story building with a longer one-story building to its east. Both buildings were stuccoed over and their fenestration patterns were altered. A nonhistoric awning covers most of the length of the façade.

327 E. Ave. D

1955

Noncontributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has nonhistoric stucco covering and nonhistoric storefront windows. An original cantilevered flat awning spans the façade.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

329-333 E. Ave. D

1955

Contributing Building

This one-story buff brick commercial building has a flat roof and parapet with brick coping. Three aluminum and glass storefronts are separated by brick pilasters. Each storefront has a single entry door. A cantilevered flat awning runs the length of the façade.

200 N. Gray St.

1945

Contributing Building

This one-story commercial building has a random rubble stone front façade made with stones of various colors. The side elevation, which faces Santa Fe Plaza Drive, is stuccoed and has a single entry door to the rear. On the front elevation, a thin flat awning is supported by hanger rods. The two large storefront windows have been enclosed with plywood. The central entry has been altered with infilled transoms and replacement doors.

201 N. Gray St.

1925

Noncontributing Building

This tall one-story commercial building has a nonhistoric wood-shingled awning, a stuccoed parapet, and a rebuilt storefront with nonhistoric bricks and windows.

202-206 N. Gray St.

1899

Contributing Building

The Levi Anderson Building is a stone 1-Part Commercial building with rusticated coursed ashlar masonry. Located at the southeast corner of Avenue D and Gray Street, it has storefronts on both elevations. Its main storefront is located at the building's chamfered corner, which contains a replacement entry door under an original large square transom window. Above the entry on the chambered corner is a carved stone panel reading "1899." On the Gray Street elevation are two bays. Each bay has an ABA arrangement of a rectangular opening with an arched stone header flanked by two rectangular openings with thick stone headers. The three openings in the southernmost bay have been enclosed with buff-colored brick. The three openings in the northern bay have replacement windows and door. In the center of the parapet on this elevation is a carved stone panel reading "LEVI ANDERSON." The building's Avenue D elevation has one significantly smaller storefront located toward the east end of the façade. It has a single entry door with two flanking windows, and a larger square window nearby. All of those openings are spanned by a single long stone header. A large door opening at the far east end of the façade has been enclosed with buff-colored brick. A projecting stone detail is found along the parapet of both elevations.

205 block N. Gray St.

1960

Noncontributing Building

This front-gabled building has been completely altered with nonhistoric siding material and a reconfigured storefront.

207 block N. Gray St.

1920

Noncontributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has replacement windows and a large metal parapet and awning that dominates the façade.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

302 N. Gray St.

1955

Contributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has an inset storefront with angled walls. A single entry door is flanked by two angled rectangular windows with brick sills. Above the storefront is a shallow wedge-shaped metal awning. Above this is a large transom opening currently enclosed with corrugated metal. At parapet level, brick corner pilasters extend above the parapet and several rows of corbelled bricks create a decorative frieze.

306 N. Gray St.

1955

Noncontributing Building

This altered 1-Part Commercial building has a completely rebuilt storefront with nonhistoric window and door and an enclosed transom. The façade is clad in brown and tan mosaic tile and along the parapet are two rows of decorative red clay tile.

308 N. Gray St.

1955

Contributing Building

The building at 308 N. Gray Street is a one-story commercial building clad in blue mosaic tile. The storefront consists of large glass display cases with glass corners. The cases project beyond the glass transom windows above. Above the storefronts is a flat metal awning supported by hanger rods, and a flat parapet with mosaic tile.

308 1/2 N. Gray St.

1925

Noncontributing Building

The storefront of this small commercial building has been rebuilt with an altered fenestration pattern and replacement door and window. It does still maintain its original angled wall. Above the storefront is a flat awning and an enclosed transom. Three rows of decorative clay roofing tile are found at parapet level.

310 N. Gray St.

1915

Contributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has a wide, almost floor-to-ceiling storefront window with a brick sill, and a single glass and aluminum entry door. Door and window sash are not original to the building but the openings do not appear to be altered. A fabric awning obscures the transoms. The parapet has slight crenellations as well as three inset panels.

311 N. Gray St.

1925

Noncontributing Building

This altered one-story commercial building has been entirely stuccoed over. The storefront has been rebuilt with nonhistoric windows and door and a large metal awning. Brick dentils along the parapet are still visible beneath the stucco layer.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

312 N. Gray St.

1910

Contributing Building

This tall brick 1-Part Commercial building has an inset central entry flanked by two cast iron columns. The rest of the storefront has been rebuilt with hardiboard and replacement window sash but is in its original position and configuration. Above the storefront is a single large inset panel with four brick diamond reliefs and a brick zigzag design just below the parapet. The top of the parapet is slightly crenellated and has a brick coping. The north elevation, which faces an alley, has one door opening at the rear that is topped with a brick arched header.

315 N. Gray St.

1925

Noncontributing Building

This one-story commercial building has been covered in nonhistoric stone or rusticated concrete block. Both sets of double entry doors have been replaced, and two new Palladian-style windows were installed. A wide band of corrugated metal runs along the parapet.

316 N. Gray St.

1945

Noncontributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has replacement windows, door, and awning.

318 N. Gray St.

1945

Noncontributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has replacement windows, door, and awning.

320 N. Gray St.

1915

Contributing Building

The building at 320 N. Gray Street was originally a Lodge Hall with a 2-Part Commercial configuration. Later it became Hack's Levi's and most of the upper floor windows were enclosed and stuccoed over. On this portion of the building is a faded, but still visible, painted mural showing a cowboy carrying a saddle and the words "Hack's Levi's Headquarters." The storefront on the ground floor was also altered and a cantilevered flat awning was added. Still visible under the stucco are the diamond-shaped brick reliefs in the center of the façade and the brick panels at parapet level. Because of the alterations, the building's contributing status is based off of its integrity from its Hack's Levi's time period in the mid-20th Century when so many commercial buildings were constructed in downtown Killeen.

321 N. Gray St.

1900

Contributing Building

This Italianate 1-Part Commercial building is located on the southwest corner of Gray Street and Avenue C. Its main elevation, which faces Gray, has five bays. Each bay contains a tall opening topped with a shallow brick arch. The five arches are connected, which creates an undulating effect across the façade. The five openings are separated by plain brick pilasters. The center opening contains a double entry door and transom; the other openings contain a rectangular window and transom. All transoms have been infilled with plywood. Above the transoms, each bay has a decorative inset panel. A brick frieze at parapet level includes dentils and several rows of dentiled corbelled brick. The north elevation, which faces Avenue C, has been stuccoed. It contains one entry door with flat awning and one small window, both located toward the rear of that elevation.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

322 N. Gray St.

1955

Contributing Building

The one-story brick commercial building at 322 N. Gray Street features a wide cantilevered flat awning above the storefronts that wraps around the corner of the building. Plate glass windows also wrap around the building to create one large storefront with two elevations. The main elevation, which faces Gray Street, has a recessed glass entry with single entry door. There is another single entry door located on the Avenue C elevation. The rest of the building is unadorned save for a brick sill underneath the length of the large storefront window, and a brick coping along the top of the parapet.

400-412 N. Gray St.

1925

Noncontributing Building

This large one-story building has multiple altered storefronts, a nonhistoric stone water table, and an altered parapet.

407 N. Gray St.

1955

Contributing Building

The tiny building at 407 N. Gray Street is an intact commercial building squeezed between the large store to the south and the large theater to the north. This extremely narrow building has one single entry door and one rectangular window on its front façade. Above these is a flat awning supported by hanger rods. Under the storefront is red brick, but the rest of the building is clad in contrasting buff brick.

409 N. Gray St.

1955

Noncontributing Building

This altered movie theater has had its storefront level completely rebuilt with nonhistoric siding material, fenestration pattern, and door. On the upper floor, two types of buff-colored brick are all that remain of its original appearance. Traditionally-shaped brick is found on most of the building, while darker, narrower bricks were used on a tower-like element and in rectangular decorative panels below the parapet. The building has a nonhistoric corrugated metal gable roof installed over the formerly flat theater roof. The north wall, which faces an alley, is red brick.

413-419 N. Gray St.

1955

Contributing

This is a long, low one-story building with four aluminum and glass entry doors, and four large windows of varying sizes. The flat roof features an overhanging cornice. The building is built from hollow clay tile and has brick window sills.

416 N. Gray St.

1950

Noncontributing Building

This altered buff brick commercial building is one story in height and has an altered storefront. The storefront has been largely enclosed with nonhistoric red brick and has small nonhistoric windows. A flat awning is supported by hanger rods.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

418 N. Gray St.

1945

Contributing Building

This Modern one-story commercial building has a razor stone front façade and a broad storefront window with an angled inset wall. A wide glass entry door is topped by a narrow transom. The parapet is unadorned save for a metal drip edge. The north (side) elevation shows the building's red hollow clay tile construction.

420 N. Gray St.

1945

Contributing Building

This two-story Hotel building features a colorful façade of contrasting stone in a random rubble pattern. The building has a rectangular footprint and a low-pitched hipped roof. The front elevation, which faces Gray Street, has a central entry door flanked by two large windows with transoms. Over these is a nonhistoric porch roof with two simple supporting poles. The second floor has two pairs of divided light windows. The long north elevation faces Avenue B. Here, each floor contains multiple pairs of windows. A secondary entry is located toward the back (east) of this elevation; it has a nonhistoric door and porch. All window sash in the building have been replaced, but window patterns and configurations are unchanged.

421 N. Gray St.

1945

Contributing Building

This brick one-story commercial building has good integrity. Aluminum and glass double entry doors in the center of the façade are topped by a narrow transom. To either side of the entry is a storefront window with glass block trim beneath. Narrow brick pilasters separate the doors and windows. Above the storefront is a cantilevered flat awning. At parapet level is a simple brick coping. Projecting perpendicularly from the parapet is a simple historic sign reading "Tharpe's Boot & Shoe Repair."

425 N. Gray St.

1945

Noncontributing Building

This one-story commercial building has facades on both Gray Street and Avenue B. The building has been significantly altered, with the storefront rebuilt and partially enclosed, sections of brickwork stuccoed, and a large nonhistoric shingled awning applied.

500 block N. Gray St.

1912

Contributing Building

At the northeast corner of Gray Street and Avenue B is 1st United Methodist Church, a large Greek Revival building. The building consists of three independent wings arranged in an "E" shape, with an arcaded passageway connecting them in the rear. Each wing presents a front-gabled two-story volume facing Gray Street. The southernmost volume is the original 1912 portion of the church, which is now used as a fellowship hall. It is a large buff brick building with a two-story front porch. At the porch, giant order fluted columns support a large pediment with a dentiled cornice and triglyphs in the frieze. This main façade has a three-bay arrangement, with shallow brick pilasters between each bay and brick quoining at the building corners. The central front entry and two large flanking windows each have a semi-circular transom, and above each of these openings is a second floor window. All front windows contain their original stained glass. The south elevation faces Avenue B and has tall vertical windows with replacement stained glass from circa 1960. The north elevation faces a grassy church yard. The rear elevation is connected to a later addition that links the three

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

distinct building volumes. The roof is largely flat, with the front porch pediment giving a front-gabled appearance. The dentiled cornice runs around the entire building, slightly below parapet level.

In the center of the “E” arrangement is another two-story buff brick volume built in 1960. It has three main bays on the front elevation, with brick pilasters between them. The central bay contains large double doors set into a recessed arched entry. Each outside bay has a small window on each floor. Above these three bays is a classical pediment. This pedimented entry volume projects slightly beyond the plane of the rest of the building, which has brick quoining and cornice returns. The northernmost building volume is a 1976 construction that blends elements of each of the earlier volumes. A tall pedimented porch with giant order columns shelters a three-bay entry, with a large arched central door opening flanked by two smaller arched door openings. At the building corners are brick quoining and cornice returns. Behind all three of these building volumes is a long perpendicular rear addition. It has an arcaded passageway that links the three buildings.

507 N. Gray St.

1960

Contributing Building

First National Bank is a large Modern building on the northwest corner of Gray Street and Avenue B. It is a tall, rectangular volume with a flat roof. The building is clad in smooth limestone panels and has clean lines and understated decoration. In the center of the front (Gray Street) façade is a large recessed entry whose opening is close to building-height. The entire recessed entry is comprised of an aluminum and glass wall, and contains two sets of glass double entry doors. The entry is trimmed in smooth metal pilasters, and a metal stringcourse runs across the façade approximately one-third of the way up the wall. The building's south elevation faces Avenue B. Much of the elevation is comprised of windowless expanses of smooth limestone, but in the center of the elevation is a massive glass wall section partially hidden behind a black-painted screen with decorative openwork in a square and rectangular pattern. The rear elevation is similar to the front, but the glass entry bay is not recessed. On the north side elevation, a flat-roofed drive-thru bank with six lanes extends from the building.

200 block Santa Fe Plaza Dr.

1913

Contributing

The historic Santa Fe Depot was built in 1913 along the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railway. The City of Killeen acquired the building in 1982 and moved it 350 west and 130 feet north to its current location in a parking lot near the railway and behind the City Hall Annex and Pocket Park. The depot is a wood-framed, side-gabled building in the Craftsman Style. It is long rectangular building with a small projecting bay near its center. The roof's wide overhanging eaves are supported by wood brackets. All siding and trim is wood. At the western end of the depot is the public space—this end has multiple 6/6 wood windows with pedimented wood trim pieces. An entry door on the south elevation near the projecting bay has a 3-light transom and a narrow vertical 2/2 window in lieu of a standard sidelight. The eastern end of the building has fewer window and door openings.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Statement of Significance

Killeen, in Bell County, Texas, is a bustling city roughly 70 miles north of Austin. The townsite was virtually vacant until the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad laid its tracks through central Texas in 1882. The railroad company platted the town of Killeen on its right-of-way and within a year, several stores, a saloon, a railroad depot, and a school appeared on its streets. Residents of surrounding hamlets moved to Killeen to take advantage of opportunities afforded the town as a railroad terminus. Killeen soon became the center of regional agriculture, shipping cotton and livestock to market from its railroad cars. The town's late 19th and early 20th century properties date from this period of agricultural success. Development slowed to a halt during the Great Depression of the 1930s but activity resumed when nearby Camp Hood was created as a major training ground for U.S. soldiers during World War II. Although the military kept the town's economy alive in the mid-to-late 1940s, it made few contributions to the city's building stock and infrastructure, perhaps because of the temporary nature of its tenure in the area. After the war, the town's future was uncertain, but when the Camp Hood was re-commissioned in 1950 as Fort Hood, a permanent military post, people flocked to Killeen to provide goods and services for the growing facility. Fort Hood's permanent status and growth directly affected Killeen's population and building boom in the 1950s. The city's population more than doubled from about 1,300 in 1949 to 7,045 the following year on the strength of the base presence. During that year, nearly 100 new commercial buildings went up in the city's downtown core. Due in large part to the presence of Fort Hood in the postwar era, downtown Killeen possesses a large number of commercial resources bearing modern architectural influences from that period. The Killeen Downtown Historic District is filled with a mix of late-19th/early 20th-century commercial buildings and postwar commercial buildings in nearly equal numbers. Some of the postwar buildings display distinctively modern architectural features. Though many of its buildings have been altered to some degree, the district is noteworthy for its concentration of historic-age resources representing Killeen's two most influential periods of growth and development. Because the district has such a distinct cluster of historic-age buildings and because its postwar architecture is noteworthy for its Modern design and form, it is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, Community Planning and Development and Military, and under Criterion C, Architecture, at the local level of significance. The district's period of significance is 1895-1964.

Geographic Setting and Prehistory

Bell County covers an area of approximately 1,055 square miles and is divided by the Balcones Escarpment, which runs from the southeast to the northwest of the county. The city of Killeen is situated in the western part of the county, in what is known as the Grand Prairie region. The land surrounding Killeen is characterized by undulating to rolling uplands which can be deeply cut by stream valleys with stony slopes and steep bluffs. Soils in the western part of the county are light to dark and loamy and clayey, with limy subsoils. Tall grasses and oak, juniper, pine, and mesquite trees typically cover the area and make for good ranching conditions.¹

Archaeological evidence reveals human habitation in Bell County as early as 10,000 B.C. By the time the Spanish first ventured into present Bell County, they encountered the Tonkawas, a flint-working hunter-gatherer people who followed buffalo herds. Other nomadic groups, including Lipan Apaches, Wacos, Anadarkoes, Kiowas, and Comanches also passed through and inhabited the region on a seasonal basis into the mid-19th century. By the 1840s, however, most of the native tribes, including the Tonkawas and Lipan Apaches, had been decimated by European-borne disease or driven out of the country.²

¹ Seymour V. Connor and Mark Odintz, "Bell County," Handbook of Texas Online (www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/BB/hcb6.html). accessed November 1, 2012, Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

² Christopher Long, 1990.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Bell County: Early Settlement and Development

Spanish explorers were the first Europeans to traverse central Texas beginning in the 18th century but they left no evidence of any permanent habitation in present Bell County.³ By the late 1840s, however, Texas had become part of the United States and English-speaking pioneers started moving into central Texas and by 1850, the Texas legislature officially established Bell County with the city of Belton as its seat of government. A decade after its establishment, Bell County remained a largely rural, almost frontier, region of Texas with only 3,794 white residents and approximately 1,000 black slaves. During this period, Bell County farmers engaged primarily in subsistence level agriculture, with corn and wheat as their principal crops. Farmers produced only a small amount of cotton. In large part, Bell County's economy depended more on cattle and sheep ranching than on crop farming in both the antebellum and immediate postwar eras.⁴ The region experienced a prolonged period of unrest as the Civil War was followed by a period of violence and economic recession in the 1860s and into the 1870s. By the late 1870s, though, Bell County's economy gradually improved due to the growing demand for sheep and cattle in northern markets and the increased cultivation of cotton. As a cash crop, cotton was a boon to farm families as well as merchants who catered to them. As farms and ranches spread throughout the county, small hamlets like Sugar Loaf and Palo Alto emerged as supply stations for surrounding farms and ranches. They usually featured a general store where farmers and ranchers could buy staple goods and a cotton gin or grain mill to process their crops.

Development of Killeen

In 1881, the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe railroad arrived in Temple, securing its role as a transportation center for cotton and other area farm and ranch products. The following year, the railroad extended its line westward near the small agricultural hubs of Sugar Loaf and Palo Alto. The track bypassed the existing communities and platted a new 70-block townsite as its terminus. The townsite lay within a 300-acre tract of largely undeveloped land about 2 ½ miles southwest of Palo Alto; there were a few patches of cotton planted on the landscape, but little else. The company built a frame depot and named the town Killeen, named for Frank P. Killeen, the Galveston-based assistant general manager of the railroad. When Killeen was officially christened on May 15, 1882, several railroad dignitaries attended the festivities, but there is no evidence that Frank P. Killeen was among them.⁵ The original railroad depot was replaced in 1913 by the current depot (200 block Santa Fe, Photo 2).

The railroad officials must have had great hopes for Killeen as Avenue D, the main street which lay just north and parallel to the railroad tracks, was platted to be 100 feet wide. Avenue D was envisioned as a grand thoroughfare with room for two-way wagon traffic, board sidewalks, and a large well in the middle of the street to water livestock. All other streets in the original grid were drawn at 80 feet in width, passages that would eventually accommodate wide sidewalks, head-in parking, and two-way traffic. These generous street widths remain intact to the present.

In fact, the railroad had already pre-sold lots in the townsite but only about 40 people had seized the opportunity by the time the new town opened. By the end of the year, however, a number of people from surrounding hamlets, as well as those drawn by a nationwide advertising campaign sponsored by the railroad, had moved to the new town. Residents of Sugar Loaf and Palo Alto packed up and moved to the new townsite in anticipation of its success. They hoped to capitalize on the value of the railroad in attracting business to the town and quickly erected several stores, a saloon, and a school building. These achievements attracted still others to the town and by 1884 – only two years after its official birth – Killeen boasted about 350 residents, five general stores, two gristmills, two cotton gins, two saloons, a lumberyard, a

³ Terri Myers and Elizabeth Butman 2005: 8.

⁴ Christopher Long, 1990.

⁵ *Killeen Daily Herald*, October 29, 1995: 1.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

blacksmith shop, and a hotel, most of which operated from simple frame business buildings that fronted onto the railroad line.⁶

Among the first businesses were the Blue Front Saloon, Spencer Brothers General Store, Shaw Drug Store, and French Drug Store. Some businesses combined interests; for example, Cole's Furniture Store also sold caskets and Will and Sam Rancier's Jeweler's Bank started as a jewelry and hardware store that practiced banking on the side. Other early businesses reflected the town's role as the new agricultural center; they included the Grange Co-operative, five gins, the Killeen Roller Mill, Firm Duncan Wool and Cotton, and Wendland Grain.⁷

Killeen soon became the focal point of the surrounding 20-mile agricultural region and area farmers shipped their cotton, wool, grain and livestock from its railroad platforms. Cotton remained the principal cash crop and gins were erected along the railroad sidings at the edge of town. As its importance as a shipping hub grew, Killeen increased its building stock to include six general stores, three cotton gins, three blacksmiths, two hardware stores and the California Hotel by 1896.⁸ Though not a metropolis, Killeen had grown to about 780 inhabitants by 1900. New technologies and businesses were introduced around that time. For instance, telephone service arrived in the 1890s, electric lights illuminated the town in 1904, and the power plant was installed in 1905. The First National Bank of Killeen was established in 1901 and remains intact at the southwest corner of Avenue D and Gray Street (224 E. Avenue D, Photo 6). Will Rancier, who became one of Killeen's most prominent businessmen with several downtown buildings, acquired the bank in 1904. Virtually all the town's citizens were white Protestants as the community discouraged blacks and Catholics from moving there.⁹

By the end of the 19th century, brick and stone business buildings appeared on Avenue D, immediately north of the railroad tracks. They replaced the original frame storefronts along the railroad track and contributed to the rise of Avenue D as the town's principal business district. Masonry buildings represented permanent investment in Killeen and reflected the business community's confidence in the town's future. Today, numerous brick and limestone buildings dating to this Early Period survive along Avenue D. Virtually all are 1- or 2-story rectangular plan buildings with entrances fronting the main street and deep interiors that stretch the length of the long, narrow commercial lots. Some share party walls with their neighbors and others occupy two or three lots with separate storefronts encompassed in a single façade. A good example of an Early Period commercial building from this era is found at 321 N. Gray Street (Photo 7).

In general, they can be described as simple 1- and 2-part commercial buildings. A few, particularly those rendered in limestone, feature the round-arched windows associated with the Romanesque Revival style. Others exhibit modest Italianate characteristics with flat roofs supported by ornate brackets. A number of surviving storefronts on Avenue D and Gray streets retain inset entries and cast iron pilasters embellished with decorative motifs. In general, upper stories feature more prominent stylistic detailing with attributes such as arched windows and corbelled brick. Examples of this Early Period of commercial construction include the 2-story building at 224 Avenue D (Photo 6) and the 1-story building at 211 Avenue D (Photo 8).

The area along Avenue D between N. 4th and N. 8th streets was almost exclusively reserved for commercial enterprises. Churches and schools lay nearby. An impressive Greek Revival style church, built at the intersection of N. Gray Street and Avenue B, within the district still looks very much as it did in 1912 when it was completed (First United Methodist Church, 500 block N. Gray Street, Photo 3). Industrial lots were concentrated along the railroad tracks for ease of

⁶ John Leffler, "Killeen, TX" in Handbook of Texas Online (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdk01>, accessed November 1, 2012. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

⁷ Bowmer 1976: 176.

⁸ Ibid, 195.

⁹ Leffler, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdk01>.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

shipping. In the first half of the 20th century, houses shared the streetscapes with commercial buildings but as the city grew, they vanished from the downtown core as more businesses took over Avenues A through D and the numbered streets in between. Residential development moved to neighborhoods north of the commercial and industrial zones. Exceptions included a few hotels. Killeen's modern technology, railroad access, and enlarged trade zone continued to attract new residents in the 20th century. The city's population increased to about 1,300 by 1914.¹⁰ On the eve of World War I, Killeen was the largest cotton shipping point between and including Temple and San Angelo¹¹

Contrary to expectation, however, Killeen's population failed to grow beyond its 1914 limit and actually lost residents in the following decades. The boll weevil and drought that plagued agriculture in central Texas in the 1920s and 1930s likely contributed to the city's declining population. The city depended on business from the surrounding farmers and their losses had a deleterious effect on Killeen's population and commercial stability. By 1930, Killeen's population had dropped to 1,260, a decrease from its 1914 level by hundreds. During the Great Depression, Killeen's population remained static with a net increase of only three souls in the decade. Still, the town supported a small number of merchants, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and other professionals throughout the period. Their services extended to the surrounding rural countryside, as well.

Partly because Killeen's growth had reached a plateau by about 1914, many early commercial buildings are still extant from the city's initial period of development. Avenue D, one block north of the railroad depot, and 6th Street (Gray), a north-south running street that spans the railroad tracks, were the city's principal commercial streets until the early 1960s. These blocks were home to general stores, drug stores, doctor's offices, banks, movie theaters and hotels. Many of the buildings that lined Avenue D and 6th Street in the 1910s survive to the present, though some have had been modified by replacement windows and painted or stuccoed brick (200 block N. side Avenue D, Photo 1). A Simple Prewar commercial building is a ca. 1910 brick building at 312 N. Gray (Photo 9). Another example is the ca. 1910 commercial building at 211 Avenue D (Photo 8). Some Prewar buildings have been so altered that they no longer convey a sense of history. Such buildings include the ca. 1901 building at 200C Avenue D (Photo 15) and the one at 215-217 Avenue D (Photo 13). To the south, east, and west, industrial blocks containing cotton gins, lumber yards, stock pens, and mills lay within close reach of the railroad cars that pulled up alongside them.

Despite hard times in the 1920s and 1930s, some businesses managed to thrive. One that took hold in Killeen was Arthur Bay's grocery store on Gray Street. The family came from a long line of farmers and stock raisers but brothers Bill and Orval Bay left the family farm and came to Killeen where they opened a general store downtown in the 300 block of N. 6th Street, north of Avenue D, about 1927. Brother Arthur Bay followed suite and joined in their business in addition to running his farm. When Arthur's son Cleo started school in Killeen, he worked afternoons stocking shelves and unloading trucks for the store. Finally, Arthur had a chance to go into the grocery business and moved into the old First National Bank at the northwest corner of Avenue D and Gray Street.¹²

Downtown also remained the principal shopping and business venue in Killeen during the Great Depression. In addition to the Bay Store, there was Norman Bros. Department and Grocery Store, Chancellor's equipment Store, and Swope Hardware. Avenue D continued to be the main business street and featured Woods Drug Store, Johnny Toliver's barber shop, Dr. Clement's dentist office, a Ford dealership, and Earl Massey's theater on the south side of the street. A hotel stood on the south side of Avenue D.¹³ The Gloria'O Beauty Shop founded by Georgia Bacon and Sadie Mae Duncan Evans in the late 1920s upstairs in the First National Bank building on the south side of Avenue D (later moved across the

¹⁰ tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdk01.

¹¹ *Killeen Daily Herald*, Sunday October 29, 1995: 1.

¹² Cleo Bay, March 14, 2012.

¹³ Cleo Bay, March 14, 2012.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

street).¹⁴ The Wyatt Bass Grocery was built in 1937 on the southeast corner of N. 6th (Gray) Street and Avenue C. Franke Chanslor, in partnership with her brother Earl, had a furniture, hardware, and implement business at Avenue D and N. 4th Street in the 1930s.¹⁵ People gathered at the intersection of Avenue D and Gray Street to talk and swap gossip. For all its modern businesses, Avenue D still conveyed a sense of its rural past. Farmers drove horse-drawn wagons into town. A hand-dug well in the middle of Avenue D – Killeen’s main street – featured a trough to slake the horses’ thirst¹⁶

Annie Roe Buckley recalled living near Killeen during the Great Depression. She had grown up on a farm with her family in Palo Alto, about two and a half miles from Killeen. Since she walked to school in Killeen, she was very familiar with the city during the 1930s. At that time, Killeen had three or four cotton gins, a grocery store, several dry goods stores, and a hardware store. Annie Roe graduated in 1933, the year some recall as the worst year of the Depression. She went to Southwest Texas State College and got a teaching certificate. With degree in hand, Annie Roe moved back to Killeen and began her 40-year teaching career at the brick school built in 1924 on Avenue D. She remembered that the pace of life was slow in Killeen. Bell County was dry and the only entertainment was watching a movie at the Sadler Theater which was open only on Saturday nights.¹⁷

Throughout the 1920s and into the 1930s, agriculture remained the basis of Killeen’s economy. The town’s trading radius extended more than 20 miles from the downtown core, covering hundreds of farms and their families. A good-sized farm might consist of 160 acres where the family grew cotton and corn, and possibly some other grains. A productive farm yielded a bale of cotton to an acre. Farmers also grew maize to feed their stock, generally a few head of cattle and some pigs. The women canned sweet corn by July 4; if it matured on the stalk, it would be hard. Families used corn shellers to make meal or hominy. Nearly all area farmers cultivated large garden plots of about an acre where they grew green beans, blackeyed peas, potatoes, lettuce, and okra. Some had orchards bearing peaches and plums. As late as the Great Depression, most of the area farmers were still without indoor plumbing, but they had deep-water wells to provide fresh water. They drew water for the stock and laundry, and saved some for the chickens.¹⁸ Agriculture declined throughout the Depression and as farmers were forced to tighten their belts they were less able to visit Killeen for shopping. As a result, Killeen’s businesses suffered along with the farmers.

Killeen received some relief from New Deal programs that offered jobs to local citizens. By the late 1930s hometown workers under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) paved city streets, installed a new water and sewer system, and improved area bridges. WPA crews also built sidewalks and curbs along the main business streets, many of which remain intact to the present (Curb at the corner of Avenue C and N. 4th Street (Photo 4). Federal funds were also used to build a twelve-mile strip of U.S. Highway 190 in 1939. WPA workers earned a dollar a day, which was generally twice as much as farm or ranch work at the time.¹⁹

Partly as a result of federal dollars, Killeen’s businesses increased from 55 in 1931 to 71 by 1940.²⁰ On most days, only a handful of cars frequented the town’s streets but on Saturday, when the farmers and their families came to town, Avenue D overflowed with vehicles. Killeen offered a number of grocery and dry goods stores, several cafes, Will Sutton’s Department Store, three drug stores, and two variety stores. A newspaper, the *Killeen Herald*, kept citizens informed and two banks kept whatever savings they might have. Despite the depression, business was brisk at the automobile

¹⁴ Killeen Project – 1930s, 24.

¹⁵ Ibid, 62.

¹⁶ Cleo Bay, March 14, 2012.

¹⁷ Annie Roe Buckley, March 21, 2012.

¹⁸ Fawcett, March 21, 2012.

¹⁹ Killeen – Project 1930s: 9.

²⁰ Leffler, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hdk01>.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

dealerships and lumberyard. Three licensed embalmers operated their mortuaries downtown. Beyond the town limits, the landscape was entirely rural with cotton and grain fields and grazing land for livestock spread out around the city.²¹

As U.S. involvement in World War II became imminent, the federal government planned ahead for the establishment of new ordnance plants and military installations across the nation. Military personnel and surveyors descended on Killeen and its surrounding farmland immediately after President Roosevelt declared a state of war. They took stock of the locale and found the inland area to be ideal for a large military base; soon, they began quietly buying up farms in Bell and Coryell counties. To the astonishment of most Bell County residents, the government announced on January 14, 1942, that a tank destroyer tactical and firing center would be established on approximately 160,000 acres of land north and west of Killeen. The 893rd Tank Destroyer Battalion arrived from Fort Meade on April 2, 1942, and Camp Hood, named for Gen. John Bell Hood, officially opened on September 18, 1942.²²

While the camp was undoubtedly essential to the war effort, its effects on local farmers and ranchers were devastating. Not only were they to lose their family farms, they were given “low-ball” offers that didn’t transpire for years, leaving the land owners both homeless and penniless. The first families to be vacated received only 90 days’ notice to pack up and move. Farmers struggled to sell their livestock and machinery in a market that was suddenly flooded with cattle, horses, and tractors. Army trucks typically appeared at their doors and ordered families out of their homes with only their personal belongings. Feed and livestock still in the barn were abandoned, furniture and farm equipment were left in place. Thus, the farmers and ranchers lost the homes, farms and neighbors they had known all their life. Many had no place to go. Some moved to Killeen, others to Gatesville, and still others, moved out of the area altogether. In some cases, people took refuge in churches. Ultimately, most houses were torn down by soldiers or blown up by tanks in training exercises. A number of people, especially the elderly, reportedly committed suicide over their losses.²³

The wholesale loss of farms throughout Killeen’s trading area had a profound effect on related businesses in the town. Its five cotton gins closed almost immediately and dry goods stores that catered to farmers shut their doors for good. Blacksmiths went out of business and livestock pens near the railroad siding lay vacant as farmers sold their horses, cows, sheep and goats at rock-bottom prices like their farms.

Others realized opportunities in the nearby camp. The Bay family, who came from generations of farmers and ranchers in the area, had to give up their land to the army. They moved to Killeen where they established a major grocery store to serve the burgeoning community attracted by the camp.²⁴ The endeavor was successful and several generations of the Bay family made the transition from the farm to grocery sales.

The construction industry received a much-needed boost by the camp. The military quickly cordoned off the prime agricultural land and began hiring people by the hundreds to build new facilities on the site. Construction workers, still haunted by the Great Depression, flocked to Killeen in droves for the work at hand. Juanita Lee Faucett recalled that she and her new husband were traveling across Texas so that he could find work on construction projects. The couple lived in a tent while they were on the road, but when Mrs. Faucett was ready to give birth to their first child, they moved home to Killeen. Mr. Troy Faucett immediately found construction jobs at the new base, working for 65 cents an hour throughout the summer of 1942. He drove nails ten hours a day to be prepared for the dedication ceremony on September 18, 1942.²⁵

²¹ Bowmer 1976: 204-206.

²² Briuer, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/qbf25.htm>.

²³ Killeen-Project 1930s, Inc.

²⁴ Bay, March 14, 2012.

²⁵ Fawcett, March 21, 2012.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

An army of workers like Mr. Faucett flooded the town of Killeen looking for jobs. They were joined by soldiers and their families, as well as uprooted farmers from the surrounding territory. An estimated 30,000 construction workers and their families descended on the small city of Killeen where they found jobs and a desperate shortage of housing. Killeen residents did their best to accommodate the unprecedented influx of people; they rented their spare rooms, barns, and even, on occasion, hen houses.²⁶ Makeshift shelter included a hastily-built tent city that housed 1,000 workers. Mrs. Faucett found creative ways to rent space to construction workers attracted to the base.²⁷ At the same time, thousands of soldiers recruited for tank training arrived from all over the country. The two-story Graystone Hotel on Gray Street and its annex on Avenue B are among the few permanent residences built to house the surplus during the war.²⁸ The 2-story stone-sheathed hotel and its annex on Avenue B were built during World War II to ease the housing shortage.

The influx of so many newcomers taxed Killeen's modest resources but for the first time in years, the city's businesses prospered. Still, little permanent new construction was seen in Killeen's downtown section. Existing buildings, many dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, comprised the core of the business district. Remembering the hardships of the Great Depression, few businessmen were willing to invest in new buildings at that time. William Yowell recalled that even with the influx of people – many of them displaced farmers and their families – during the war, Killeen was still very much a country town with four or five now-closed gins, a bank, a Piggly Wiggly, and a furniture store. A road connected Killeen and Belton. Much of the war-related population boom consisted of refugees from farms acquired by the military at the beginning of the war. No one knew what would last or when the bubble would burst.

Mrs. Buckley remembered that it seemed like the town was flooded with newcomers overnight. Soldiers lined the streets at night, looking for any kind of entertainment. A USO facility was established in town to entertain the troops. New restaurants sprang up and church congregations grew in numbers. Downtown was the center of activity for military and civilians alike. There were two banks, several doctors, a dentist, and several ready-to-wear shops. Norman Brothers and Suttons Mercantile Store were abuzz with activity. Saturday afternoon was a big day for downtown merchants and barbers. Bill Bay's grocery store was downtown occupied the store where Modern TV and Appliance now stands. Outside of Killeen, just south of the Williamson county line, was a roadhouse called the Rattlesnake Inn that catered to thirsty soldiers and construction workers (Faucett March 21, 2012). Still, even with the influx of people during the war, Killeen remained very much a country town with four or five soon-to-be-abandoned gins, a bank, a Piggly Wiggly, and a furniture store. A dirt road connected Killeen and Belton (Yowell, March 14, 2012). Most new construction occurred on base and few entrepreneurs invested in new businesses in Killeen. As a result, few, if any, commercial buildings in the downtown area date from the Camp Hood period.

While Killeen's streets were crowded with people and booming businesses, its citizens never forgot about the war that raged around the world. Some of their own sons enlisted in the armed services to join the war effort. Local boys like Cleo Bay, William Yowell, and James H. "Screwdriver" Arnold enlisted in the military and served for the duration. Bay came back to Killeen and built his first big store.

Perhaps overlooked amid the city's steep population increase, frenzied construction projects and the flourishing trade was the question "how long will this last and what will happen when it stops"? Indeed, the loss of so much farmland and its replacement by a sprawling military encampment altered Killeen's economic base at the most fundamental level. Camp Hood initially consumed some 300 farms and ranches – almost half of Killeen's trade region – eliminating most of the city's historic business trade with farmers and ranchers. The town's cotton gins and farm supply businesses had shut their doors and the city quickly changed its economic focus from agricultural commerce to military service. Most saw the boom years of the war as a temporary infusion of cash but little more. Most of the construction that had taken place at

²⁶ Bowmer 1976: 208.

²⁷ Fawcett, March 21, 2012.

²⁸ Buckley, March 21, 2012

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Camp Hood was deemed “semi-permanent” by the army – built of inexpensive materials and intended to last only five-to-ten years. Much of the building stock on the base was war-related, of course, and unsuitable for peacetime use. Still, few objected; the city’s economy was at least temporarily supported by the military presence.

Effect of Fort Hood: 1950

Killeen’s economy was barely sustained by the presence of the army in the immediate postwar era (1946-1949). Though little tangible improvement had taken place in the city’s built environment, its citizens relied on the military for its very existence. Then talk began to circulate that Camp Hood was scheduled for closure, a rumor supported by a sudden drop in troop strength from nearly 45,000, at the end of 1942, to only 4,000 personnel just after the war. Killeen’s future, once tied to agriculture, then to the military, looked bleak. The government’s condemnation of the surrounding farmland for military use generally precluded a return to an agricultural economy. It resembled a moonscape, its earth compacted and riddled with both spent and live mortar rounds. The sudden reduction in military personnel in the immediate postwar years led to a short but anxiety-filled Depression in the late 1940s.

In 1950, however, the town rejoiced when Camp Hood was re-commissioned as Fort Hood and designated a permanent base. The city’s population more than doubled almost overnight, from 1,300 in 1949, to 7,045 in 1950. The security of a permanent base inspired many townspeople and outside entrepreneurs to invest in Killeen resulting in a spate of new construction throughout the town. In a single year, 1950-1951, more than ninety-five new commercial buildings sprang up in the city, many in the downtown district. People still came downtown to do their grocery and other shopping in the early postwar years. Local stores were busy and included City Cash Grocery and Modern Food Store, built in 1951 or 1952. Modern Food Store, behind the old Methodist Church on 8th Street, was built at this time. It is currently occupied by a Korean Church.²⁹

Some postwar buildings were simple rectangular forms with broad storefronts. Good examples of Simple Postwar commercial buildings include the ones at 412 N. 8th Street (Photo 10) and 322 N. Gray Street (Photo 11). Many of the new commercial buildings, however, adopted a Modern style whose design contrasted sharply with the town’s earlier 1- and 2-part commercial buildings. Many of the new buildings featured irregular massing and streamlined styling that included projecting canopies supported by angled poles, off-center entrances, and abstract or “space-aged” signs and detailing. The old Bealls Department Store at 401 N. 8th Street (Modern TV and Appliance (Photo 12) and the former Post Office across the street at 402 N. 8th Street are good examples of the sleek, streamlined designs popular in the 1950s. Signs at 415-425 N. 8th Street and 315 E. Avenue C (Modern TV and Appliance), are rather abstract in their styling, as typical of 1950s commercial buildings. As more new businesses opened outside the town center, the importance of downtown diminished. Avenue D slowly became known for its dry goods, trinkets, and small-scale retail.

Other downtown stores included Hack’s Western Wear which sold hats, jeans, and boots. This store was earlier occupied by Bradley’s Café; the Masonic hall was upstairs. City Drug was the largest drugstore in town and Piggly Wiggly was one of the largest grocery stores. The original Modern TV and Appliance occupied small buildings at 315-317 Avenue C. Erected about 1927, 317 served as the Texas Employment Commission office while 315 was originally a blacksmith’s shop and later a cleaners. The Mills family, owner of Modern TV eventually outgrew the small buildings and several decades later took over an adjoining building. Robert “Bob” DeBolt operated Killeen Photography for many years. Estevan’s, on the south side of Avenue D, had a restaurant downstairs, a bar and patio in a courtyard at the rear, and a beauty shop upstairs. The Methodist Chapel was built next to the 1912 church building about this time.

Residential construction grew tremendously during the early 1950s. Subdivisions were platted on the edge of the city and the lots and blocks filled with new housing starts. William Yowell, along with his brother and cousin, foresaw the coming

²⁹ Bay, March 14, 2012

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

building boom and opened a lumber yard – the Little Lumber (Gross-Yowell) Company – in 1950. Because the military didn't supply family housing, Yowell and his brother went into the contracting business to house military personnel and their families. Cameo Homes supplied a lot of houses at that time and is still in business after 50 years. The brothers' principal business, however, was supplying materials for other contractors (Yowell, March 14, 2012).

Due to the permanent designation of nearby Fort Hood and the promise of continued work, Killeen's population continued to rise through much of the 1950s: by 1954, the city claimed 21,076 residents and 275 businesses, an overwhelming increase over the 1,300 residents in 1949. The city responded to the increase with new schools, hospitals, streets, and additional water and sewer systems to keep up with demand. Then, as happens in many military towns, troop reductions preceded another recession in the mid-1950s. The business economy did not rebound until 1959 when the First Armored Division reoccupied Fort Hood. Interestingly, Killeen maintained its population and businesses during the downturn; by 1960, the city counted 23,377 inhabitants and 275 businesses.³⁰ At that level, the city had enough permanent residents to sustain itself without being entirely dependent on the army base. As an inducement to the military, Killeen worked to establish Lake Belton, a manmade reservoir, as a permanent source of water.

The 1960s and the Demise of Downtown

Killeen grew throughout the 1960s in response to troop buildup for the Vietnam War. Its growing population warranted the construction of a new public library, city hall, police station, and municipal airport, financed by a 1963 bond issue. Four years later, another bond issue funded water, sewer, and street improvements, and provided for a Community Center. That year, the town received permission to build a junior college (Central Texas College), completed by 1970.³¹

While Killeen prepared for its future, it could not protect itself from cultural changes spreading across the nation in reaction to the war in Vietnam. Fort Hood had grown to become the largest military installation in the "free world,"³² possibly the entire world.³³ Soldiers prepared for deployment during the Cuban Missile Crisis in the early 1960s and performed advanced training for service in Vietnam as the decade wore on.³⁴ The fort's presence at Killeen's doorstep drew the ire of anti-war protesters, including Jane Fonda who made at least two appearances in Killeen and Fort Hood. The focal point for local dissidents was a coffee house known as Oleo Strut, a reference to a vertical shock absorber on the bottom of a helicopter. According to those who frequented the place, the café was a place to "absorb the shock" of training for war. The building and surrounding blocks of Avenue D reportedly became a center for drug use, drug peddlers, and prostitutes. In response, many legitimate businesses moved from Killeen's traditional downtown core to suburban locations. The loss of so many active businesses led to neglect and decay in the central city. Despite such daunting obstacles, downtown Killeen has the potential to once again attract visitors to its streets. A concerted effort to restore buildings to their historic appearances may lead to adaptive use such as a festival shopping venue or an educational center to showcase the city's historic past.

Killeen and Fort Hood Today

Killeen remains inexorably tied to Fort Hood. Killeen was a small, agrarian-based town in a largely rural and somewhat isolated part of central Texas before the advent of Camp Hood. With the establishment of the base and the removal of area farms, Killeen's entire economic foundation forever changed. Killeen might have flourished into the 21st century, but it is more likely that its role as a small agricultural hub would have rendered it a quiet, country by-way. The town's

³⁰ Leffler, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/KK/hdk1.htm>.

³¹ Bowmer 1976: 208.

³² Fawcett March 21, 2012.

³³ *The Guardian*, July 30, 1968 in http://www.sirnosir.com/archives_and_resources/library/articles/gau

³⁴ Yowell, March 14, 2012.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

growth and development to its present condition is largely based on its service to Fort Hood. As of 2010, its population had reached 127,921, making it the 21st largest city in Texas. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and into the early 1990s, troop increases or cutbacks affected the town's economic status but Fort Hood's fortunes ceased to be the only barometer of Killeen's economic vitality.³⁵

Fort Hood's presence has had a positive impact on social and cultural standards in the city and surrounding area. For instance, Killeen traditionally discouraged African Americans and Catholics from moving to the city; as late as 1950 no African Americans lived in the city. President Truman's mandate to integrate the military on July 26, 1948, led to Fort Hood's positive integration policy; the first African Americans moved to the area shortly afterward. Killeen followed suit and in the early 1950s, the city approved the plat for Marlboro Heights, an all-black subdivision. By 1956, the racial climate had improved so much that the school board voted to fully integrate the public high school. Over the course of the last half century, Fort Hood has been dedicated to racial parity and has done much to improve relations between African American, Hispanic, Asian, and other ethnic groups in Killeen. Likewise, people from all over the country and the world have contributed to Killeen's educational institutions, professional services, including healthcare, and cultural offerings such as artistic displays.

Architectural Significance

Commercial development, and significant civic construction, followed this grid pattern through the city's formative years, in the late-19th and early 20th centuries, continuing through the early years after World War II. Today, the city's largest concentration of historic-age commercial buildings lies in the Killeen Downtown Historic District. In addition, several churches, a historic railroad depot, and a small hotel lie within the boundaries. They reflect Killeen's development trends spanning more than half a century. Most of the buildings in the district are typical of their time—relatively simple 1- and 2-story stone or brick buildings – but together they form unbroken streetscapes of similar size, scale, massing, fenestration pattern and setback.

The oldest part of downtown Killeen is primarily comprised of one- and two-part brick or stone commercial buildings on deep, narrow lots, typical of late-19th century town development in central Texas. Several such buildings feature round-arched windows, corbelled brick, and Italianate brackets. Others are relatively plain one-story brick buildings, some with segmental arched windows, central entries, and decorative brickwork along the cornices. Cast iron pilasters stamped with floral designs appear on buildings along Avenue D and N. 6th Street, the main business blocks in the late 19th- and early 20th centuries. The Santa Fe Railroad depot is an architectural exception for this period. Built in 1913, it is strongly evocative of the Craftsman style, just then coming into vogue. It is of wood construction and features oversized triangle braces. The 1912 Methodist Church building is an excellent example of the Greek Revival style.

Architectural styles in Killeen changed as nearby Camp Hood was carved out of some 300 farms and ranches in 1942. The greatest architectural change came in the postwar era when numerous Modern buildings replaced dwellings or earlier commercial buildings in the downtown district. In the Killeen Downtown Historic District, such buildings tend to have low, horizontal profiles, with long expanses of red brick relieved by large, plate glass windows. Typically, they feature abstract or “modern” signs, some of which rise above the roofline or are free-standing near the main entrance.

Downtown Killeen features good examples of both late-19th/early 20th century commercial buildings and Postwar Modern architectural styles and types. In addition, it has excellent examples of religious (church), domestic (hotel), and railroad-related (depot) buildings in the downtown complex.

³⁵ Leffler, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/KK/hdk1.htm>.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Since Avenue D, just north of the railroad line, was the first commercial street, it is not surprising that the earliest commercial buildings front onto the avenue and adjacent blocks of Gray and N. 8th streets. Several of the earliest buildings are outstanding examples of their type. The Jeweler's Bank building is a load-bearing rusticated stone building with a corner site chamfered entry. It features large stone accentuated archways at the entrance and segmental arch windows on both the first and second floors.

Postwar Commercial Architecture

After World War II, the design of commercial buildings drastically changed. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, commercial buildings had highly decorated facades, with arches, friezes, contrasting brick, or rusticated stones. The entries and storefronts were often secondary to the decorative motifs framing their openings. Facades were symmetrical or arranged into distinct bays. Buildings from this early era commonly have compact, vertical compositions. Most blocks have several of these placed together in a row. Commercial buildings in the 1920s and 1930s were often simplified versions of these, with less decoration around storefronts but similar motifs. Midcentury commercial architecture, on the other hand, was characterized by asymmetrical facades, flat awnings, new materials such as aluminum, tile, and simulated stone, and expansive storefronts with the emphasis on the glass rather than the surrounding materials. Commercial strips in the postwar automobile suburbs often had larger buildings than those found in historic downtowns; this larger building type soon found its way into the downtowns as well. The result was a very different style of downtown commercial architecture than had previously been seen.

Wartime industrial production gave rise to cheaper manufacturing methods and an array of household technologies and consumer goods previously unobtainable. "New," "modern," and "efficient" items were seen as desirable status objects, and older models were discarded. The United States entered a new era of consumer culture previously unseen. The automobile also became ubiquitous during this time period, and with it came a new way of experiencing our cities and reaching our shopping centers. Signage and other building elements needed to be designed to be seen not just from eye-level but also from a moving car. Because of these factors, commercial buildings increasingly turned to Modern architectural motifs to attract customers.

Our modernized industrial capabilities also produced new building materials. Like their modern consumer-goods counterparts, the new building materials were equated with the new era of efficiency and industry and thus were valuable branding tools. Building technologies advanced far enough to make new designs possible, such as installing large sheets of plate glass with very little visible support, or installing mullionless glass corners with invisible clips. Designers of commercial architecture seized these new methods and created a new standard for commercial architecture that included emphasis on the storefront and visibility of the goods within. Often, the storefront windows were so large that passersby could view the entire store interior from the sidewalk. In other cases, illuminated, jutting glass boxes were incorporated to feature specific items and draw customers inside.

It wasn't just technological improvements that influenced design. The rising popularity of European Modern styles first found its foothold in the United States in the realm of commercial architecture. The bold, innovative designs were perfect for branding a business as fresh and modern. An added bonus was that the unique designs were highly visible to both motorists and pedestrians. Postwar design motifs are characterized by asymmetrical facades, often with angled storefronts or jutting, angled supports. Windows are large and dominate the façade. Entry doors are glass and aluminum. Multicolored or multi-textured facades are common; these use mixed materials such as brick, stone, tile, metal, stucco, or polished glass to create visual interest. Awnings are flat, often cantilevered, and are incorporated into the architectural design of the building. Awnings span entire facades and often wrap around corners, thus further emphasizing the building's horizontality. Parapets are low and usually unadorned save for a simple coping.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Signage on midcentury commercial buildings was an important part of the building design. The desire for branding and graphic identity led to a creative use of signage; in fact, the sign was often the most modern element of a commercial building. New materials such as plastic, aluminum, or neon were incorporated. Commonly, signs had internal illumination. New typefaces or cursive fonts were used to catch the eye of consumers. In some cases, signs projected above the level of the awning, or even above the parapet. Projecting signs were often arranged in a sideways fashion to be visible to a motorist driving down the street. These projecting signs often had cut-outs or shapes inspired by the era's popular space-age designs.

While there were many outstanding Modern commercial buildings incorporating all of these high-style elements, many midcentury buildings had some simplified version of the Modern motif. More modest Postwar commercial buildings were of brick construction with low unadorned parapets. A flat awning would serve as a functional decorative piece. These modest midcentury commercial buildings relied on a large glass storefront as their primary feature.

Examples of Simple Postwar commercial buildings that contribute to the historic district are found at 412 N. 8th Street (Photo 10) and 322 N. Gray (Photo 11). Good examples of Modern design in postwar buildings are found at 401 N. 8th Street (Modern TV and Appliance) and the former post office across the street at 402 N. 8th Street. Both of these large, sprawling brick buildings were built about 1955 and retain their original appearance to a great degree. These are representative of the types and styles of Postwar Modern commercial architecture in downtown Killeen.

Conclusion

Killeen has grown to be the largest city in Bell County, surpassing the county seat of Belton and the railroad hub of Temple. Suburban subdivisions, strip shopping centers, and malls spread out in all directions from the traditional downtown node. They largely reflect the domestic styles dating from the 1970s to the present fast food restaurants and big box retail stores. In the downtown district, however, late 19th and early 20th century buildings reflect Killeen's distant past as the center of a farming and ranching region, while Modern architectural styles dating from the 1950s and early 1960s showcase the city's relationship with the postwar expansion of Fort Hood. Both architectural genres are significant for their association with two distinct and significant periods of Killeen's historic growth and development.

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance starts in 1895 when the Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railroad arrived in the area and platted the townsite of Killeen on the railroad line. Dry goods stores, cotton gins, restaurants, taverns, and warehouses, crowded the streets with the onset of commercial brought by the railroad. A second boom occurred with the outbreak of World War II and the growth of nearby Camp Hood. Camp Hood became Fort Hood and Killeen continued its role as a military town. As Fort Hood grew into one of the largest army training bases in the world, Killeen grew to accommodate its troops and related personnel. Downtown Killeen remained viable as the main business center for both the city and the military base through the early 1960s. Because of this, the Period of Significance ends at the fifty-year point in 1964.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Bibliography

Written Sources

- Atkinson, Bertha. *The History of Bell County, Texas*. M.A. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1929. Belton, Texas: Bell County Historical Society, 1970.
- Bowmer, Martha. *Bell County Revisited*. Temple, Texas: Temple Jaycees, 1976.
- Briuer, Frederick L. "Fort Hood". <http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/qbf25.htm> <accessed January 2008.
- Connor, Seymoure V. and Mark Odintz. "Bell County". www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/BB/hcb6.html <accessed January 2008.
- Duncan, Gra'Delle. *Killeen: Tale of Two Cities*. Austin, TX: Eakin Publications, 1984.
- Killeen Daily Herald, *Newcomers' Guide*. Killeen, TX: October 29, 1995.
- Leffler, John. "Killeen, Texas". <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/KK/hdk1.htm> <accessed January 2008.
- Long, Christopher. "Belton, Texas". <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/BB/heb6.html> <accessed January 2008.
- Myers, Terri and Elizabeth Butman. *Belton Historic Resources Survey*. Preservation Central, Inc., 2005.
- Tyler, George W. *History of Bell County*. San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1936.
- Unforgettable Decade: Killeen, Texas and Trade Area 1930-1939*. Killeen-Project 1930s, Inc., 1993.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
Population Schedules, 1860-1870
Slave Schedules, 1860
Agricultural Schedules, 1880-1910.

Oral Histories

- Bay, Cleo. March 23, 2012
- Buckley, Annie Roe. March 21, 2012.
- Faucett, Juanita Lee. March 21, 2012
- Mills, Billy. May 11, 2012.
- Yowell, William Harper. March 23, 2012.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Section 10:

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the east edge of N. Gray Street, mid-way between the railroad tracks and E. Avenue D, proceed north/northeast along N. 4th Street to the northeast corner of the property boundary associated with 201-205 N. 4th Street, thence, proceed east to the southeast corner of the property boundary associated with 216 E. Avenue B, thence, proceed north/northeast to the northwest corner of the property boundary associated with 507 N. Gray Street, thence east/southeast to a point at the east edge of N. Gray Street, thence north/northeast on N. Gray Street to the rear property line of the Methodist Church complex, being the mid-way point on Avenue A between N. Gray Street and N. 8th Street, thence in a southerly direction to a point on the south edge of E. Avenue B, mid-way between N. Gray Street and N. 8th Street, thence east along E. Avenue B to the rear property line of 414 N. 8th Street, approximately mid-way between N. 8th Street and N. 10th Street, thence in a southerly direction along the rear property lines of 402-414 N. 8th Street, to a point on the south edge of Avenue C approximately between mid-way between N. 8th Street and N. 10th Street, thence west on E. Avenue C to the west edge of the intersection of N. 8th Street and Avenue C, thence in a southerly direction along the west edge of N. 8th Street, to the intersection of E. Avenue D and N. 8th Street, thence west along E. Avenue D to the northeast corner of 306-308 Avenue D, thence in a southerly direction along the east side of 306-08 to a point in Santa Fe Plaza Drive, thence west to the northeast corner of the Santa Fe Depot property, thence south to the southeast corner of the depot property, thence west to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Killeen Downtown Historic District were selected to include the largest number of relatively intact historic-period resources that reflect the city's most important development eras. The lines were draw to exclude blocks of noncontributing resources, both historic and nonhistoric, and vacant lots.

Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

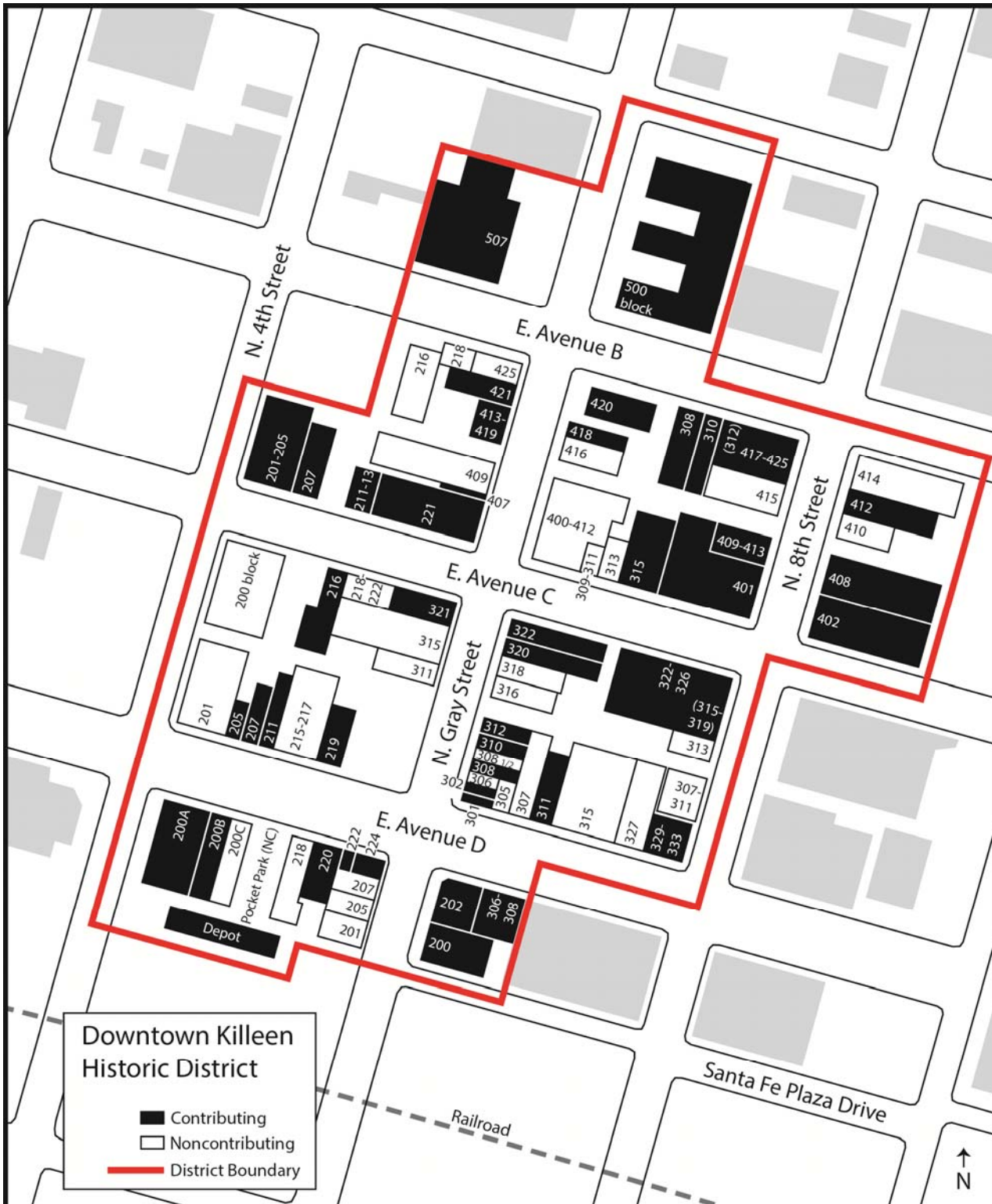
Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 31.122872° | Longitude: -97.727608° |
| 2. Latitude: 31.122567° | Longitude: -97.726401° |
| 3. Latitude: 31.120904° | Longitude: -97.725198° |
| 4. Latitude: 31.119306° | Longitude: -97.727432° |
| 5. Latitude: 31.119684° | Longitude: -97.729206° |
| 6. Latitude: 31.121711° | Longitude: -97.728559° |



Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

District Map



Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Historic Photographs
Avenue D at the corner of Gray ca. 1900



Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Avenue D looking west ca. 1910



Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Santa Fe Railroad Depot ca. 1910



Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

Methodist Church near completion, 1912



Killeen Downtown Historic District, Killeen, Bell County, Texas

300 Block Avenue D, looking southwest



-fin-



Designer Awards

207

SPORTS
RECREATION

BEAUTY & BARBERS
SUPPLY

PORT HODD REALTY
1977
Kilmer & Cunningham Bros.
EST. 1912-1922



KILLEEN

300-1738

City Engineer
Incident Commander

712-441

CHAMBER PARKING

CHAMBER



The Bishop's Place
Style Dining
11 am - 2 pm

ices
are
rolling
51

The Bishop's Place
Catholic Social Services & P.C. Hall
Monday-Friday 9:00am-5:00pm
Saturday 9:00am-12:00pm
Sunday & Holy Days 10:00am-4:00pm
254-535-0990



DONT
WALK

FOR
RENT

201

GIFT SHOP
213 E. AVE. C

FREEBIRD
BAIL BONDS
254-526-3733

211
24
HR SERVICE

FOR
RENT

한국보약
KOREA
한물상회
CELL 289-2737

C.Y. SHOP

한글약

한글약

한글약

한글약

한글약



224

SUN LIGHT
FASHION
699-6800



L'S
LERY

HOME OF THE
DREAM TEAM



wards

207

SPORTS
RECREATION
254-519-7679

BEAUTY & BARBER
SUPPLY

RESERVED
PARKING
ONLY



215



312

The Le...



네

한동네

ORIENTAL
FOOD
& GIFT'S

(254)
628-27



방
아

옛날짜장

짬뽕

KOREAN & CHINESE

722-TMC

IAAH

Z34-KFG

MUSTANG



THE DAILY GRIND / MICHIGAN BEANS COFFEE



HA
Q

HEA



Modern
TV and APPLIANCE

Modern
TV and APPLIANCE

Modern TV
and
APPLIANCE

8th St



AVENUE C

8th

American Building
254-628-0105

254-628-0105

254-628-0105

BEAUTY SUPPLY

Y & BARBEH
PPPLY



215

LIGHTING
ELECTRICITY

FORT HOOD REALTY
SPC
Killeen & Surrounding Areas
254-519-2228

CENTRAL TEXAS PROPERTY
MANAGEMENT
• PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
• LEASING
• RENTALS



