

1858



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

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**1. Name of Property**

=====

historic name Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad Bridge at the Leon River

other names/site number #36

=====

**2. Location**

=====

street & number @ Taylor's Valley Road [NA] not for publication

city/town Belton [NA] vicinity

state Texas code TX County Bell code 027 zip code 76513

=====

**3. Classification**

=====

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Contributing	
Property			
Noncontributing			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	_____	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Community Development in Belton, Texas, 1850-1945

Number of contributing resources  
previously listed in NR 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [XX] 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 [XX] meets [ ] does not meet the National Register Criteria. [ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official: 29 Oct 1990 [Signature] Date: 29 Oct 1990
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- [X] entered in the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register [ ] See continuation sheet.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
[ ] removed from the National Register
[ ] other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

for Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

Current Functions

TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

NO STYLE

Materials

foundation STONE: limestone

walls

roof

other Steel Truss

Concrete & Steel Approaches

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

[ ] See continuation sheet.

The Leon River Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad Bridge is a steel through truss railroad bridge supported on limestone piers. It crosses the Leon River east of downtown Belton in a lightly wooded area.

The Leon River MKT Bridge has a riveted steel Parker truss with a polygonal top chord divided by webbed vertical hangers into five segments with light diagonal struts; the top chord angles sharply down to the road base at both ends. The truss is supported on either side of the river on wide, rectangular-plan piers of large blocks of rough-cut limestone capped with a concrete lintel. The more recent approach spans are supported on composite piers of steel and concrete.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [XX] locally

Applicable National Register Criteria [XX]A [ ]B [ ]C [ ]D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) [ ]A [ ]B [ ]C [ ]D [ ]E [ ]F [ ]G NA

Areas of Significance Transportation Period of Significance c. 1900 - 1940 Significant Dates NA

Cultural Affiliation NA

Significant Person(s) NA Architect/Builder unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. [ ] See continuation sheet.

The MKT Railroad crossing of the Leon River, established at the location of this bridge in 1882, provided Belton's most direct transportation link with the outside world from the 1880s through the first World War. Contextually the bridge relates to Community and Regional Development, specifically illustrating the economic stimulus and development brought to Belton in the 1880s by the railroad. The bridge is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A, significant in the area of Transportation, for its direct association with the Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad and its important role in the Belton economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Missouri, Kansas & Texas (MKT) Railroad is believed to have built this bridge between 1900 and 1915 to replace 1882 and 1890 trestles at this location. The MKT was the second railroad to serve Belton, but was particularly important to the development of the town because the Santa Fe Railway had bypassed the town to the north in 1881, in favored Temple as their rail center for Bell County. This was a bitter disappointment to the town of Belton, which had provided financial incentives to attract the Santa Fe. (For more information on railroad service see Historic Context.) Belton's survival as a market and processing center was dependent on getting a railroad link directly into town. By offering an attractive financial package Belton got the MKT Railroad to build a branch line from its line through Echo, south of Temple, with the branch terminating downtown, two blocks north of the courthouse square. Although not as desirable as being on a main railroad line, the MKT branch line was critical to Belton's survival as a town. It made it possible for Belton to continue to operate as a market center (although soon surpassed in importance by Temple) and specifically to develop as a processing and transportation center for the shipping of cotton, the mainstay of the Belton economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The MKT Railroad Bridge is significant for its association with this with this branch line and as an example of early 20th century bridge engineering.

9. Major Bibliographical References

[ ] See continuation sheet.

Please see bibliography accompanying context statement "Community Development in Belton, Texas, 1850-1945."

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA
[ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
[ ] previously listed in 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:
[XX] State historic preservation office
[ ] Other State agency
[ ] Federal agency
[ ] Local government
[ ] University
[ ] Other
Specify repository:
Texas Historical Commission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

UTM References

A [14] [646500] [3436700]
Zone Easting Northing
C [ ] [ ] [ ]

B [ ] [ ] [ ]
Zone Easting Northing
D [ ] [ ] [ ]

Verbal Boundary Description

[ ] See continuation sheet

The width of the MKT right of way over the Leon River, including the bridge structure and its approach trestles.

Boundary Justification

[ ] See continuation sheet

Includes the entire bridge structure as constructed.

11. Form Prepared By

(based on research by Sally Victor, Victor & Victor Consultants)
Name/Title Chris Long, Historian (with Tory Laughlin Taylor, Architectural Historian)
Organization Texas Historical Commission, NR Programs date August 1990
Street & Number P.O. Box 12276 Capitol Station telephone 512-463-6094
City or Town Austin state TX zip 78711

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JAN 7 1991

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

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Amendment to the Historic and Architectural Resources of Belton, Texas:  
Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad Bridge at the Leon River (Site 36)

### 10. Geographical Data

UTM Reference A [14] [648560] [3437360]

GILBERT  
200-944-00  
LANCASTER BOND  
100% COTTON FIBRE

11/14/90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Belton MPS Bell County, TEXAS

	Date Listed
22. Harris, Capt. Andrew Jackson, House <u>Substantive Review</u>	12/26/90
23. House at 402 N. East St.	12/26/90
24. House at 730 N. Beal St. <u>Substantive Review</u>	12/26/90
25. Hudson, Dr. Taylor, House	12/26/90
26. James House	12/26/90
27. Kinchion, L. B., House	12/26/90
28. Lee, Walter J., House	12/26/90
29. McWhirter, George and Martha, House	12/26/90
30. Means, V. R., House	12/26/90
31. Miller, J. I., House	12/26/90
32. Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad Bridge at the Leon River <u>Substantive Review</u>	12/26/90
33. Morey House	12/26/90
34. Mount Zion United Methodist Church	12/26/90
35. Naismith, Robert, House	12/26/90
36. Potts, Arthur, House	12/26/90
37. Venable, W. J., House	12/26/90
38. Ware, H. A. and Helena, House	12/26/90

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90001898 Date Listed: 12/26/90

Missouri, Kansas & Texas RR Bridge      Bell      TX  
Property Name                                      County      State

Historic and Architectural Resources of Belton, Texas  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for* *Austin G. Lee*  
Signature of the Keeper

12/27/90  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

**Location on USGS Map:** This property, listed as Site #36, apparently is mis-located on the map (over the Nolan Creek). The Texas State Historic Preservation Office will send a copy of the map with the correct location.

This information was confirmed with Bruce Jensen of the Texas State Historic Preservation Office.

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DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad Bridge at the Leon River

MULTIPLE NAME: Belton MPS

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Bell

DATE RECEIVED: 11/14/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/30/90  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/16/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/29/90  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90001898

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: Y SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 12/26/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Missouri - Kansas + Texas RR Bridge at the Leon River is significant for its association with the critical railroad link between Belton and its surrounding markets. Constructed in 1900 to replace earlier trestles, the bridge allowed for Belton to <sup>continue to</sup> operate as a processing and transportation center for the shipping of cotton.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept/A  
REVIEWER Antoniella Lee  
DISCIPLINE History  
DATE 12/26/90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR (Y) N

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CLASSIFICATION

\_\_\_count      \_\_\_resource type

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STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

---

FUNCTION

\_\_\_historic      \_\_\_current

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DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_architectural classification  
\_\_\_materials  
\_\_\_descriptive text

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SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

\_\_\_summary paragraph  
\_\_\_completeness  
\_\_\_clarity  
\_\_\_applicable criteria  
\_\_\_justification of areas checked  
\_\_\_relating significance to the resource  
\_\_\_context  
\_\_\_relationship of integrity to significance  
\_\_\_justification of exception  
\_\_\_other

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

\_\_\_acreage      \_\_\_verbal boundary description  
\_\_\_UTMs      \_\_\_boundary justification

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ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

\_\_\_sketch maps      \_\_\_USGS maps      \_\_\_photographs      \_\_\_presentation

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OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Site No. 584  
Address Leon River near TV Road  
View se oblique

Belton, Texas  
Historic Sites Survey, 1985  
VICTOR AND VICTOR CONSULTANTS, INC.  
P.O. Box 26189  
AUSTIN, TEXAS

HISTORIC & ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES of BELTON, TEXAS  
LEON RIVER MKT RAILROAD BRIDGE  
LEON RIVER AT TAYLOR'S VALLEY ROAD  
BELTON, BELL CO., TEXAS  
CAMERA FACING SOUTHEAST  
NEGATIVE WITH CONSULTANT

PHOTO 36 OF 38

HISTORIC & ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES of BELTON, TEXAS  
JAN 7 1991  
BELTON, BELL CO., TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCES: REFER TO CONTINUATION SHEETS



Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500627



## **Texas Historical Commission**

**To** Toni Lee                      **Date** 1-3-91

**From** Marlene Casarez - National Register Programs

**Re** Historic and Architectural Resources of  
Belton, Texas - Bell County, Texas

Bruce Jensen asked me to forward Continuation Sheet 10-1 of the above referenced nomination, indicating the location of the Missouri, Kansas, & Texas Railroad Bridge at Leon River (Site 36).

Please let us know if additional information is needed.

Thank you.

**RECEIVED**  
JAN 07 1991

**NATIONAL  
REGISTER**