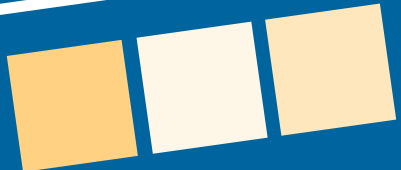




CALVERT CITY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014



Created by the residents of Calvert City, Kentucky with assistance from the Kentucky League of Cities.



WHAT IS THE CALVERT CITY STRATEGIC PLAN?

The City of Calvert City and the Calvert City Planning Commission began the process of updating its Comprehensive Land-Use Plan in the summer of 2013. Several initial steps were taken in order to obtain input from local residents as to the future of the community. In addition to numerous personal interviews and site visits, several public meetings were held to gather input from the residents of the city including a group of local high school students.



During the public meeting, residents were encouraged to talk about their current concerns of the community. They were also invited to visualize what they would like to see in terms of future development, and to indicate where they believe new development should occur.

One component of the Comprehensive Plan update is a section for recommended implementation strategies. The city took this opportunity to create a more detailed Strategic Plan that would lead to greater public participation in shaping and creating the city's future. This document is the result of those public sessions.



Calvert City – A Look Back in Time



Calvert City is located in Marshall County in the Jackson Purchase area of Kentucky. As early as 1820 there were several ferries in operation along the Tennessee River, carrying people to this new land as it was laid off in parcels. The city was named for Potilla Calvert who selected a site in 1853 to build his home, about 1½ miles from the river. At the time of his purchase, he agreed to donate land to the Paducah and Elizabethtown Railroad, if it would stop near his home. The company agreed and named the station Calvert City.

The city was incorporated in March 1871. Shortly after its incorporation as a city, it was estimated that Calvert City had a population of approximately 200 citizens. The first mayor was John Taylor, a blacksmith and the Town Marshal was Pete Summers. By 1894, there were several businesses making Calvert City a commercial center for the farm families living in the northern part of Marshall

County. These included two general stores, a drug store, a blacksmith shop, mechanic shop, railroad depot, hotel, mill, two churches and two doctor's offices.

Education was deemed important early on as three local men took a public subscription in 1868 and built the first log school building. In 1900 a two story frame building was built near the railroad. In 1918, the principal of the existing school challenged the community to expand to include classroom instruction at the high school level. She proposed that 50 percent of the cost be raised by the community and the remainder be paid for by the Board of Education. The residents responded quickly and the existing building was remodeled and enlarged into a six-room structure. The class of 1922 was the first year of high school graduates.

An interesting moment of history occurred in 1979 when the nation was watching with great

Calvert City – A Look Back in Time

concern how the Iranian Hostage Crisis would evolve. Fourth grade students of the Calvert City Elementary School wrote letters to President Jimmy Carter and the local mayor, asking that the national and community Christmas trees not be lit until the crisis in Iran was resolved. Senator Wendell Ford read the students' letters to congress, and as a result, the event was recorded in the December 13, 1979 issue of the *Congressional Record*.

A community telephone service was established in the early 1900s. However, electric power did not reach the community until the early 1930s.

The historic flood of 1937 changed the lives of many Kentuckians, but its aftermath had an immense impact on Calvert City residents with the development of Kentucky Dam. There were over 5,000 men employed by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) at the time of the construction, providing a real boost to the local economy. The flip side was the displacement of many families that were forced to move from their homes.

This new facility controlled flooding of the city and the region, and offered cheap hydroelectricity to the region. Kentucky Dam was completed in October 1945. With Calvert City being located along the Tennessee River, it didn't take long for industrial developments to occur. A manufacturing and chemical complex arose on the Tennessee River, just below the dam. Commonly referred to by locals as "the Calvert plants," these industries provide hundreds of jobs for area workers.

Early industries included the Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Co, established in 1948 and later

became the Pennsalt Corporation. It was later renamed the Pennwalt Corporation. This company was soon followed by Pittsburgh Metallurgical Co., Inc., later known as Airco Alloys. The National Carbide Company soon followed as did BF Goodrich, opening a polyvinyl chloride plant within the same time frame. Other chemical manufacturing facilities such as American Aniline, Air Products and Chemicals, and GAF Corporation followed in the decade of the 1950's.

Calvert City grew up along the railroad from its earliest days. With the new developments wrought by the dam construction, this area became known as "Old Calvert," and new neighborhoods began to emerge. This new neighborhood was known as Adamstown. In time, other neighborhoods developed as the chemical plants opened and offered good wages for local workers.

Since its earliest settlement, most residents had made their living from farming or some type of agriculture. Once Kentucky Dam was built, within a 20-year period, the community's top two economic engines became industry and tourism, with agriculture a distant third.

In 2013 the leaders of Calvert City still tout its strategic location with industrial river access, mainline rail and interstate highway interchanges, as the premiere location option for industry. They suggest that all modes of transportation that link Marshall County with the world, must pass through Calvert City.

Information gathered from these sources:

History of Marshall County, Kentucky, (Benton, KY: Marshall County Genealogical Society in collaboration with Dave Turner and Associates Publishing), 1948.

New History of Kentucky, Lowell H. Harrison and James C. Klotter, (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky), 1997.

www.calvertcity.com

What Citizens Said

Community Listening and Design sessions were held on September 16, 2013, March 20, 2014, and May 8, 2014. A Student Listening and Design session was held at Marshall County High School on January 23, 2014. The community discussed these questions:

What makes Calvert City unique?

- ◆ Large industrial next to large recreational
- ◆ Great schools
- ◆ On the river
- ◆ River/rail/interstate
- ◆ Small-town feeling
- ◆ Land (use) diversity

What are the strengths of the city?

- ◆ Good place to raise family
- ◆ Close to lake and Paducah
- ◆ Variety of churches
- ◆ Equidistant between big cities
- ◆ Enough necessity shopping
- ◆ Great recreation opportunities
- ◆ Sound infrastructure
- ◆ Safe feeling
- ◆ Low housing cost
- ◆ Great city parks

What are the weaknesses of the city?

- ◆ Lack of recreation for youth
- ◆ Lack of high paying jobs
- ◆ Lack of retail growth
- ◆ Affordable housing for young/aging families
- ◆ Perception of industrial pollution
- ◆ Population decline
- ◆ Job loss/outflow
- ◆ No incentive for youth to stay
- ◆ City school compared to county
- ◆ Indifference

What are the opportunities of the city?

- ◆ Economic growth due to infrastructure
- ◆ Increase civic involvement/education
- ◆ More restaurants (sit down family, "cheddars," better hours)
- ◆ Expand tourism
- ◆ More industry (20-50 jobs)
- ◆ Medical center
- ◆ Develop fire services
- ◆ Spend on community
- ◆ Proximity to interstate/lake/rail
- ◆ Fiber tech infrastructure
- ◆ Golf cart/bike paths (more friendly/safe)
- ◆ Expand gas and sewer service

What Citizens Said

- ◆ Curtail water expenses
- ◆ Reduce tap on fees
- ◆ Expand medical services
- ◆ I69/I24 increase traffic and development
- ◆ City promotion/PR
- ◆ Tourism (state park partnership)
- ◆ Housing stock
- ◆ Alcohol
- ◆ Increase school prestige/enrollment
- ◆ Use racetrack
- ◆ Expand sidewalks
- ◆ Highway/public safety
- ◆ Loss of schools and doctors
- ◆ Environmental, water, air standards getting tougher
- ◆ Perception of highway 95
- ◆ Manual labor opportunities
- ◆ Entertainment or lack thereof (for adults)
- ◆ Awareness/signage
- ◆ People don't care
- ◆ Lack of civic pride

What are the threats to the city?

- ◆ Perception of increase in crime/drugs
- ◆ Plant closure
- ◆ Lack of property for new housing
- ◆ Regressive mindset towards expansion
- ◆ Perception of getting people off interstate
- ◆ Natural hazards (earthquake)
- ◆ Lack of emphasis on entrepreneurial spirit/economic diversity
- ◆ Age/investment of housing stock
- ◆ Failure of growth
- ◆ Employment layoff
- ◆ Youth retention
- ◆ Evening ghost town feeling
- ◆ Commuter population increase

The Vision: What We Saw

A Design session was held as a part of the public input process. More than 80 citizens worked in teams to create a visual image of Calvert City in the future.



- ◆ Better signage
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Recreation trails
- ◆ Branding the city
- ◆ River access
- ◆ Local food
- ◆ Groundwater protection
- ◆ Water/spray park
- ◆ Connection to state park

Community Core Values



- ◆ Family-Oriented
- ◆ Good Education
- ◆ Small-town Feel
- ◆ Strong Faith-based Community
- ◆ Diversity of Outdoor Resources
- ◆ Sense of Place
- ◆ Safety

What Students Said!

A Listening and Design session was held with a group of Marshall County High School students who reside in Calvert City. They shared their ideas and vision of Calvert City.

What We Like

- ◆ Lakes
- ◆ All-American, wholesome place to live
- ◆ You can walk everywhere
- ◆ Revolution
- ◆ The drive-in
- ◆ Parks
- ◆ Library
- ◆ Recreation opportunities
- ◆ Country Club
- ◆ Something for everybody
- ◆ The community cares about us

What We Want

- ◆ Bowling alley, movies
- ◆ BBQ at the Lake
- ◆ Festivals
- ◆ Special community events
- ◆ Utilize the stage at the park more often
- ◆ Shopping
- ◆ Family restaurants
- ◆ Newer apartments for young adults

The Big Picture

Creating a Diverse Future for Calvert City

As Calvert City looks toward its future, new opportunities and realities have the potential to change the economic dynamic of the community. In order to sustain the city's growth, the revenue base will need to be carefully examined and retooled. Three areas of potential for maximizing the city's potential and minimizing the risk of

unforeseen change in the future are available for development. They are:

- ◆ Become A Recreational Trail Hub
- ◆ Become the Most Beautiful City in Kentucky
- ◆ Become a Thriving Local Economic Center



Reality Check

Calvert City is fortunate to have an abundance of natural and economic resources. For the past several decades, the city has benefited from the visionary leadership of local leaders. With sustained success comes challenges – apathy, comfort and unrecognized shifting realities. Calvert City needs to embrace these challenges so that prosperity will continue for future generations. Here are the challenges:

- ◆ Industry-based Economy
- ◆ The Comfort Zone
- ◆ Getting Smaller
- ◆ Getting Older



The Big Picture

Reality Check



Industrial Realities

- ◆ A great economic engine
- ◆ Low unemployment
- ◆ Susceptible to “all the eggs in one basket” syndrome
- ◆ Young people don’t see opportunity
- ◆ Jobs could leave
- ◆ Outside perceptions

The Comfort Zone

- ◆ Apathy among residents
- ◆ Things will always be this good
- ◆ City is cash flush
- ◆ Let’s wait
- ◆ Missed opportunities



Getting Smaller

- ◆ Calvert City’s population is declining
- ◆ Continued decline expected through 2030
- ◆ Shrinking workforce
- ◆ Young people leaving and won’t return (though they’d like to)

The Big Picture

Getting Older

- ◆ Median age is 44
- ◆ Largest population segment will retire before the 2020 census
- ◆ Number of citizens over 65 living alone has tripled in the last 10 years



We Recommend

So What Should Calvert City Do?

- ◆ Refocus
- ◆ Reinvent
- ◆ Reimagine

Create a Second Economy!

We recommend that Calvert City refocus some of its economic development efforts on a "second" economy that is built on entrepreneurship, tourism, recreation and leisure. With the potential to annex Kentucky

Dam Village State Park, the city can provide many local activities that improve the quality of life for its residents first. Then, the community can reimagine its future as a tourist destination through connecting trails, "whole community" marketing and provide amenities that no other city in the region can offer. The key to success in this endeavor is to fully leverage the small-town atmosphere that is the essence of Calvert City with the appeal of a huge playground at KDV. The city and state park must fully merge their assets and strengths to build a new brand.

Recreational Trail Hub

Connect Calvert City to the Lakes, River and Paducah

- ◆ Create a “Green Line” trail to Kentucky Dam Village State Park, the Tennessee River and Paducah
- ◆ Create a “Green Line” Trail Center on Main Street
- ◆ Link all three city parks to Green Line and each other



Leverage Kentucky Dam Village

- ◆ Bring the Village to Calvert City – Annex
- ◆ Embrace KDV as a fully-integrated part of the city
- ◆ Create a brand that ties the city and KDV
- ◆ Focus on advantages for local residents first
- ◆ Turn “local tourism” into “global tourism”



Alternative Transportation

Many local residents already use alternative modes of transportation including:

- ◆ Bikes
- ◆ Walking
- ◆ Golf Carts

One idea was to implement a “Complete Streets” plan. This concept may be possible in limited areas.

One alternative for narrow streets in older neighborhoods might be traffic-calming design in strategic locations. The city can easily test this concept by installing temporary buffers using 2x4 boards and building out from the curb. This method would be inexpensive and allow the public to provide feedback to the city.



The Most Beautiful City

Develop Calvert City Art Trail

Commission public art at key intersections creating a loop around town

Calvert City in Bloom



Plant wildflowers along the interstate ramps that bloom from mid-March to mid-May



Plant flowering trees on the art trail loop – that bloom from mid-March to mid-May



Thriving Local Economy

Position Calvert City as the “authentic” place to stay and visit in the region

- ◆ Build an economy catering to visitors
- ◆ Places to stay – locally owned B&Bs, micro-hotels
- ◆ Places to eat - restaurants featuring local food
- ◆ Create a community market
- ◆ Develop wayfinding plan for visitors



Create a City Center Focal Point

Spruce Up 5th Avenue



- ◆ Leverage relation to outdoor activities (biking, hiking, hunting, fishing, water sports) to build small businesses
- ◆ Outfitters, guides, equipment sales and repair, locally made gear
- ◆ Develop education curricula and mentorship programs to assist youth in developing businesses that support the brand identity
- ◆ Utilize access to high speed POP 3 to attract tech-based startups – sell small town quality of life in an outdoor setting with great education for children
- ◆ Recruit people with business ideas to further brand identity

Fulfill Local Needs

- ◆ Identify local service gaps
- ◆ What necessities for local residents and businesses are not provided locally
- ◆ Create list of job types that are needed and could be created locally



Thriving Local Economy

Address Medical Needs

- ◆ Is elder care being addressed sufficiently
- ◆ Need more medical specialists locally – perhaps a Physician’s Assistant
- ◆ Urgent Treatment Center
- ◆ Career training and opportunities for career paths locally



Address Housing Needs

- ◆ Start with a Housing Study
 - What’s needed?
 - Who is interested?
 - Where to build?
 - Price range?
 - Who are the local developers?
 - Are townhouses/condos the answer?
 - Can the community capture the upscale market?

Think BIG!

From the Port to the Park

Eco-Park at the River

- ◆ Develop an “Eco-industrial Park” concept for land designated by the Port Authority
- ◆ Connect this Eco-Park to I-24



Airpark at the State Park



- ◆ Work with the state to negotiate a sale of the airport to a private company
- ◆ Facilitate development of a “Western Kentucky International Airpark” cargo facility that links multi-modally to the existing industries in Calvert City as well as in the new Eco-Park

In Conclusion...

Calvert City has the leadership, resources and vision to successfully maneuver through the challenges of the 21st global economy. By taking appropriate steps now, the community can diversify its economy and minimize the impact of any market or financial shift. We appreciate and value the many individuals who took time to provide us information and participated in the listening and design sessions. We especially want to thank the city officials for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Calvert City. We also appreciate our design partner, Steve Austin, for his incredible conceptual photos and guidance throughout this process.

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Kentucky League of Cities

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