

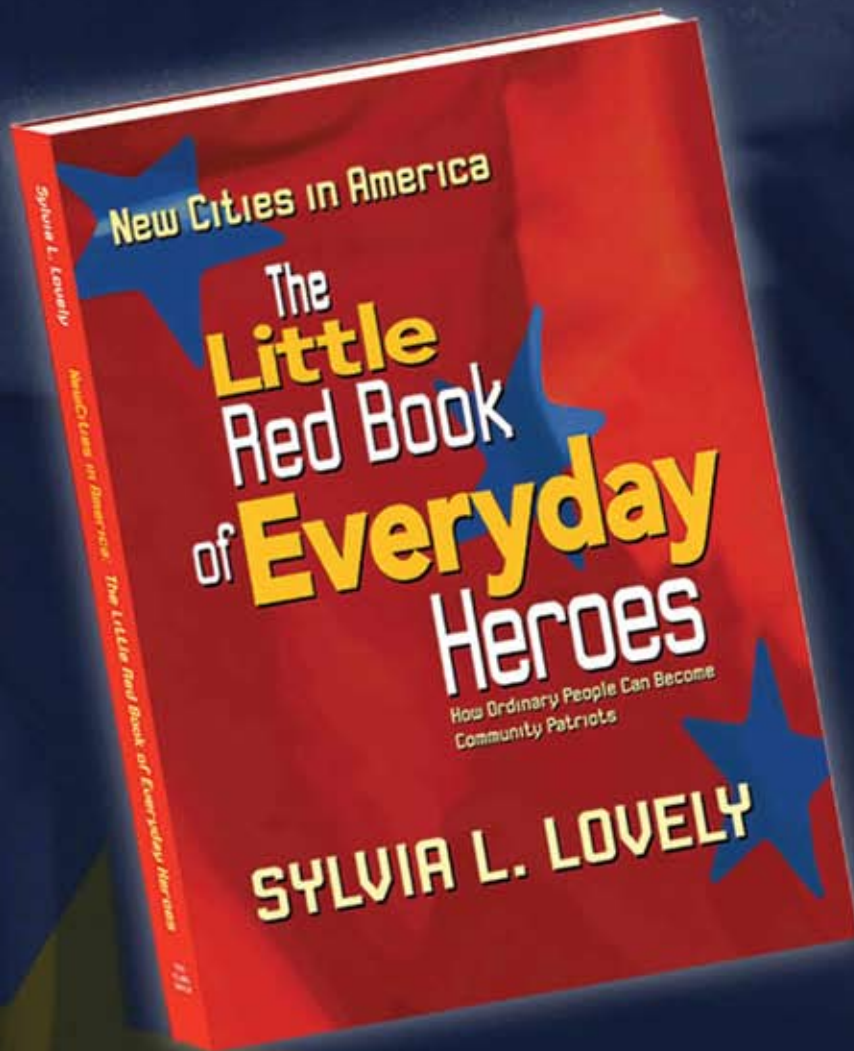
City

THE COMMUNITY ISSUES MAGAZINE OF THE
KENTUCKY LEAGUE OF CITIES WINTER 2008

City Budgets: Tough & Tightening



*Presented by Sylvia Lovely
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City CONTENTS

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FEATURES



8 Strained City Budgets

A growing demand for services and limited options for raising revenue are combining to strain city budgets across Kentucky.

BY DIANA J. TAYLOR



16 Homeless Kentuckians

The economic decline is leaving more Kentuckians somewhere they never thought they'd be—without a home.

BY TERRI JOHNSON



20 Preventing Homelessness

Identifying and addressing the causes of homelessness is the focus of new state programs.

BY AMANDA HERMANN

DEPARTMENTS

CITY SCAPES



2

CITY LEADERS



4

CITY BUSINESS



6

CITY SCENES



14

CITY PERSPECTIVE



24

CITY CENTER



26

CITY SCHOOLS



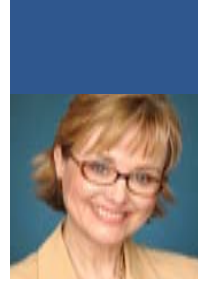
28

CITY BITS



30

Kentucky
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A young Kentuckian offers a review of his hometown

Jordan Roberts, a sixth-grader at Grandview Elementary in the Bellevue Independent school district, recently shared an essay he authored about the appeal of his hometown.

The insights of this 12-year-old citizen offer yet another reason for those of us involved in improving community life to be optimistic about the future.

Following are excerpts from Jordan's work.



Jordan Roberts

...

I think Bellevue is a great place to live, and that is why I am proud to call this city my home. ...

I think one of the neatest things about this town is that it can be considered the "melting pot" of Northern Kentucky, just like New York is often called the melting pot of the United States. By this I mean that this small river town of about 6,480 people has a huge variety of residents, different religions, different ethnic backgrounds, different social classes, different incomes, different professions and many different races, including White, Native Americans, African Americans, Pacific Islanders, Asian, Hispanics, Latino and other races.

Bellevue also contains a wide variety of attractions and activities, and if it isn't found inside the 0.9 square miles of the city, you can bet it can be found nearby. Nearly everyone can walk to where they need to go and if that

isn't possible, the TANK bus passes right through the city.

For religious and spiritual needs, this town offers Catholic, Protestant and other Christian places of worship.

We have our own grocery store that is part of a big regional chain and a popular (party supply) store. ... Retail shops run from very reasonable prices all the way to more expensive items. ...

Restaurants also vary a great deal and can satisfy even the pickiest of eaters. We have the popular fast food places ... but we also have (restaurants) which offer a sit-down meal with outdoor seating overlooking the

Ohio River and a great view of the Cincinnati skyline.

Everyone has the choice of either a public school or private Catholic schools so that all kids can get a good education. Personally, I think Grandview is the best school, but that's probably just because I go there!

Everything a person could need or want is right here; you would never have to leave the city if you didn't want to. There are hair salons, old time barber shops, an animal hospital, doctors, dental care, pharmacies, medical massage shops, a craft store, our very own bead shop where you can make your own jewelry, a coffee shop, an embroidery store, public parks, sports, free concerts in the park, lawyers, a top-rate police and fire department, car repair shops, insurance companies, tax places, a pretty famous ice cream and candy shop, great yearly fireworks, a place where people can go if they need help such as food and shelter, a funeral parlor (although I hope no one



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The Kentucky League of Cities (KLC) is a voluntary association of cities, created in 1927, to assist municipal officials in representing the interests of cities and to provide services to members which will foster improved local government in Kentucky.

KLC provides a forum for its 370 local member cities across the Commonwealth to address their common needs, challenges and opportunities. Some service program divisions of the League include: legal assistance, group insurance plans and risk management services, capital financing and management services, training and leadership development, downtown and economic development programs, information and research services.

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will have to go there for a long time), and just about anything else you can imagine!

The Ohio River provides numerous activities such as water skiing, jet skis, and boating. Another reason Bellevue is great can be summed up by using the real estate term, "location, location, location!"

Newport on the Levee offers top-rate entertainment, dining, movies and a cool aquarium. The Purple People Bridge not only provides a walkway to Cincinnati, but also gives people a chance to climb to the top of the bridge.

We are close to the Cincinnati Bengals Stadium, the Cincinnati Reds stadium, and US Bank Arena, which gives people the chance to see concerts, sporting events, ice skating exhibitions, rodeos, motor cross, monster truck shows and the circus.

Being located just minutes away from the interstates, we also have access to hospitals, Coney Island, Northern Kentucky University and even a YMCA! So, although we benefit from small-town appeal, we are right across the river from a major city and we can have access to museums, a wide variety of arts and great job opportunities.

A family could live in anything from a small cottage, a 100-year old house that has been fixed up, all the way to a million dollar condominium on the Ohio River. ...

Even though Bellevue provides many practical reasons as to why people should raise a family here it is also the special fun factor that

makes it even more appealing. It gives special meaning to the words "live, love, and laugh" that proves life is more than just existing. It is also about playing, fun and friendship.

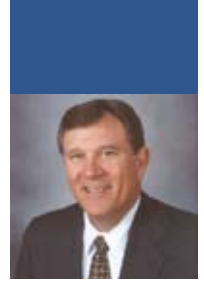
It isn't just all the things that I've listed that make Bellevue a special place. It is that this is a community

and a community that has heart. Most people know each other and are willing to help others out. This is a community where the whole town supports our sports teams, whether it is football, basketball, baseball, cheerleading or any other sport. Parents donate their time to help coach the children in this city, and there is always a person willing to lend a hand if someone needs help.

No matter where you live, it can never be perfect. But I think Bellevue comes pretty close, and that is why I am proud to call it my home.

I think Bellevue is a great place to live, and that is why I am proud to call this city my home.





Strong cities essential for Kentucky's future

Cities don't always get recognition for the important role they play in the state, but cities have acted as a hub for government, business, arts, culture and education since the very beginning of Kentucky.

At least seven cities were already established before Kentucky even became a state in 1792. These cities sprang up near forts and were the primary organizing force at the local level.

More than 200 years have passed, and even though a majority of Kentucky's population lives in cities, many people still think of this as a rural state. Cities are now home to an estimated 2.2 million people—53 percent of the population. Just 50 years ago, only 37 percent of the population lived in incorporated areas. Simply stated, the people and the action are in cities.

Cities in Kentucky create the most economic opportunity for the state. Almost three in four Kentuckians are employed in cities. Daytime populations increase 27 percent as more than 100,000 people commute into cities to work. More than \$7 billion of retail sales occur in second-class cities alone, representing 16 percent of the total retail sales in the state. The 2007 "State of the South" report noted that Southern metro areas have accounted for 87 percent of total job growth in the region since 1980.

In addition to serving as the economic engines for the state, cities provide many services that reach beyond their borders. Local governments provide services that are not always noticed by citizens because they have become an expected part of life.

Building sidewalks, maintaining sewers and ensuring public safety are just a few of the numerous services that citizens receive from their city

governments. These services affect not only those within city limits but also have a ripple effect throughout a region. Until things go wrong, the day-to-day functions of city government are usually invisible to the public.

Cities typically house area colleges, universities, theaters, museums, art galleries and conference centers. There are more than 5,000 arts-related organizations in Kentucky, which are the source of more than 22,000 jobs. Kentucky cities are home to about two-thirds of the state's art, recreation and entertainment establishments. Almost all public colleges and universities in Kentucky are located within city limits.

Today, cities find themselves

In addition to serving as the economic engines for the state, cities provide many services that reach beyond their borders.

in a precarious position with overwhelming budget demands coupled with outdated revenue sources. Cities face huge unfunded deficits in employee pension plans that were mandated by state government. Funds that could be used for local projects and programs are being siphoned off to cover these costs as well as federal mandates to clean up the environment.

Clearly, unless something changes, it is unlikely that Kentucky cities will have the resources to attract new business and industry and the workers they employ. If history has taught us anything, it is that Kentucky's future depends on the

success of its cities. The state cannot afford to ignore its cities' needs.

Kentucky faces many challenges. Despite the millions of dollars spent on education, we still trail most of the nation in education attainment rankings. Despite significant success in recruiting manufacturing jobs, we remain near the bottom in per capita and household incomes.

Despite building a broadband network that covers much of the state with high-speed Internet access, we continue to place near the bottom in technology and entrepreneurial rankings. Clearly another strategy is going to be necessary for us to climb out of this statistical basement.

Creating world-class economic regions that contain strong cities, coupled with our existing efforts in education and technology, I submit, is our most likely solution. If we have in this state the kinds of places that attract young workers and educated workers, we improve our chances of changing for the better.

How can Kentucky make this happen? How can we create world-class regions and world-class cities?



We must have state policies that help cities grow and prosper. We must have state policies that provide cities with the tools they need to become the kinds of places that can compete in a global marketplace. We must use our scarce resources in ways that have the most significant impact on improving the entire state.

An example of a state policy that hinders the growth of cities is the current constitutional restriction against giving citizens the right to authorize a local sales tax to finance the programs or projects they want in their communities.

Kentucky is one of only 14 states and the only state in the Southeast that does not allow local governments to use a local sales tax for such purposes. In the competitive global market, it will be important that cities and their citizens have tools like this at their disposal.

These kinds of citizen tax initiatives, if approved by the voters, impose the tax only as long as necessary to pay for a project or program. Such an approach has been used effectively by cities around the country to make improvements to roads and sidewalks; build community centers, parks and playgrounds; and other needed facilities.

Recent reports from Frankfort make it clear that state government is going to have to make cuts to meet its own budget. How likely is it that the projects and programs you need in your community today are going

to be funded by the state? I think we all know the answer. It is time to begin making the changes necessary to help our cities prosper and grow in the future, so we can develop strong economic centers that can give all Kentuckians a great environment in which to live, work and play.

We have a great state, with tremendous beauty, hard-working people and great potential. We cannot afford to wait. We need to act now to move this state forward.

Sarah Razor, Government Affairs and Policy Communications Specialist for the Kentucky League of Cities, contributed to this article.



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City LETTERS

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100 years and growing: Dawahare's an established Kentucky tradition

Kentuckians are very familiar with tradition and its importance to the state and its citizens. Whether its Wildcat basketball, horse racing at Keeneland, enjoying some bourbon or a special family gathering, things in, from or about Kentucky have special meaning to the people who call the commonwealth home.

For the Dawahare family, the tradition of the past 100 years has been associated with offering clothes to Kentuckians across the state.

The Dawahare tradition began with Serur Frank Dawahare, born in 1888 in a small village near Damascus, Syria. Close to the turn of the 20th century, he left his home country to escape religious persecution and came to New York, where he met his wife, Selma.

With Selma's family connections in Virginia, the couple was able to relocate to eastern Kentucky. Although coal mining was a customary means of making a living in that place and time, Dawahare had a different idea. He decided to peddle merchandise to homes in the coal camps, leading to the opening of his first clothing store in Jenkins.

He and Selma later moved their family of 11 children to Neon and opened a larger store.

"My grandfather had a great dream," said Richard Dawahare. "He wanted one of his sons to go to Harvard, one son to become president and each to have their own store."

Serur Dawahare prided himself on befriending the people in his community, and he had a strong love for America as well as Kentucky. His attitude prompted a positive response from people, helping his business to grow.

Now, his descendants are carrying on the tradition he established as

Dawahare's continues to grow as a statewide brand – with stores in 31 Kentucky towns and cities today.

And as the Dawahares move into their 100th year of business, they have no plans to change their practices. Of particular importance is the family's tradition of supporting communities through chamber of

"My grandfather had a great dream," said Richard Dawahare. "He wanted one of his sons to go to Harvard, one son to become president and each to have their own store."

commerce memberships or charitable contributions to organizations such as the United Way and the Salvation Army.

Reaching the 100-year mark in business is a significant achievement, particularly in an industry that shows signs of deterioration.

"Small, locally owned businesses are becoming a thing of the past," said Richard Dawahare. "(But) we have the upper hand when it comes to fulfilling our customers' wants and needs. Our business is small enough to where we can listen to our customers and meet their requests promptly and accordingly. National businesses may have the advantage when it comes to more customers, but they cannot meet their needs as quickly as we can."

Advances in technology won't



mean broad changes in the company's business practices, noted Harding Dawahare, president of the Dawahare Corp.

"We are not going to be the leaders in new technology, but we will use it

"We have enough people in every age group within our market to continue being successful. The aging population will not have an effect on that."




to our advantage." A planned upgrade of cash registers, for instance, came after using the same model for 20 years.

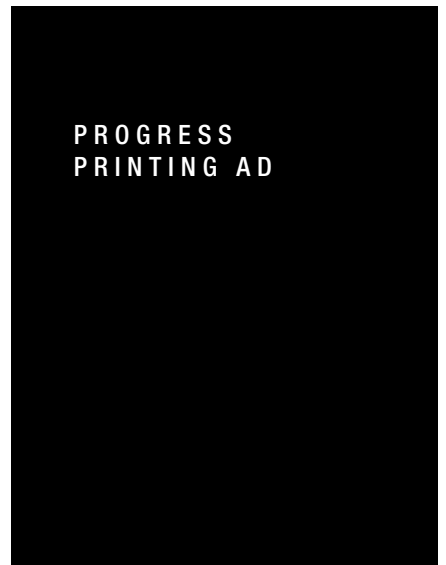
Technological assistance aside, customer service is the highest priority, the Dawahares noted. "You need to know the consumers and how well you are able to give them what they want," Harding Dawahare said.


And societal changes, such as an aging population, aren't

expected to have a negative impact. "Grandmothers want to be trendy," Richard Dawahare noted. "We have enough people in every age group within our market to continue being successful. The aging population will not have an effect on that."

The company expects growth to continue. "There are still towns where we currently do not have a store, and we plan to utilize the state's full business potential, as best as possible," Harding Dawahare said.


As a result, Kentuckians can expect the strong tradition of Dawahare's to continue for many years to come. 






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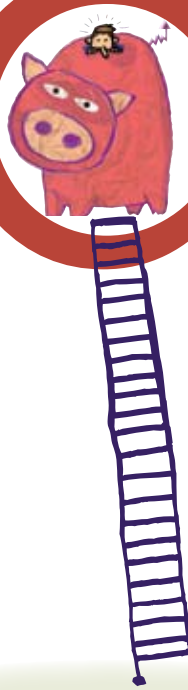
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City budgets being strained to the

max...

An illustration of a pig wearing a red hoodie, climbing a purple ladder that is leaning against the letter 'a' in the word 'max'. The pig is positioned inside the 'a', and the ladder extends from the ground up to the top of the letter. The word 'max' is written in a large, bold, red font, followed by three red dots.

BY DIANA J. TAYLOR

Here's the situation.

Many cities across Kentucky are up against it when it comes to funding services to meet citizens' needs. In fact, it wouldn't be surprising if city leaders had engaged in some collective head nodding when the details of state government's current budget and revenue challenges emerged in early January.

The checklist of problems includes several that are familiar to mayors and councilmembers statewide:

- ✓ Rising employee insurance and benefit costs
- ✓ Overdue infrastructure upgrades or maintenance
- ✓ Limited options for raising revenue
- ✓ Employee insecurity spawned by budget issues

"We can dream boldly. We can spend wisely. But the truth is that a day of reckoning is coming," Louisville Metro Mayor Jerry Abramson noted in his budget address for the 2008 fiscal year.

That day of reckoning is dawning in more and more Kentucky communities.

Just a few months after Abramson's prediction, revenue projections showed that Louisville Metro government would be \$9 million short of its budget in the current fiscal year. According to media accounts, the mayor asked department heads to cut their budgets by 3 percent and 5 percent and to consider all options, including layoffs.

In Lexington, increased sewer fees are on the agenda as the city works to correct long-standing problems with its storm and sanitary sewer systems. A consent degree was being reviewed

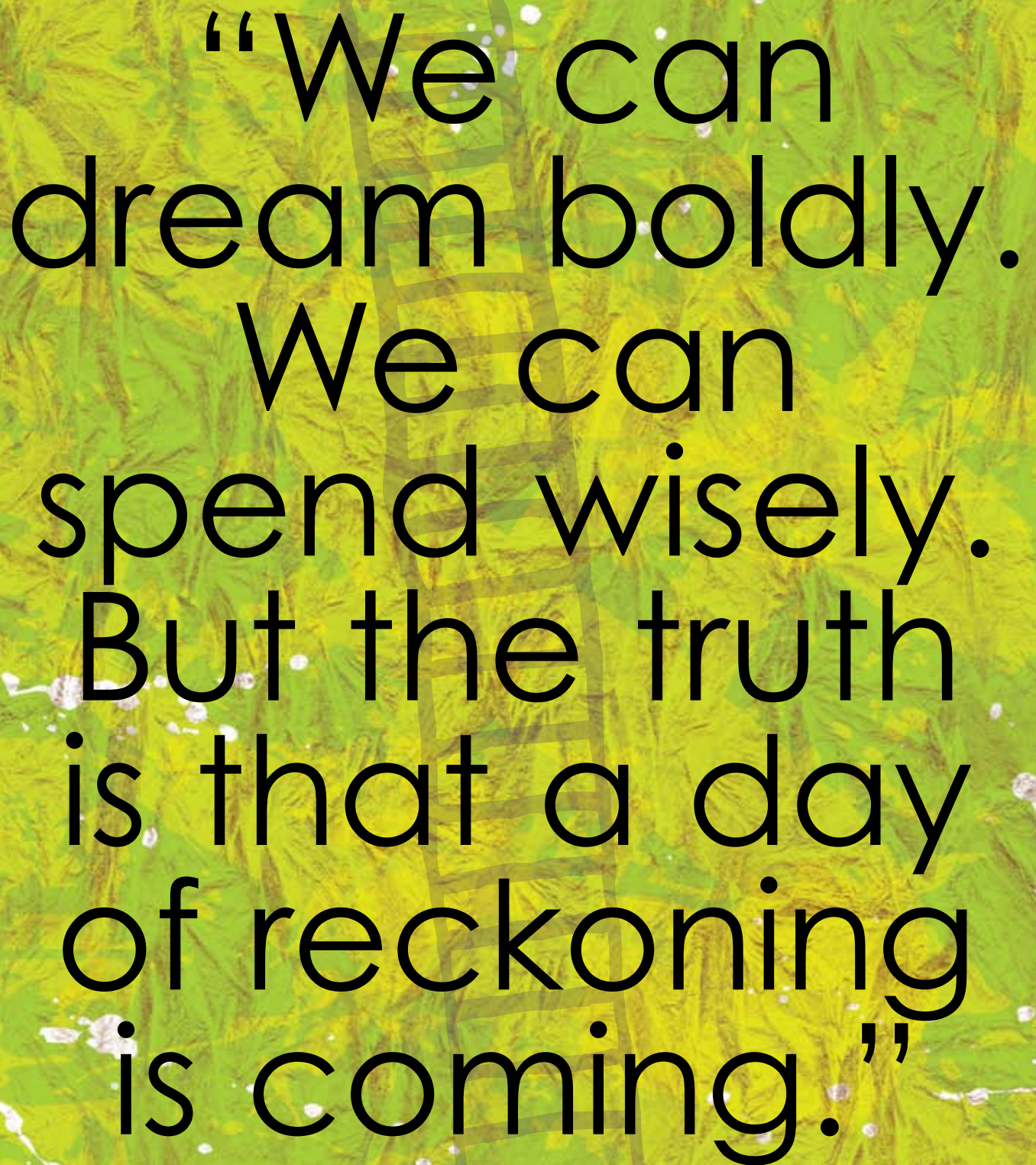
in late January as part of the city's settlement negotiations with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency over Clean Water Act violations.

Smaller cities are confronting similar budget challenges, some related to infrastructure, others with different causes.

Maysville city commissioners recently approved a \$200,000 storm sewer contract to address compliance issues raised by the state under pressure from the U.S. EPA.

And the midpoint of the fiscal year found Georgetown facing a deficit of almost \$500,000, according to an account in the *Georgetown News-Graphic*.

Mayor Karen Tingle-Sames told the newspaper that the city's financial woes have been a problem for years, but the focus is on providing services.



“We can
dream boldly.
We can
spend wisely.
But the truth
is that a day
of reckoning
is coming.”

"Even though this could create some hardships for the city, it is my intent that we utilize any and all solutions that won't adversely affect the citizens," she said.

When Hopkinsville Mayor Dan Kemp approached the end of his first year in office, he told the *Kentucky New Era* in a December 2007 interview:

"Then the first six months of the year the big 900-pound gorilla in the room was the budget problem. I tried every way in the world to avoid using the "T" word, the tax increase word, because I did not want to propose that and I know that none of the council wanted to vote for that and the public, at least most of the public, needed to be informed on what the facts were. ...

"We had to examine all of the options

that we had for money-saving measures, and we had to convince the public and the council in the final analysis that we didn't have any choice because of pension costs and other issues and the necessity of maintaining an adequate public safety element. ..."

The mayor pointed out that public safety represents two-thirds of his city's

payroll and that payroll is the largest part of city expenses. His experience mirrors the spending pressures on other communities across Kentucky and the nation.

According to data compiled by the Kentucky League of Cities, cities spent more collectively on public safety than on general government in five of the six fiscal years from 2000 to 2006. Personnel costs increased by 59 percent between fiscal 2000 and fiscal 2006. During that time, expenditures for wages and salaries increased by 50 percent while fringe benefit costs increased by 90 percent.

Nationally, according to a National League of Cities survey, city finance officers predict slow revenue

growth of only 0.4 percent this year while expenditures are expected to increase by 3.5 percent. "Spending pressures stem from increased public safety and infrastructure needs as well as increasing employee-related costs for health care, pensions and wages," the national organization noted in an October 2007 *Research Brief on America's Cities*.

The health care and pension cost increases are particularly acute in Kentucky, where cities are required by law to contribute specific amounts to their employees' retirement accounts – and health insurance is the primary cost driver of rising retirement costs.

Most full-time city employees are enrolled in the County Employees Retirement System, a defined-benefit program created in 1958. Unlike contribution rates for state employees, which are approved by the General Assembly and frequently differ from actuarial recommendations, cities' contribution rates to CERS are established by the Kentucky Retirement Systems Board of Trustees. The increases in recent years have been substantial.

The employer contribution rates

"Then the first six months of the year the big 900-pound gorilla in the room was the budget problem."



differ for hazardous duty employees (police officers, firefighters and emergency medical staff) and non-hazardous duty employees.

In fiscal 2004, cities were required to pay 18.51 percent of a hazardous duty employee's salary into the retirement system. The contribution rate for fiscal 2007-08 is 33.87 percent.

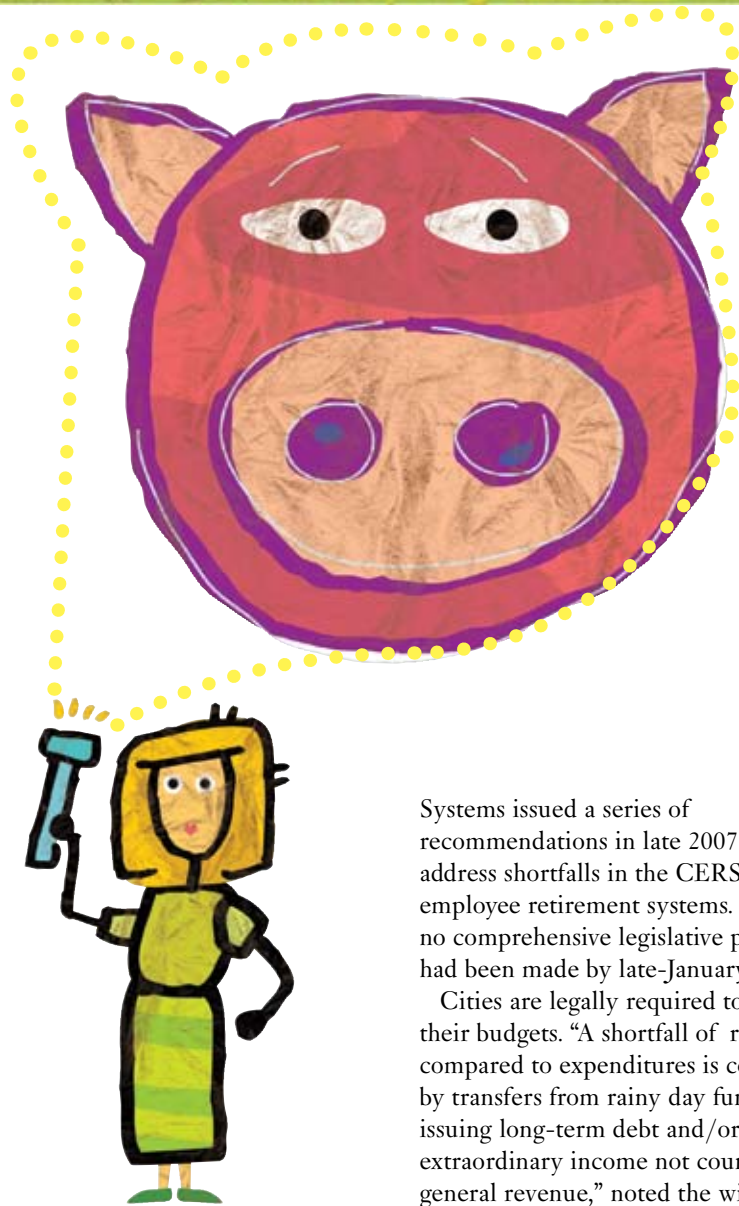
For non-hazardous duty employees, the contribution rate was 7.34 percent in 2004; this year it is 16.17 percent.

The cumulative impact on cities' budgets is measuring in the millions of dollars. Some examples:

- Covington needed \$1 million more this year to cover its CERS contribution.
- Elizabethtown's cost went up by \$500,000.
- Louisville Metro faced a \$12 million increase.
- Williamstown's costs will more than double in 10 years.

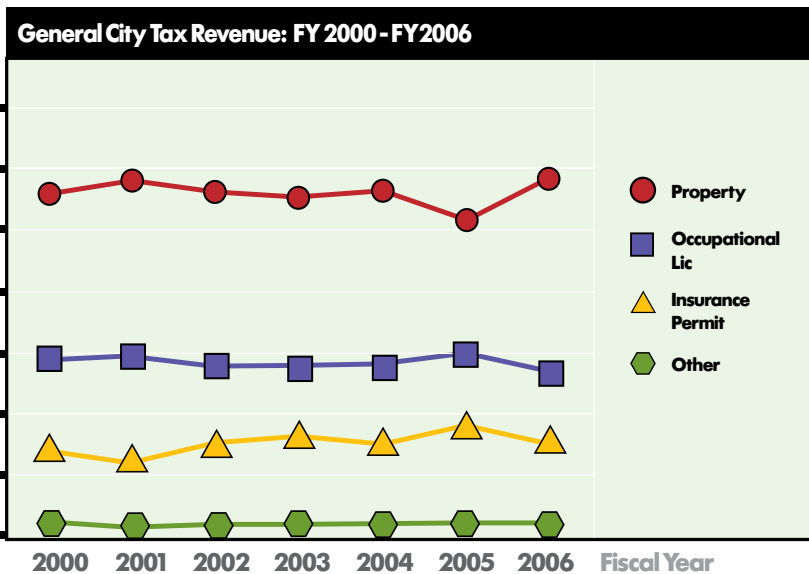
A Kentucky League of Cities survey found that more than 40 percent of its members who responded had to draw down rainy day or surplus funds to cover the increased CERS contributions for 2007. And personnel costs, including health and retirement benefits, now account for more than half of cities' collective general expenditures.

The state Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Employees Retirement



Systems issued a series of recommendations in late 2007 to address shortfalls in the CERS and state employee retirement systems. However, no comprehensive legislative proposals had been made by late-January.

Cities are legally required to balance their budgets. "A shortfall of revenues compared to expenditures is covered by transfers from rainy day funds, issuing long-term debt and/or receiving extraordinary income not counted as general revenue," noted the winter 2007 issue of KLC's *On Point* research report. "This could be part of the reason why



Data analyses and graphics were conducted and developed by Joseph W. Coleman, Policy Resource Manager for the Kentucky League of Cities.



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Kentucky cities collectively face a record amount of long-term debt."

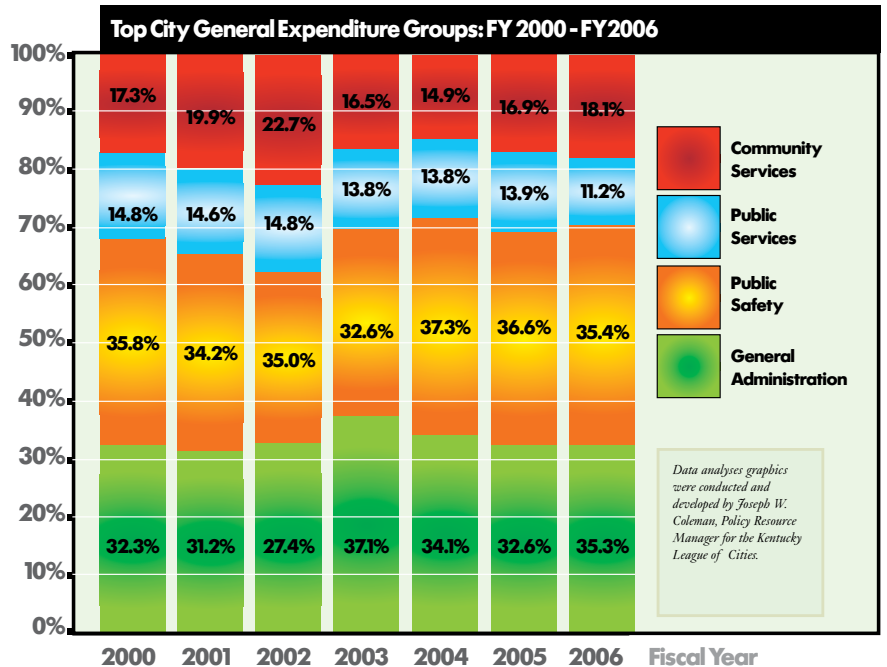
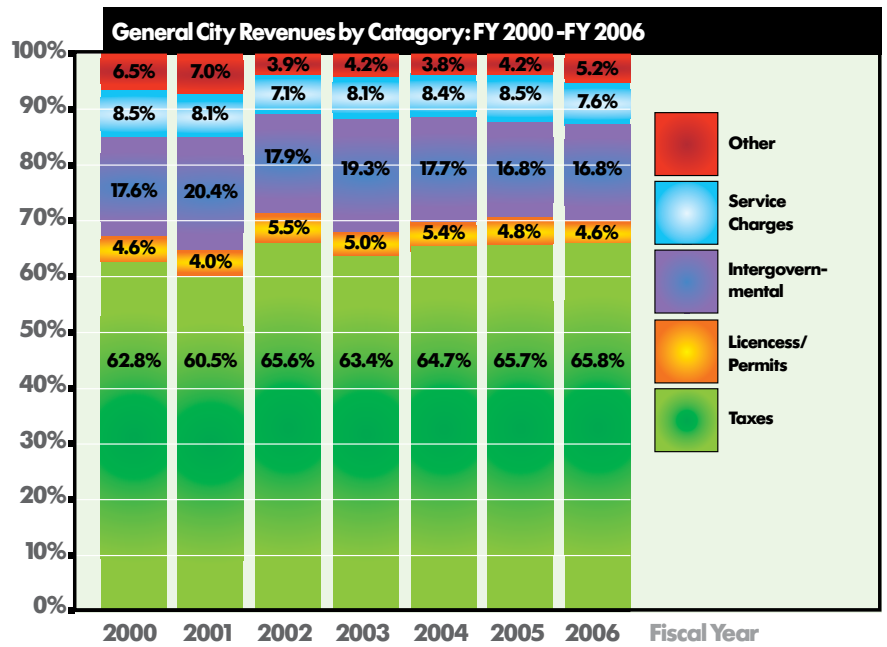
The Governor's Office for Local Development reports that cities' outstanding debt totaled \$4.75 billion in fiscal 2005—up from \$2.9 billion in fiscal 1998.

"While debt is not bad public policy – it can help finance much needed capital construction projects – local

leaders will have to deal with increasing debt service payments for years to come," the research report noted.

Cities' revenue-raising options are limited by law and the state constitution to three basic areas: insurance premium taxes, property taxes and occupational license fees. But a city's classification affects its taxing options.

Only cities of the fourth and fifth



classes (with populations ranging from 1,000 to 7,999) may levy a restaurant tax, for instance, and that revenue must be earmarked for tourism promotion and development purposes.

Property tax revenues are limited by legislation that has arguably the best-remembered number in recent history: House Bill 44. That 1979 law allows a public referendum on a property tax rate that would produce a revenue increase of more than 4 percent.

Such limitations have prompted cities to rely more heavily in recent years on occupational license fees, such as payroll taxes, and insurance premium taxes. (Cities of the sixth class, with populations of 999 or less, are not permitted to levy a payroll tax but may impose a flat business license fee.)

In its June 2006 report, the legislatively created Task Force on Local Taxation said amending the state constitution is “the most necessary and significant change that must be made for Kentucky to develop a modern, efficient local tax system.” The amendment suggested by the task force would allow the



Amending the Constitution “is the most necessary and significant change that must be made for Kentucky to develop a modern, efficient local tax system.”

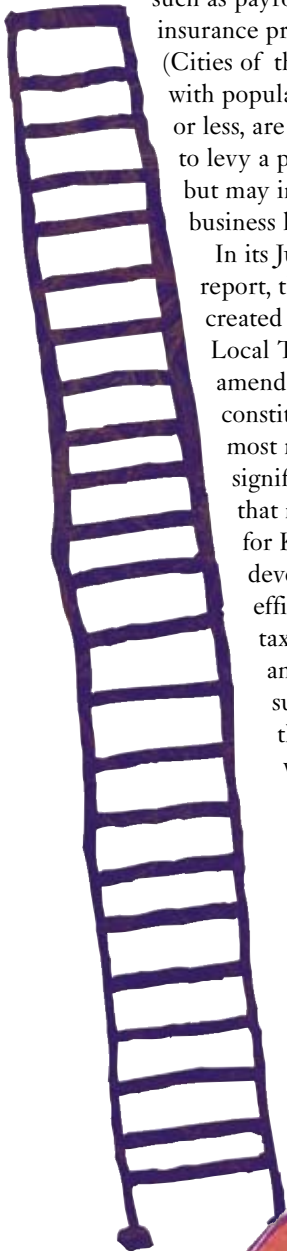
state legislature to expand the taxing authority of local governments and provide local governments with a larger share of state revenue collected at the local level.

KLC is among the organizations supporting a constitutional amendment on local revenue options during the current legislative session.

An amendment providing for community approval of a local sales tax “simply would give citizens the ability to vote on a new way to pay for projects and programs that they support in their own communities,” KLC Executive Director/CEO Sylvia Lovely wrote in a recent opinion column.

The tax would only be implemented following passage of a local referendum that specifically earmarked the tax revenues for a project or program. The tax would be levied only long enough to pay for that project or program.

“Clearly, unless something changes, it is unlikely that Kentucky cities will have the resources to attract new business and industry and the workers they employ,” KLC Deputy Executive Director Neil Hackworth writes in this issue’s City Leaders column. “If history has taught us anything, it is that Kentucky’s future depends on the success of its cities. The state cannot afford to ignore its cities’ needs.”



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VICTORIAN HOMES OF LOUISVILLE

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AN URBAN AND RURAL REALITY: HOMELESSNESS COMMON IN SMALL TOWNS AS WELL AS LARGER COMMUNITIES

BY TERRI JOHNSON

As the housing market shrinks and other economic fluctuations take their toll, more Kentuckians are finding themselves somewhere they never expected to be – without a home. And these Kentuckians are from urban, rural and suburban areas – a reality that contradicts the stereotype that a homeless person is a man sleeping on a big-city sidewalk or park bench.

Here's another myth-buster: the average age of a homeless American is 9 years old.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact number of homeless people in any given area. But, based on the data that is available, about 20,000 people are homeless at some point every year in Kentucky.

Nationally, the U.S. Department

of Housing and Urban Development estimates that from 600,000 to 1.3 million people are homeless at any given time and that up to 3.5 million experience homelessness at some point during the year.

The HUD estimate is based on "Point in Time" surveys that provide one-day snapshots of the number of

**THE AVERAGE AGE
OF A HOMELESS
AMERICAN IS 9
YEARS OLD.**

people using homeless shelters and other services. In 2007, the 24 largest American cities participating in the survey, including Louisville, spent more than \$420 million collectively on services for the homeless.

The fastest growing segment of the homeless population in Kentucky and the nation is single mothers and children. Also on the rise is the number of working homeless – people who have jobs but who cannot afford permanent shelter. Victims of domestic violence who are homeless now outnumber the mentally ill and chronically homeless, according to Point in Time data for Kentucky.

And while urban homelessness is more concentrated and visible, rural homelessness is also increasing.

Rural homelessness mostly unseen

People who work with homeless programs note that some homeless people choose to remain as "invisible" as possible. But others are hidden because they are forced to find shelter in less-public places such as cars and abandoned buildings or with friends and relatives.

Whatever their level of visibility, the growing homeless population is putting pressure on community programs and services, particularly in rural communities trying to meet the challenges of geographic isolation, restricted service capacity, a diminishing number of farms, a lack of jobs and the limited availability of affordable housing.

"Poverty and the lack of affordable housing are the main contributors to



homelessness for the clients we see,” said Marilyn Smith, executive director of Gateway House in Morehead, a facility that shelters individuals and families and primarily serves Bath, Carter, Elliott, Fleming, Meniffee, Montgomery, Morgan and Rowan counties.

“Although housing costs are lower in rural areas, so are incomes. When a family lives on a fixed income, any type of unexpected expense, even a car repair, can cause them to lose everything they have.”

Smith said “couch surfing”—moving from the home of one friend or family member to another—is a growing type of homelessness. Adding to the frustration is the fact that many rural households are also in trouble, with more than 30 percent experiencing one or more serious problems that endanger the health or safety of their inhabitants.

“It also means more mouths to feed and creates additional personal and financial burdens for those trying to help,” Smith said.

Urban issues

In Kentucky’s metropolitan areas, the cost of living is higher than in other parts of the state, placing additional stress on the housing system. Louisville’s 2007 Point in Time

survey revealed that 17 percent of the respondents were not technically homeless the day of the survey but expected to be evicted within seven days.

An earlier survey estimated that more than 28 percent of the homeless in Louisville were working, but one-third of them were earning less than \$10 per hour – not enough to pay for a two bedroom apartment that typically rents for more than \$550 a month, according to HUD.

Urban areas see more homeless people with mental health and drug-related disabilities; nearly 30 percent of the Louisville survey respondents stated they had more than one disability.

The number of homeless women,

particularly those with children, continues to rise in urban as well as rural areas. Fifty-nine percent of those completing the 2007 Louisville survey were women.

Veterans also comprise nearly one-third of the national adult homeless population. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the number of homeless Vietnam-era veterans is greater than the number of servicemen and women who died during that war. In Lexington, 12 percent of the clients of the Hope Center are veterans; the center provides more than 12,000 meals and shelters approximately 200 men a month.

Walter May, director of special projects, said that 61 percent of the Hope Center’s clients experience substance abuse while 25 percent suffer from mental illness and many experience both. May, like most who work

with the homeless, said multiple factors land people at the center.

“Lack of affordable housing is the macro issue,” he said.

Lost opportunities

Clearly, homeless individuals and families bear the heaviest burden, but homelessness also presents economic challenges for all levels of government, health care providers

and, ultimately, taxpayers.

A *New England Journal of Medicine* report noted that homeless people spent an average of four days longer per hospital visit than comparable non-homeless patients; the additional cost amounted to approximately \$2,400. Another cost driver was the admission rate among homeless people for psychiatric hospitalization, which was more than 100 times the non-homeless rate.

People who are homeless also spend more time in jail for such crimes as loitering. A University of Texas two-year survey of homeless individuals found that each person costs taxpayers \$14,480 per year, primarily for overnight jail stays.

Emergency shelters across the

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nation are at or beyond capacity, and their services are a costly alternative to permanent housing. An emergency shelter bed funded by HUD's Emergency Shelter Grants program,

for instance, is more costly than the average annual subsidy for federally supported housing.

Perhaps the greatest cost to society is the impact of homelessness



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on children. According to the state Department of Education, the number of homeless students in Kentucky increased by 61 percent in four years.

Winifred Gallagher's book, *The Power of Place*, describes how children's surroundings begin to shape their lives, their personalities and their social and emotional development from their earliest moments. They associate sleep, concentration and fun with places like home, school and the playground. When children lose the stability of places, they suffer.

In *Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Homeless Children and Families in Small Town America*, author Yvonna M. Vissing provides a poignant example of the impact on one little boy. "I miss my house and yard," he said. "We had a dog, but we had to get rid of him when we moved. ... I miss my friends. ... I want to go home."

Homeless students struggle in school. Tired, stressed and frequently absent, they typically are about two grade levels behind their peers in academic performance, according to the Kentucky School Boards Association.

An astonishing study in New York City public schools showed that 79 percent of homeless children scored at or below the 10th percentile compared with children of the same age in the general population.

Kentucky schools are required to designate a homeless child education coordinator in each district. Additionally, schools have made efforts to better identify homeless students in recent years by training teachers, cafeteria workers and bus drivers on how to recognize the signs

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HOMELESSNESS IN THE **VIRTUAL AGE**

www.Homelessnation.org is a gritty Canadian-based web site where homeless individuals, primarily teenagers and young adults, blog and videoblog about resources, send messages to each other and share their disappointments and dreams.

The site was started by a filmmaker whose work documenting street kids in Montreal prompted his subsequent work with social service organizations.

Social scientists and service providers say homeless people, particularly in urban areas, share a unique sense of kinship. A sense of belonging and some level of control are two of the many things homeless people feel they've lost in larger society. Now www.Homelessnation.org outreach teams work in shelters, food centers and on the streets, giving homeless people a literal voice – online.

of homeless children. Schools also work with churches, community services and even mail carriers to locate and enroll homeless children.

School officials say parents are sometimes reluctant to enroll their children in school for fear that they may lose them.

Building a foundation for change

Kentucky launched a "Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness" in January 2006, as detailed in an accompanying article in this issue of *City*. As a result of that effort, Kentucky communities have intensified their efforts to address the problems that cause homelessness.

"All of us have to look at homelessness and its implications realistically," said KLC Executive Director/CEO and NewCities Institute President Sylvia L. Lovely. "It's a quality of life and economic development indicator, not just a social services or law enforcement issue."

As homelessness continues to take its toll on people and places, community leaders and professionals are realistic, yet hopeful.

In Covington, City Manager Jay Fossett noted that the city is working with agencies that serve the homeless to consolidate their efforts. "The city certainly recognizes that we have to address the issue of homelessness and organizations that serve the homeless see the value in us all working together," he said. "We're optimistic."

To review the results of Kentucky's latest Point in Time survey and for more information, resources and ways to help fight homelessness in Kentucky, visit the Kentucky Housing Corporation web site, www.kybousing.org

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ADDRESSING THE ROOT CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS

BY AMANDA HERMANN

The definition of homelessness, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, is lacking access to safe, affordable and permanent housing. A chronically homeless person is an unaccompanied individual who has been homeless for a year or more or who has been homeless at least four times in the past three years.

One-quarter of the national homeless population is considered chronically homeless, but they consume over half the resources. When the costs of recurring emergency room visits and jail time are considered, it costs thousands—or even hundreds of thousands—of dollars each year to provide services to just *one* chronically homeless person. In addition, people are usually no better off after using these resources than when they started.

In response to a national call to end chronic homelessness, Kentucky created a Ten-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness in January 2006. The plan proposed something new: proactively fighting homelessness by treating the causes instead of providing services after someone is without shelter.

The plan was developed by the Kentucky Interagency Council on Homelessness and the Kentucky Housing Corporation with public input from 12 community forums held across the state.

Chemical dependency, domestic violence and mental illness are the main causes of homelessness in Kentucky. Kentucky's 10-year plan provides strategies to address these root causes.

"We have learned it's much less expensive over time to resolve the issues that create chronic homelessness than it is to care for these individuals on an ongoing basis," said Ben A. Cook, chief



Women's Addiction Recovery Manor in Henderson, the first of 10 Recovery Kentucky centers to open.

**A NEW PLAN:
PROACTIVELY FIGHTING
HOMELESSNESS BY
TREATING THE CAUSES
INSTEAD OF PROVIDING
SERVICES AFTER SOMEONE
IS WITHOUT SHELTER.**

executive officer of Kentucky Housing Corporation, the state's housing finance agency.

Two initiatives from the plan are Recovery Kentucky and Safe Havens. Both of these programs are funded with existing resources and did not require additional taxes.

Recovery Kentucky

Recovery Kentucky is creating 10 recovery centers designed to simultaneously help reduce the state's drug and homelessness problems. Each center will use the same recovery

program model that includes peer support, daily living skills training, job responsibilities and challenges to practice sober living.

This type of supportive housing and recovery program is proven to help people fighting addiction to live more stable, productive lives. It has been

demonstrated successfully by both the Hope Center in Lexington and The Healing Place in Louisville and was named "A Model That Works" by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

To date, centers in Florence, Harlan, Hopkinsville, Morehead, Paducah, Richmond and Owensboro have broken ground. Women's Addiction Recovery Manor in Henderson started accepting participants last July. Facilities in Campbellsville and Covington are also planned.

Safe Havens

Safe Havens is a self-sufficiency program in which securing housing is the first component in a family's or individual's success. Kentucky Housing Corporation provides the first piece of self-sufficiency by providing temporary housing assistance to households whose members are currently seeking to leave a shelter or who are otherwise in critical need of housing.

A Safe Havens client evolves through three phases: transitional housing, self-sufficiency and permanent housing.

The first phase, transitional housing, provides a temporary housing voucher to income-eligible participants so they can find a place to live. Housing vouchers are issued to eligible participants for one year.

The next phase requires the client to participate in a self-sufficiency activity, whether it is going to school,

HOMELESSNESS

participating in other forms of continuing education or working. Case management agencies help Safe Havens participants identify skills and resources to gain economic self-sufficiency.

When participants reach the third phase, they have been working toward or reached self-sufficiency and have identified more permanent housing options.

Since the program began in January 2006, more than 1,500 housing vouchers have been issued. Safe Havens is composed of two programs, each serving a different special needs population:

Safe Place

This program provides up to 500 housing vouchers a year to people with serious and persistent mental illnesses who are leaving shelters or marginal housing situations. Clients receive services that prepare them for their new living arrangements and expedite their progress into permanent housing. These services assist clients in gaining access to such resources as psychiatric support, food stamps, clothing banks, household furnishings and Social Security benefits.

Safe Start

A shortage of affordable housing in Kentucky has caused domestic violence victims to stay in shelters longer than in the past, forcing shelters to turn away victims. These victims often must choose between homelessness and returning to their abuser.

Domestic violence victims typically do not fit the definition of chronically homeless because they are not single unaccompanied adults, meaning Kentucky's homeless families with children cannot be served through current federal programs that exclusively target the chronically homeless. Safe Start offers hope and

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a safe environment for domestic violence victims fleeing their abusers and for families with no other place to go. The program eases the burden on shelters by offering 500 housing vouchers a year specifically to domestic violence victims and homeless families with children.

Creating a Local Ten-Year Plan

Several hundred states, cities and counties across the country have developed local 10-year plans to address the needs of the homeless in their communities. For most cities in

Kentucky, homelessness is not a visible problem. The rural homeless are most likely living with friends, family, in overcrowded housing or in inadequate housing because there are fewer shelters in these areas.

This was the case in Ashland, one of a handful of cities in Kentucky to create a local 10-year plan.

After attending the Mayor's Summit on Homelessness hosted by KHC and the Kentucky League of Cities, Ashland's city leaders realized its shelters and hospitals were bearing the load of caring for the homeless.

"Ashland didn't have a large chronic homeless population sleeping on every street corner, but it does have a large population on the verge of homelessness huddled in substandard housing, doubled up with relatives or surviving in inadequate motels," said Greg Rice, director of the Department of Planning and Community Development for the City of Ashland.

"The need for a 10-year plan was undeniable. With the leadership of Mayor Steve Gilmore and the support of Kentucky Housing, the city with its nonprofit partners and faith-based community, committed to the 10-year plan process."

Invitations were sent to stakeholders inviting them to participate in a planning meeting. Attendance at the meeting was three times what had been expected, emphasizing the need for the plan. A task force of local stakeholders spent the next eight months drafting the Ten-Year Plan to Minimize Homelessness.

The plan received its final approval during a meeting held last September, where Rice thanked everyone who participated in the planning and said, "Now the work begins."

For more information on developing a local 10-year plan, contact Davey King toll-free in Kentucky at 1-800-633-8896 or (502) 564-7630, extension 412; TTY 711; or e-mail dking@kyhousing.org.

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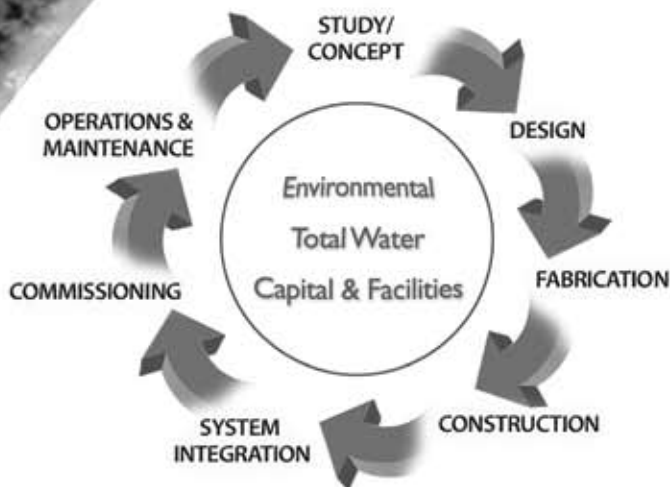


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Charlie Boland is a Senior Administrative Officer with the Mayor's Office of the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government.



Lexington-Fayette County develops award-winning facility to improve services

Can you imagine a single government project that improves the delivery of public services, lifts employee morale, builds workplace team unity and protects a city's historical legacy—all while providing a wise investment of tax dollars and long-term savings to taxpayers?

That is just what the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) was able to accomplish with the development of a multi-purpose satellite facility, the Versailles Road Government Campus, an



a 37,630-square-foot main building, and two additional buildings with 48,000 square feet.

The weeds were tall, the paint was peeling, and the asphalt was cracked, but LFUCG saw the potential for a new facility where scat-

tered functions could be creatively

brought together into one facility—one that LFUCG owned. The price was right, the city council was approached and convinced, and the property was purchased.

The majority of the needed renovation work could be done in-house by a variety of LFUCG's skilled trades workers, but it would take an unusual level of cooperation and partnership.

Plumbers, electricians, painters, dry wallers, draftsmen and others were called together from divisions such as building maintenance, parks, the fire department, sanitary sewers and others. These workers were challenged to add this large renovation project to their already busy schedules, and they delivered, embracing the project as a point of pride to showcase their skills and to save money on fit-up costs.

All of the facility's eventual occupants were also called together to co-design the layout to ensure the best and most efficient use of the space. Once the design was complete, construction began. In the end, 160 employees from 10 divisions worked

Enterprise Cities Award winner.

In 2003, a review of LFUCG property holdings revealed that significant tax dollars were being spent to lease several separate spaces, most of which were deteriorating, to provide a variety of long-term services.

Citizens had to find their way to inconvenient locations to access those services. Employees were working in dilapidated, cramped, inefficient conditions. The city's historical records and archives had overflowed available space and were literally wedged into every nook and cranny that could be found in an aging, ill-equipped building. Parks sports equipment and concessions inventory could not be stored in an organized, easily accessible fashion. The Metro Employees Credit Union was housed in a tight, uncomfortable space shared with a detention center drug-testing facility.

LFUCG decided there had to be a better way, and set out to find it. An opportunity came disguised as a vacant, big-box building materials store on one of the city's main corridors. The facility included seven acres of land with 150 parking spaces,

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on some facet of the renovation. They completed the customized project in 18 months for about half of what a renovation contractor would have charged.

Today, the Versailles Road Government Campus is an attractive, highly visible, modern multi-purpose facility that is home to a diversity of functions. The purchase and renovation costs totaled \$2.7 million. Comparing debt service on that amount to the leases that were being paid before, LFUCG is saving over \$50,000 annually. The savings will amount to more than \$1 million over the 20-year life of the bond. And, in the end, Lexington taxpayers will own a facility that is worth far more than its original cost.


All in all, the Versailles Road Government Campus project resulted in:

- Better and more convenient services for citizens
- Protection of the community's municipal history/legacy
- LFUCG progress in moving from leased to owned property
- Multi-division teams of skilled trades employees working together and taking pride in their craftsmanship
- New, spacious, efficient working conditions for employees
- Improved LFUCG employee morale
- A temperature and humidity controlled Municipal Records & Archives facility, complete with a viewing and research room and state of the art fire suppression—a model for local governments in Kentucky
- A parks distribution center where coaches and organizers can easily access and safely store sports equipment, prepare food and concessions, and serve the parks programming at more than 100 city parks
- A full-service credit union for 3,400 customers, complete with a drive-through window for large vehicles
- The grant-funded Bluegrass Farm Workers Clinic that provides medical and clinical services to over 5,000 people a year

- The Cardinal Valley Center for neighborhood services, with an emphasis on Hispanic residents, which provides services to more than 450 people a month
- A household hazardous recycling drop-off center for easy, centralized disposal of electronics and other hazardous household waste
- A solid waste storage and distribution facility for new household refuse and recycling containers

Government services that directly touch citizens' everyday lives will always receive the greatest amount of attention, because they are the most visible. But this project demonstrates that other important elements, such as employee working conditions, well-maintained and adequately equipped government facilities or a government's property investment strategy, can also have a direct impact on citizens.

Happier, better equipped employees deliver better services. The government's wise use of taxpayer dollars yields a more stable government financial picture, including a portfolio of valuable capital assets. And every dollar saved on facilities or through the efficient use of resources can instead be used on other direct services or programs that may have higher visibility in the community.

For all of these reasons and more, the LFUCG Versailles Road Government Campus project provided one more tangible result – a definite win for the community. 



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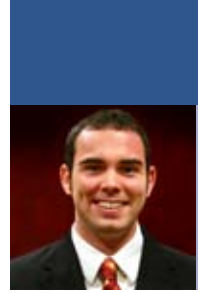
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A community rebirth for beauty and history

Editor's Note: This article was developed based on the script for Victorian Mansions of Old Louisville, a video production by Michael Breeding MEDIA. The production will appear throughout the PBS system in the spring of 2008.

...

As an 18-year-old girl named Victoria assumed the throne, from that point to be referred to as the Queen of England, the area of Kentucky known today as "Old Louisville" was unblemished countryside.

The quickly growing river town was yet to make its first suburb. It wasn't until almost 50 years later that the first extension of Louisville, adorned with the architecture named after the reign of this young queen, was born.

Today people traveling down the streets of Old Louisville can be awestruck by mansions brandishing turrets and gargoyles, stained glass and

bay windows, porches, porticos and wrought-iron fences. The flamboyant ornamentation of Victorian architecture is still evident, as an examination of the interiors of these large houses

In 1883 developers chose a site to the south of the city and, in a grandiose display of the finest technologies of the day (including electricity), the residential development began.

reveals marble mantels and parquet floors that all lead to the highlight of the house, the formal parlor.

How did these extravagant homes come about? As Louisville's manufacturing and economic sectors grew,

the demand for upper-to middle-class housing rose as well. In 1883 developers chose a site to the south of the city and, in a grandiose display of the finest technologies of the day (including electricity), the residential development began.

When it ended, nearly 1,400 houses dotted the newly developed Kentucky countryside, each decorated in a style that many would describe as eclectic. However, it is the eclectic style that denotes Victorian architecture, and builders and architects of the era took advantage of the opportunity to design each house with a personal flair.

But as America rolled into the 20th century, these once beautiful and unique houses began to resemble structures in a ghost town. Due to the invention of the automobile, upper class Louisvillians were now able to travel long distances more easily.

As Louisville began to sprawl in all directions, many affluent residents began to look to the newer, trendier suburbs on the outskirts of town for places to live. Also, as World War II arose, Louisville needed an area to house workers for its growing defense industry. Many of the empty mansions were subdivided to become multi-family homes. After the war, the workers left and many houses were abandoned. Time began to wear away much of their grandeur.

In the 1960s, Americans began to view historic neighborhoods as areas in need of restoration instead of eyesores. Louisville residents were part of this trend. Many saw the generous spaces, high ceilings, and imaginative décor of the Victorian houses of Old Louisville as something that must be preserved.

This renaissance began as a grassroots movement. Some private entities began renovating a handful of



Photo credit: John Paul



as it did in the late 1800s.

Recent years have brought changes to the neighborhood. Multi-family homes have been converted to single family dwellings. Businesses and museums have moved into the spacious structures and found new uses for old rooms. While many are trying to restore buildings to their 1880s appearance, many others have made slight alterations due to their interpretation of Victorian style.

Whatever their taste, visitors find Old Louisville's impressive façades both curious and intriguing. Gazing at these structures, one may wonder what it was like to have traveled up and down these streets almost 125 years ago. The neighborhood stands as a testament to how a community can make neighborhoods thrive and rescue them from the ravages of time.

For more information on late Victorian architecture and Historic Old Louisville, go to www.oldhistoriclouisville.org. For more information about the video, visit www.michaelbreedingmedia.com.

houses, sparking community recognition of the value of these extraordinary homes. Restoration work began in earnest.

Today, much of Old Louisville has been restored to its earlier splendor, and the area has re-emerged as an attraction for visitors from around the world. Overnight guests can be pampered in a bed and breakfast or enjoy Shakespeare in Central Park each summer. Every fall, almost 300,000 artists from North and South

America come to Old Louisville to showcase their work. Even with so much culture filling the area it is still the architecture that keeps the visitors coming back. As one Old Louisville resident stated, "Our architecture is perhaps our greatest art."

The neighborhood of Old Louisville has become a model of preservation. The outcome is not just a snapshot of the past but a fusion between tradition and modernity. What visitors will see now is a community thriving



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Lebanon-Marion County growing their own workforce to meet demand

Quick. Name the No. 1 need in the average small Kentucky town. Roads? Jobs? Water and sewer services?

Those would probably top the list in many communities, but not in Lebanon and Marion County, where a group of government, business and education leaders has placed the needs of the area technology center as the top priority.

The Marion County Area Technology Center needs to be renovated and expanded to keep pace with the community's economic development, which has seen the addition of 4,500 jobs in the last decade or so, said Mayor Gary Crenshaw.

"By creating those jobs we have had any number of plants come into the community," he said. "As technology changes these plants expect the workforce to be better educated, for new employees to come in better educated, and we don't have the facilities to accommodate that expansion right now that the companies need with regard to robotics, with regard to other cutting-edge technology."

Crenshaw, Marion County Judge-Executive John G. Mattingly, Marion County Schools Superintendent Roger Marcum, local industry and economic development officials and the area's state lawmakers were among those who recently signed a letter placing the area tech center at the top of the

county's "critical needs" list.

Citing demand by current and future local industries for trained employees, those leaders are seeking \$4.5 million from the state legislature for the tech center expansion, after the school district's attempt to raise funding through a tax increase was postponed.

High school students take classes at the technology center, which is owned by the Marion County school district and operated by the state Department for Workforce

Investment as part of the Kentucky Tech system.

The center got a shot in the arm last year when the Lebanon-Marion County Chamber of Commerce set a goal of raising the profile and polishing the image of the tech center, said Kathy Browning, the chamber's executive director. That resulted in a multi-agency drive that included media coverage and saw leaders making the rounds to local business and civic groups, talking up technical education and laying to rest the old

"As technology changes these plants expect the workforce to be better educated, for new employees to come in better educated, and we don't have the facilities to accommodate that expansion right now that the companies need with regard to robotics, with regard to other cutting-edge technology."



“vocational school” stereotype.

Before that, the tech center was “not looked on favorably” in the community, said Dawna Kelch, director of education for the chamber, but now “it’s become the course of choice for kids who want to continue on to some kind of postsecondary education.”

Enrollment figures bear out the success of the drive. Total enrollment at the tech center in 2006-07 was 694; for 2007-08, enrollment is projected to be 1,318. The tech center also has added a robotics program and construction geometry this year and is using Project Lead the Way, a national program designed to give students the rigorous and relevant knowledge necessary to pursue engineering or engineering technology programs in a postsecondary setting.

“Many of our kids are not going to college or go to college and aren’t very successful. And we think in some cases they should have been looking at career and technical education as an opportunity,” Marcum, the school superintendent, said. “The message we’re consistently trying to preach here is postsecondary education, not just college, but you’ve got to have some kind of postsecondary education to provide you some knowledge and skills beyond the high school diploma.”

The center’s enrollment boost this year also is important for its role as a feeder school for the new \$14.5-million campus extension of Elizabethtown Community and Technical College that is being built in neighboring Springfield, Crenshaw noted.

“Its success or failure is going to depend a lot on how many students we run through our area technology center. Because it’s so close, their enrollment is going to depend a lot on how much they get from Marion County – and then turn back around and send those people into these technical jobs that we have available here,” he said.

The tech center initiative also “absolutely” has resulted in greater involvement by local industries in the tech center and more co-op job placements and other opportunities for students, Kelch said. Industry and business representatives have even joined the tech center’s advisory committees for career areas such as robotics, information technology and

industrial maintenance.

“What we’ve done is we’ve been able to get the industries in the area involved so that they now are working with the area technology center to change the educational curriculum that they’re doing to meet our needs. It allowed the teachers in the school to now know what our needs are,” said Kelch, who is vice president of operations for Angell-Demmel, Marion County’s largest employer.

The drive to raise the profile of the

tech center was successful because, “we all understand the need,” said Crenshaw, who is starting his 10th year as mayor. He calls it “the next phase” in the community’s economic development.

Beth Smith, Department for Workforce Investment commissioner, said the Lebanon-Marion County effort “is surely the poster child in how a community can embrace and support our area technology centers.”



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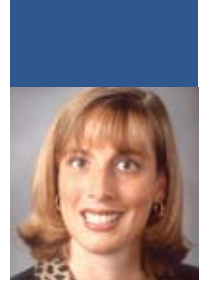
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Robyn Miller is Member Services Manager for the Kentucky League of Cities.



Kentucky League of Cities congratulates Enterprise Cities Award winners

Since 1999, the Kentucky League of Cities (KLC) has recognized municipalities in Kentucky that exhibit excellence in entrepreneurship, innovation and local governance. The recipients of the 2007 Enterprise Cities Award were announced at the 2007 KLC Convention & Expo in Northern Kentucky last October.

Each city's project was judged in seven key areas: innovativeness or creativity of the program, long-term value to the community, adaptability to other cities, use of public/private partnerships, ability to achieve project benchmarks, community/citizen participation in planning and/or initiating the project and efficiency of the program.

"Today's cities are faced with many unique challenges, one of which is continuously adapting to our society while retaining their charm," said Sylvia L. Lovely, executive director/CEO of KLC. "We recognize these cities with the Enterprise Cities Award for their ability to be

progressive."

The judging panel was comprised of city leaders and citizens, including KLC Past President and Elizabethtown Mayor David L. Willmoth, Jr.; Florence Mayor Diane Whalen;

Lawrenceburg Mayor Edwinna Baker; Midway Mayor Tom Bozarth; Louisville Deputy Mayor Rick Johnstone; Greg Mullins, vice president of public funds at Fifth Third Bank in Lexington; and John Ward, senior designer at HDR, Inc.

KLC congratulates the 2007 Enterprise Cities Award winners in the four population categories.

Population Under 5,000 Simpsonville, Mayor Steve Eden

The Simpsonville City Hall Project

The Simpsonville City Hall project converted a 1949 school building for use as new offices for the City of Simpsonville. Since becoming a city in 1982, Simpsonville has operated out of several locations. The lack of a permanent location and limited services prohibited the city government from fully addressing its citizens' needs and concerns.

The new city hall will enhance customer service and will better meet the future needs of Simpsonville's residents. A long-term goal of the project is to successfully recruit more business and industry to the city. The new city hall facility has already played a role in helping the city land two new industries that will create approximately 150 new jobs.

Population Under 5,000 Greensburg, Mayor George C. Cheatham, Jr.

The Heartland Regional Micro-Enterprise Park

The Heartland Regional Micro-Enterprise Park project began in early 2004 when the Greensburg City Council decided to use a donated building as an incubator for business and industry. The project provides opportunities for small businesses and industries to get started or expand without incurring the usual associated expenses. Businesses that have participated in the project have provided employment for some of the several hundred people who lost their jobs as a result of factory closings in the area.

One of the immediate benefits of the project has been an increase in the entrepreneurial spirit in the area. In the future, the city hopes to enhance that spirit by working with individuals to form new businesses and helping them find the available resources through their use of the Heartland Micro-Enterprise Park.

Population 5,001-15,000 Maysville, Mayor David Cartmell

Maysville Renaissance Façade Project

Maysville's Renaissance Façade project was developed to help property owners in the Maysville Renaissance District with matching funds. As they restore their building façades, property owners in the district apply for reimbursement of up to 50 percent of their project costs, with a maximum cap of \$5,000 per property owner.

Several properties have participated in the program, resulting in a more



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appealing streetscape that is attracting new businesses into the downtown area. These include a coffee shop, a restaurant, a real estate office and an art/boutique store.

While this project is spurring interest in the downtown area, it is also making local property owners more aware of local, state and federal resources that are available to update many of their buildings. So much interest has been created that the city is starting to hold workshops to better educate local officials on the details of downtown restoration projects.

Population 15,001 – 40,000
Hopkinsville, Mayor J. Daniel Kemp

The Inner City Residential Enterprise Zone

Hopkinsville's Inner City Residential Enterprise Zone (ICREZ) was established to renovate and revitalize the city's Downtown Renaissance Area as well as four neighborhoods adjoining downtown. A 12-member Inner City Advisory Committee provides oversight of

the project and chose four elements to serve as the foundation of the effort: clean and safe neighborhoods, housing stock revitalization, economic infrastructure and economic opportunity.

By holding charrettes with the leaders of the four neighborhoods, the city was able to better identify citizens' needs and develop designs to meet those needs. The goal of the project is to create a more pleasing atmosphere for residents and to attract retail businesses to the area.

Population Over 40,000
Bowling Green, Mayor Elaine N. Walker

The Bowling Green Housing Initiative

The Bowling Green Housing Initiative addresses housing issues, particularly home ownership, from all angles. Through the leadership of the mayor, city manager and city commission, the City of Bowling Green is tackling housing issues by streamlining the building permit process, donating property,

establishing a housing fund, offering housing counseling, assessing regulatory barriers and strengthening a coalition with local nonprofits and the housing authority.

The tools for making homes available to families were in place, yet getting information to people who needed it proved to be a challenge. Spreading the word of the Housing Initiative was a primary goal of the campaign. The local newspaper partnered with the Mayor's Dollar Wise Campaign and began to publish a weekly article, "Dollars and Sense," to focus on saving money, financial literacy and buying a home. Home-buying information also is provided to the public each year at a local housing festival.

Although many elements of the program will be long-term, strides are being made to rehabilitate homes, offer home ownership counseling and assist families with home purchases through the city's Section 8 to Home Ownership Program.

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In addition to the five winners of the 2007 Enterprise Cities Award, the Kentucky League of Cities offers its congratulations to the other finalists.

Cities with Population Under 5,000

Burgin - *City Hall Transformation, Safety and Heritage Preservation* - The city renovated its city hall with new furnishings, office equipment and computers. The Burgin City Hall is now a more attractive and effective place for residents and employees to conduct business.

New Haven - *Telecommunications Utilization* - In July 2006, the city took advantage of a grant and purchased equipment to make the Public, Educational and Government Channel a reality. City hall employees received training and now offer programming to educate, inform and entertain.

Smithfield - *Weather Siren* - To improve public protection, the city raised funds to purchase battery operated weather radios, first aid kits, large flash lights and a weather warning siren.

Vanceburg - *The George Morgan Thomas House* - With a grant from the Kentucky Heritage Council, the home of Judge George Morgan Thomas was restored and opened in October 2006 as the Vanceburg Visitor Center.

Watterson Park - *Neighborhood Development* - Since 1995, the city has planted approximately 581 trees and shrubs and added acorn park lights along the city's main corridor. Its efforts have been recognized through certification from Tree City U.S.A.

Windy Hills - *Windy Hills Horticultural Advisory Group (WHHAG)* - The WHHAG works to restore and enhance the city's landscape by suggesting beautification options to property owners and assisting with the addition of trees to residents' properties.

Cities with Population 5,001-15,000

Edgewood - *Pocket Park* - The Edgewood City Council voted to use a piece of residential property acquired during the construction of the new city building as a pocket park. The final product developed into a landscaped park with a pervious concrete parking lot and a gazebo.

Middletown - *Creation of Park and Bandstand* - The city erected a bandstand, installed landscaping, created a walking path and dedicated an area for a Middletown War Memorial Monument. The park is used by its residents for exercise, community concerts, memorial services, festivals and weddings.

Taylor Mill - *Neighborhood Emergency Assistance Team* - The team is a volunteer group of citizens trained by the Taylor Mill Police Department to assist the community in the event of large scale incidents, such as natural or man-made disasters, acts of terrorism, missing or abducted children and during community events.

Cities with Population 15,001-40,000

Paducah - *Paducah-Cape Girardeau Staff Exchange* - The staff exchange program builds intergovernmental friendship and cooperation and compares best management and operational practices by allowing Paducah's city staff to shadow their counterparts at a similarly sized and located city: Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Winchester - *Battle of the Belts* - Members of the Winchester Police Department held essay and poster contests to raise awareness of seat belt use among students. At the conclusion of the Battle of the Belts, seat belt use rose 200 percent at some schools.

Cities with Population over 40,000

Covington - *Building Covington's Future: A Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Process* - Covington's strategic plan was developed by a broad spectrum of citizens and stakeholders who collaborated on a shared vision. The strategic plan's core objective is to connect people and places to build an engaged, caring community.

Owensboro - *"Very Good to Great" Leadership Program* - The program is an ongoing effort to develop leadership/management skills of city employees by using college courses, workshops, management panel discussions, guest speakers, leadership/personality assessments and role-playing exercises.

Special thanks to KLC Communications Intern Clay Johnson for contributing to this article.



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