

**Elsmere Strategic Plan  
Listening Session – Elected City Officials  
October 6, 2015**

On October 6, 2015, Tad Long, Community Development Advisor with the Kentucky League of Cities, met with the mayor, council and city administrator to conduct a listening session. The listening session is one of several being conducted for the purposes of creating a strategic vision and plan for the city.

Tad reviewed the results of the surveys that were completed by the supervisors, the mayor and members of the city council.

The participants were asked to describe their proudest moment as an elected official. They responded:

- We use the taxpayers' money wisely
- 1950-200 upgrades – We did a 50 year infrastructure upgrade in 5 years
- More kids involved – they know their council members
- Annexation of industrial park; police department
- Friendly
- Signage
- Personnel and council
- Street assessment (funded)
- Staff we've hired
- Paying attention to what we're doing
- Fiscally sound and improving
- Camaraderie among council, hiring a full-time city administrator
- Communication – people get answers
- Proud of the past
- Fiscally sound
- We have the right vision of customer service, improving streets (through the assessment) and code enforcement

What are the strengths of Elsmere?

- Best placed to raise a family
  - Friendliness
  - Get along with neighboring cities
  - Fire district
  - Good education (schools)
  - Business
- Businesses
- Airport

- We are where everything is
- Part of Greater Cincinnati without being big or urban
- Diversity – Elsmere is the most diverse city in northern Kentucky
- Property values are reasonable
- Median income is lower, but that is due to having younger families just getting started.
- Families stay. Go to college. Then move back. Low neighborhood turnover.
- Affordable living
- Safest city in Kentucky – 2014-15
- Best place to raise a family

#### What does Elsmere lack?

- Need to address blight. Be proactive.
- Need welcome packages for new residents
- Pride in property – The challenge is getting the name and addresses of new residents.
- More businesses on Dixie Highway
- Dixie Highway needs a facelift. (change of building color)
- Paint/Respect for property
- Parking
  - Is there enough?
  - Where is it?
  - How is it used?
  - When is it used?
- Walking trails – Could Elsmere become a Trail Town?
- Restaurants

#### What are some things that Elsmere could do in the short-term?

- Clean Dixie Highway
- Get rid of old signs, old poles, old advertising. Need to paint buildings and clean sidewalks
- Electronic sign in front of city hall that could be moved if city hall is relocated
- The city could accept credit card payments at city hall
- Gazebo on the vacant lot at the police station with a nice sign
- Gateway signs
  - Industrial area
  - Turkeyfoot
  - Florence, Erlanger zip codes – makes it confusing for residents, businesses and visitors to know what city they are in
  - Address storm drain issues
- Have a community picnic or festival like we did years ago at Woodside
- Road bonds are tied up until 2020
- Turkeyfoot Access account - \$60,000 needs to be spent. These are restricted funds – Need a vision for the use of the money like a clock or gazebo

**What needs to be done in the area of housing?**

- Trailer park is not working
- Apartments work
- Rental – not for 2 car families
- Need to eliminate Woodside trailer park – build a community recreation center with public restrooms at the site
- Continue with family residences (ownership)

**What city services should be started, stopped or continued?**

- Loan program – continue
- Recognize those that go beyond the minimum in helping the community
- Public Works – great work – shift from contract employees to 1 or 2 more full-time employees
- Police – do great work
- Administrative – do great work
- Code Enforcement – work is complaint driven

**What are some BIG things that you would like to see in Elsmere if funding were available?**

- Community center
- Municipal building w/police department
- Total redevelopment of Dixie Highway
- Harrison/List Farm – developed into upscale housing with wooded lots/part of farm developed as industrial

**Next steps**

**KLC CCS will:**

- Provide a copy of the notes from the meetings.
- Prepare and send a media kit

**The city will:**

- Make preparations for the public meetings in January 2016
- Set the dates for the public meetings in January 2016 and subsequent meetings
- Communicate and market the purpose and importance of the Listening & Design Sessions to the residents
- Secure a location for the meetings
- Work with the local schools so that students can participate in the listening and design sessions at school and at the public meetings