

WELCOME!

**Community Listening and Design Session
City of Elsmere
Thursday, January 28, 2016
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Listening Session

What are the things that set Elsmere apart from other cities or places?

Strengths

- Parks are beautiful
- Police Department friendly towards the community
- District school awards
- City roads were cleaned –excellent!
- School district has a great pre-school and early childhood program
- Friends of Elsmere Facebook page
- Community Hero Awards
- Active Senior Center
- Transportation is great, can get everywhere
- Nice diverse, small, safe community
- Has a small town feel
- Location – I can get to downtown Cincinnati without too much traffic, I also can see trees all around
- Very close to an airport
- Strong City Council
- African American Cemetery support
- Good, caring neighbors
- Nice churches
- Low property taxes
- Clean city, but we can do a lot better with property and landlords

Weaknesses

- Parks have been neglected
- Keep up rental properties
- More opportunities to give our young people something to do
- Abandoned homes and properties
- More continuous sidewalks
- Drainage issues when we have storms
- Major drug problem
- Garvey Avenue bridge has had some injuries, perhaps work with railroad to help prevent injuries
- No bus service for children to get to school
- Litter along the sidewalks – need to educate
- Major blight issue overall
- Lot of new streets in city, need to keep them clean
- Nothing attractive young professionals
- Rental properties need stricter guidelines for property owners – better code enforcement
- Rodents in properties and property owners live out of state – inspections need to be made
- Better communication with residents
- More opportunities for residents to have a voice in the community – residents used to speak at council meetings and caucus meetings, but no longer allowed.
- Section 8 housing driving down property values
- Promote what we're about, better promotion of businesses; let people know what businesses are here. You don't know if you're in Elsmere or somewhere else.
- Ban on certain breeds of dogs, may be keeping people from moving here
- Abandoned cars
- Opportunities for people to know how to give back to the community – to volunteer
- Deer in the city
- Street traffic calming would be helpful
- Could use more signage (directional)

Opportunities

- Grants for parks are possible
- Arbor Day trees are ordered and information is available
- Welcome Wagon needs to be created
- Wonderful police and EMS/Fire, but people don't feel comfortable. Need to offer meet/greet opportunities to connect more with community residents
- Find some way to integrate (STEM) programming/materials to teach kids engineering, math and technology skills.

- Lot of potential with school district. Problem may be image – need to develop awareness of the great educational system here in Elsmere.
- We have 2 school districts here – not enough communication between Kenton County and the Erlanger/Elsmere school districts.
- Look at giving the PD funds to pay for extra overtime – to have officers to work undercover to work on drug problems.
- Consider Drug Recognition Expert to work on drug problems – use book provided and available in Covington
- Create better community relations through touch a truck and city government day, and police academy, type activities
- Many residents don't know who the council members are.
- Offer more opportunities for home owners to get rid of stuff – bring in a dumpster
- Girls and Boys club- connect to STEM activities after school. Also, some type of training center that facilitates young people and adults for second career training.
- Landlords don't have control over the tenants. At a loss because of the condition they leave properties in the shape they are in.
- Need codes to prevent this type of problem
- Leverage the centers like the one in Florence in order to have something him
- A donation drop to help community residents
- Express willingness to help with drug problem rather than going to jail

Threats

- Crime
- Heroin problem- vacant properties are used for shooting galleries
- What happened to watch committee?
- Need a reason to stay here
- Need to know what to do about abandoned properties as a neighbor
- Anything that impacts our safety and health, businesses, transportation safety, all are threats
- Lighting is needed on some streets
- Property values are going down
- Lighting along creek, in low lying areas
- Loss of businesses
- Survey the community
- Some of the threats aren't coming from the city, they're coming into the city.
- Traffic is moving too fast along Garvey
- Disaster recovery? Do we know what we'll do if we have a disaster?
- Sex offenders - living in our city as well as pornographic materials readily available

Design Session

Table # 1

- Potential for swimming pool
 - Free of charge for Elsmere residents
 - Charge those who don't live in Elsmere
- Park with trails between Turkeyfoot and Garvey
- Traffic issues – road bumpers – Autumn, Garvey
- Add egress – Ripple Creek II
- Heavy traffic through Turkeyfoot Acres from industrial park – Close off egress point

Table #7

- More small businesses on Dixie near Florence
- Elsmere welcome sign by police department
- Sidewalk along Plateau
- List Farm – housing, maybe senior citizen housing – not low income
- Close off entrance from Heartland Trailer Park on Turkey foot

Table #1a

- List Farm – preserve green space
- Buffington – from Garvey to industrial – no sidewalks
- Bus service return to Garvey Ave again
- Turkeyfoot Acres – mitigate drainage problem in the back of the subdivision
- Community sitting area around old grocery that is now city building (lot across from city building)

Table #2

- Small businesses on Garvey
- Dixie HWY – Empty Ollie's building – fresh food market
- Pipes not meet code – Mitten
- Welcome sign at Garvey and Foundation Drive
- Places for kids to play – Short and Vine Street
- Fix sidewalks

Table #3

- Better opportunities – Senior center
- Better lighting for parks
- More signage toward Dixie Highway

- Better upkeep of property – code enforcement
- Better parking along Dixie HWY

Table #4

- Large sign by police building on Dixie HWY
- Sidewalk – Park and Plateau

Table #5

- Facelift along Dixie HWY – businesses
- Challenge park/skate park
- More sidewalks for foot traffic
- Horseback riding
- Zip line course
- Public garden/community garden

Table #6

- Welcome sign – Arch at Garvey
- Utilizing Senior Center more for youth – STEM – work together with seniors on projects
- Promote businesses – Digital Signage for business ads
- Safety – bus service – Garvey Avenue
- Renovate public parks/nature trails already exist
- Speed bumps in high traffic areas
- Make sure that RR crossings are safe and railing along tracks
- Community Watch – need signs – work with city
- Cameras – Security
- Mobile home parks – assess and address the needs

Next steps – Before the next meeting,

- Citizens will
 - Invite 5 more people to the next meeting
 - Participate in follow-up team meeting(s)
 - Continue the discussions within your own sphere of influence (at home, work, school, church, and community meetings)
 - Determine your role in implementing the community's strategies
 - Reflect on your work
 - Share additional thoughts with KLC staff
Bobbie Bryant, bbryant@klc.org or Tad Long, tlong@klc.org or call either of us at 800-876-4552

- KLC Staff will:
 - Analyze the comments
 - Identify key themes and core values
 - Develop initial strategies and priorities
 - Report back to the group

- The Leadership will:
 - Set a date, time and place for the next meeting
 - Determine how to take ownership of the plan
 - Consider the benchmarks for success
 - Talk about this effort at every opportunity