



ELSMERE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2016

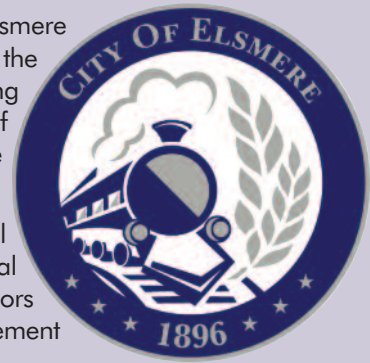


Created by the residents of Elsmere, Kentucky with assistance from the Kentucky League of Cities.



INTRODUCTION

With economic conditions improving, the mayor and city council of Elsmere authorized the development of a strategic vision and five-year plan for the future of the city. The plan would also provide a framework for addressing some of the chronic concerns that have plagued Elsmere for a number of years. To put their effort into motion, Elsmere sought the assistance of the Kentucky League of Cities Community Consulting Services (KLC CCS).



Initial listening sessions were conducted with the mayor, city council members, and the city administrator, on October 6, 2015. Additional conversations were held the same day with the city's department supervisors and contract employees (such as the building inspector and code enforcement officer/zoning administrator).

With a desire to include the youth of the community in the discussion, the city worked with the superintendent of the Erlanger-Elsmere Independent School District to engage junior and senior high school students during classroom time. KLC CCS advisors conducted a listening and design session with more than 20 students on December 15, 2015. On the same day, a group of city and Elsmere Fire District employees were convened to share their thoughts about the community and provide ideas on how things could be improved.

On January 28, 2016, a second meeting of city and Elsmere Fire District employees occurred where ideas and thoughts were expressed by those individuals unable to attend the prior employee meeting. Later that same day, a community-wide public meeting was held with over 100 local residents and business owners attending. Those in attendance provided numerous ideas and suggestions for the future of the community.

On March 22, 2016, the city hosted its second public meeting, with more than 75 individuals attending. KLC CCS staff shared a framework from which they are developing the strategic plan. Those in attendance were asked to provide feedback and additional ideas.



From left to right: Councilwoman Alexis Tanner, Councilman Bill Bradford, Councilwoman Mary Lou Neal, Mayor Marty Lenhof, Councilwoman Nancy Bowman, Councilwoman Gloria Grubbs, and Councilwoman Joanne Barnett-Smith.

Main Points:

- ♦ Develop Dixie Highway
- ♦ Blight - clean up properties
- ♦ Housing – need a better mix and address rental property concerns
- ♦ Parks/trails/sidewalks
- ♦ Modernize city services
- ♦ Promote Elsmere and its unique identity
- ♦ Potential development opportunities in Elsmere

“Moving Forward, Making Tracks. We are committed to preserving this high quality of life through efficient and responsible delivery of public services.”

History of Elsmere



Arnett School



Elsmere School Central Row

- ♦ In 1793 Kentucky passed an act for clearing of a wagon road from Frankfort to Cincinnati that closely followed the old buffalo road (ran along the Dry Ridge and became known as Georgetown Road).
- ♦ In 1813 Robert Johnson and John D. Watkins divided their land that would later become Elsmere and Erlanger.
- ♦ The land was sold to Bartlett Graves and John Stansifer.
- ♦ By 1850, John Stansifer sold all interest to the property (known as South Erlanger at the time).
- ♦ The 1874 trustees of the Cincinnati Southern Railroad announced they would build a bridge over the Ohio River into Ludlow and that the railroad was coming to Elsmere and Erlanger.
- ♦ The railroad brought industry and a wide variety of people.
- ♦ Elsmere and Erlanger Syndicates were formed to entice buyers, and free commuter transportation to Cincinnati was added as an incentive.
- ♦ In May 1896, South Erlanger was incorporated as the City of Elsmere, becoming a major suburb along Old Lexington Pike.
- ♦ Elsmere is frequently named one of the safest cities in Kentucky, and was named as "Best Place to Raise a Family" in 2011 by Bloomberg News.
- ♦ In 1998, Bill Bradford was elected mayor of Elsmere, the first African-American mayor elected in Northern Kentucky. He served 12 years (three terms), and now serves as a member of the city council.

¹ Living in Elsmere: Small city boasts reputation as safe, leading place to raise a family. WCPO Cincinnati. <http://www.wcpo.com/news/local-news/kenton-county/elsmere/living-in-elsmere-small-city-boasts-reputation-as-safe-leading-place-to-raise-a-family>

Community Core Values

Every community has a passion for particular things that exist within that community. The valued “things” that are shared by most residents of the community make up the “core values.” We strongly believe that every successful community plan is built upon these core values. They form the unique foundational elements upon which every idea and strategy must be built. After listening carefully, we discovered these core values for the City of Elsmere:

♦ Outdoor Spaces



Even in the urban/suburban setting of Northern Kentucky, residents of Elsmere greatly value the outdoor spaces of their community. Fresh air, green space, and gathering places for families to interact with their neighbors are an important part of the quality of life.

♦ We Care

Many residents of the city are descendants from generations of families who have made Elsmere their home since its founding. This sense of place is important as residents look out for their neighbors, even if they aren't family. When there is a need, the community responds, comes together, and fills the need.

♦ It's Our Small Town

This same sense of place resonates with residents as they recognize that their small town values must be protected, and it is up to

them to do so. Within this metropolitan land area of greater Cincinnati, there is this unique place called Elsmere which provides the atmosphere where people want to live, work, and raise their children.

♦ Safest City in Kentucky

In recent years, drug abuse and crime have not escaped Elsmere. Yet, the city has been named one of the safest cities in Kentucky by Safewise and Safe Choice Security in 2014 and by ValuePenguin in 2015. This is an important component of the small town atmosphere, and a foundational core value for a successful community.

♦ We're Different, and We Love It



Elsmere is one of the most diverse cities in Northern Kentucky. While there are generations of families that still live in Elsmere, new citizens have moved into the city because of its access to interstates and larger population centers, its small town values, safe atmosphere, and caring neighbors. Local residents are welcoming to these newcomers and embrace the diversity they inherently bring to the community.

Elsmere – What We Heard



When the residents of Elsmere gathered for a Listening and Design Session on January 28, 2016, they had a lot on their minds, and they shared it all. Their willingness to talk, discuss and solve the issues as well as praise and recognize the good things going on within the community created a positive atmosphere that went far beyond the walls of the Elsmere Senior Citizens Center. Ideas began to flow throughout the community and the city was moved to action. This is what they said:

What Are the Things that Set Elsmere Apart from Other Places?

- ♦ Great parks
- ♦ Award-winning schools
- ♦ A nice, diverse, small and safe community
- ♦ Location – near Cincinnati
- ♦ Tree canopy
- ♦ Good transportation

- ♦ Friendly police department
- ♦ Active and well-equipped senior center

What Are Our Strengths?

- ♦ Safe community
- ♦ Tight knit community
- ♦ Good city government
- ♦ Excellent schools
- ♦ Nice parks
- ♦ Diversity
- ♦ Ease of access/travel
- ♦ Diverse churches
- ♦ A caring community
- ♦ Urban without feeling urban

Elsmere – What We Heard



We Need to Work On?

- ♦ Code enforcement and blighted property
- ♦ Tighten rental property regulations
- ♦ Neighborhood appearance
- ♦ Attract more businesses
- ♦ Stagnate population growth
- ♦ Parking
- ♦ Dixie Highway
- ♦ Invest in parks

What Are Our Opportunities?

- ♦ Reimagine Dixie Highway
- ♦ Paint, clean up and fix up
- ♦ Gateway signage
- ♦ Retail/commercial development
- ♦ Make this a walkable city
- ♦ Community gardens

- ♦ Parks enhancement
- ♦ Grow, recruit and attract young professionals



What Are Our Priorities?

- ♦ Development of Dixie Highway and Harrison property/List Farm
- ♦ City government center
- ♦ Address blight and code enforcement
- ♦ Parks, trails and recreation
- ♦ Single-family homes for young adults/professionals
- ♦ Regulate rental properties

Students – What We Heard



What Does the City Need?

- ♦ Trails
- ♦ Place for teens to hang out
- ♦ Restaurants
- ♦ Sports complex/skate park
- ♦ Animal shelter
- ♦ Challenge park
- ♦ Remove the eyesore buildings
- ♦ Transportation

What We Saw

- ♦ Sidewalks/trails
- ♦ Marketplace
- ♦ Housing
- ♦ Green energy
- ♦ Covered bus stops
- ♦ Horseback riding
- ♦ Recreation center

Steps to Success



Meeting the Challenge - Local First

- ◆ Focus on things that benefit the city's residents first
- ◆ Engage local residents in helping to solve the problems
- ◆ Accept help
- ◆ Empower the community to act
- ◆ Take big challenges and break them into small tasks



Doing Things Together

- ◆ Identify residents that want to work on specific projects as volunteers
- ◆ Develop a volunteer training program
- ◆ Engage students for community service projects that improve the city
- ◆ Intensify outreach to the city's neighbors and work on solving common issues

Tasks to Tackle

- ◆ Focus on dilapidated and blighted properties, particularly problem rental property
- ◆ Enhance code enforcement activity
- ◆ Record retention and archival solution
- ◆ Tablet-based work order system
- ◆ Website/web presence/technology
- ◆ Seek out volunteers
- ◆ More dialogue and cooperation with neighboring cities
- ◆ Welcome package for new residents
- ◆ Sidewalks and parks improvement and expansion
- ◆ Redevelop Dixie Highway
- ◆ Encourage growth
- ◆ Consolidate city services into one location/community center/new municipal building

Development/Redevelopment



Commercial and Residential Properties

Many residents, staff and elected officials have concerns about substandard properties within the city limits. These concerns reflect chronic maintenance problems in both residential and commercial properties. Property improvements will take time, and a clearly defined plan of action, focused on established end results, is paramount to success. We recommend a multifaceted approach, accomplished incrementally over the next five to ten years.

Specifically, we recommend a two-pronged approach: Commercial and Residential.

Residential Steps to Success

Understand that a comprehensive properties initiative will take time. The city council will need to make a long-term commitment to this effort.

Rental Property Regulation Component – The city should immediately create a rental property plan to address nuisances, dilapidation, blight, health concerns and safety issues. Conduct a summit to be composed of the mayor, city administrator, rental property owners, renters, code enforcement officer and at-large citizens to address rental property regulations. The city should enact tougher standards for the maintenance of rental properties

and create an education/communication action plan that clearly spells out the intent and requirements of the regulations.

Identify persons within the city who will have an interest in neighborhood redevelopment. Invite them to an informational meeting. Use this initial meeting to launch an initiative with the end goal of creating a Properties Action Plan for Neighborhood Redevelopment.

Create a Properties Action Plan

- ◆ Identify individuals to assist in developing a citywide plan. Individuals should represent a broad cross section of the community – homeowners, renters, landlords, builders, real estate professionals, and contractors. Also, those knowledgeable in historic properties, finances, grants and grant administration, and persons with legal expertise, will be particularly helpful.
- ◆ Immediately address rental property regulations. The council should enact stringent ordinances and regulations that strengthen enforcement. Inform and educate the city residents, rental property owners and renters of the requirements of the ordinances and regulations.

Residential Redevelopment

- ♦ Establish desired outcomes – what do residents of Elsmere define as appropriate or adequate for properties within the city.
- ♦ Define target neighborhoods and whether there should be a priority area. Number areas in order of priority.



- ♦ Evaluate city codes and ordinances, specifically rental codes, to see where problems lie and line up with the desired outcomes established by the committee.
- ♦ Work with police and fire departments to coordinate code updates with policies.
- ♦ Communicate clearly and regularly to the community the new level of code enforcement.
- ♦ Enforce the policies.
- ♦ Identify potential sources of revenue to focus on neighborhood development.
- ♦ Investigate other cities incentive programs and develop incentives for Elsmere to provide.
- ♦ Define what the city or other agencies or organizations such as Repair Affair, Habitat for Humanity, or perhaps the Home Builders

HOW DO WE BEGIN?

- Identify individuals to assist
- Form a task force or working group
- Establish desired outcomes
- Evaluate city codes and ordinances
- Work with police and fire departments to update codes
- Identify potential sources of revenue
- Investigate other cities incentive programs
- Develop incentives for Elsmere to provide
- Identify partnership agencies or organizations:
 - Repair Affair
 - Habitat For Humanity
 - Home Builders Association
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Industrial Park Association
 - Others
- Identify who will spearhead this initiative
- Create an inventory of priority properties
- Set forth goals and objectives and define strategies
- Relay this information to every property owner by certified mail
- Work one-on-one with property owners and renters for property cleanup
- Seek assistance for financing options, tax credits, and grant funds
- Recognize property owners that work to improve and maintain their property

Residential Redevelopment

Association, might provide in terms of assistance. Organizations such as Boy Scouts and church affiliations may provide assistance as well. Inform organizations such as the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce or Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (Tri-Ed) of the proposed plan and seek their help and support.

- ◆ Identify who will spearhead and oversee this initiative over the long haul.
- ◆ Create an inventory of properties in need of attention. Identify by street address and property owner those properties which need immediate attention and prioritize as urgent, moderate, and remedial.
- ◆ Set forth goals and objectives and define strategies to approach the work.
- ◆ Upon completion of the action plan, relay this information to every property owner, so everyone understands the commitment the city is making to improve the property values within the city.
- ◆ Work on-on-one with property owners to encourage ongoing home ownership.
- ◆ Seek assistance as needed from the Kentucky League of Cities, the Kentucky Housing Corporation, the Northern Kentucky Area Development District and the Kentucky Heritage Council to seek financing assistance, tax credits, and grant funds.

Include these elements within the planning process:

Establish and widely promote incentives or encouragements for owners to improve properties. This might include

- ◆ Periodically providing a dumpster at no cost for owners to clean up their properties
- ◆ Encouraging civic clubs, churches or students to conduct street by street cleanup activities – provide trash bags, refreshments, and make it



fun by giving prizes for the most garbage by weight or perhaps the largest item disposed

- ◆ Organize a neighborhood by neighborhood competition to encourage multiple improvements in one block
- ◆ Create a special fund to award property owners with matching funds for paint or building materials. Porter Paints and Walmart provide small matching grants that will work for this type of incentive fund.

Update as needed, property-related ordinances, and clearly define penalties for non-compliance.

Seek a planning grant to pay for the preparation of a housing study to evaluate the housing market in the community and assess its housing needs, particularly related to market-rate housing.

Work with a local financial institution or NKU to provide homeownership workshops. Topics could range from finance, first time homebuyer, rental readiness, and housing maintenance to understanding mortgage loans and foreclosure prevention.

Recognize property owners who initiate cleanup efforts without encouragement. Present the owner with a certificate of improvement, take a picture of them with the Mayor and City Council and post via social media.

Reimagine Commercial Property

Elsmere does not have an identifiable “downtown.” The center of commercial activity is along Dixie Highway and is a gateway corridor. As the core of business activity, the corridor could become Elsmere’s de facto “Downtown” – the place to gather for local eateries, entertainment and shopping.

An Elsmere Community Development Corporation can lead the way in renovation and targeted economic development. As a regional corridor and combined with community redevelopment, Dixie Highway redevelopment could deliver needed revenue for other much needed city projects.

If the Dixie Highway redevelopment plan is implemented in the next 10-15 years, Elsmere would be ahead of the curve in making this a visitor magnet. It will take imagination, commitment and patience.

Power lines can be buried underground and street furnishings added to give the corridor a welcoming “attitude.”

During interviews and public meetings, many expressed interest in seeing a more vibrant commercial district along Dixie Highway. Immediate, short term steps might include:

Establish a task force to focus solely on Dixie Highway and develop a plan for moving forward. Be sure to include knowledgeable NKY planning



HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- Create a nonprofit corporation – The Elsmere Community Development Corporation.
- Identify stakeholders and those with knowledge of commercial development.
- Inventory all properties and businesses along Dixie Highway in the Elsmere city limits.
- Identify and target available properties.
- Develop a gap list of businesses needed.
- Create a joint taskforce with Erlanger and leverage the strength and influence of both cities toward joint implementation.
- Work with regional economic development agencies and the Cabinet for Economic Development.
- Create a working list of entrepreneurs interested in starting the kinds of businesses that Elsmere needs.
- Identify working capital resources.
- Identify and develop business incentive resources.
- Focus on local business development.
- Implement the plan step-by-step.
- Success will take time.
- Be patient and work at it.

personnel, leadership from the NKY Chamber of Commerce, as well as commercial real estate professionals who are familiar with the corridor, to assist with the ongoing work.

- ♦ Determine boundary areas to focus on.
- ♦ Conduct an analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT).

Reimagine Commercial Property

- ◆ Once the SWOT is completed, investigate in more details that are perceived as weaknesses or threats. For instance, if there is a perceived parking problem, initiate a study to assess whether there is actually a need for more on-street or lot parking options. Work with community partners such as NKU students to assist as needed.
- ◆ Review previous studies, plans, and actions to better understand the current situation and possible alternatives.
- ◆ Identify steps for moving forward, the quick fixes and those that will take more time, then prioritize.
- ◆ Review Elsmere's existing policies and ordinances that impact development and recommend adjustments, if needed.
- ◆ Assess what types of businesses are missing along the corridor and determine the gap. Identify what businesses from this gap will fit in the boundary area.
- ◆ Develop a plan and recommend to the city what type of adjustments, if any, should be made to current lot sizes.
- ◆ Develop business incentive resources such as the Kentucky Investment Act incentives, new market tax credits, tax incremental financing (TIF), property tax abatement and a retail establishment fund.
- ◆ Work with Northern Kentucky partners to create a welcome kit for new businesses and residents.
- ◆ With a plan in place, organize and establish the Elsmere Community Development Corporation to implement the plan.

Continue discussions with Erlanger leadership and ask for a joint meeting to discuss the future of Dixie Highway. Seek their input for agenda items and meet on neutral turf. Use a third party facilitator, identify ways in which you might partner, as well as determine who will take the lead on issues of common concerns. Assess whether ongoing meetings will be advantageous.

A particular focus area seemed to be on Dixie Highway and Orchard Street, generally between Caldwell Drive and Kenton Street. While restaurants and specialty retail are desirable, there is a realization that current lot sizes are an impediment and must be expanded. Expanding lot sizes will better accommodate big box development, as well as larger operations of local entrepreneurs.

It is possible to maintain the current lot size and encourage private development by local entrepreneurs, but this may take much longer to develop.



BUSINESSES THAT STUDENTS SUGGESTED

- Restaurants w/Wi-Fi
- Go-Karts
- Water park
- Skate park
- Indoor shooting range
- Frozen yogurt
- Dairy Queen
- Arcade
- Zipline

City Services and Facilities



Use the current location of the police department to create an Elsmere welcome and city service center.

Incorporate the city's history and initiate an urban trail system by naming the center the Elsmere Station or Elsmere Depot. By doing so, the following improvements and partnerships are set into motion:

1. The city sets the standard for the appearance of new and rehabilitated development along Dixie Highway.
2. The city upgrades its administrative services allowing for online and drive-thru payment options.
3. The city works with local history buffs to provide photos and memorabilia of Elsmere's past to incorporate into the décor.
4. The city creates a cooperative with the Northern Kentucky Tourism office to provide a tourist information kiosk and public restrooms. And limited free parking if there is enough space. Make this the gathering space for out-of-towners.
5. The city initiates the Elsmere Urban Trail System described on page 14 of this plan.
6. The city encourages new development adjacent to Elsmere Station to cater to tourists and local consumer traffic. For example: local restaurants, local food trucks, local outfitters, and local food/produce/markets.
7. The city considers maintaining a smaller police department presence within the new Service Center. This will focus the city on a renewed neighborhood policing presence by relocating the police station to the current city hall location.

An alternative to moving city hall to the police department is to relocate all city services to a new location. Offer the current police station as described previously. The current city hall property could be sold in order to pay down the costs of new construction.

The city may offer incentives to encourage development, but must remember that the market will drive developments.

The Great Outdoors

City Parks

Create a green space task force to focus on park improvements and development.

- ♦ Take an inventory of everything that is available at each park.
- ♦ Assess the condition of each park amenity and estimate its functional obsolescence.
- ♦ Utilize local focus groups to make recommendations for improvements.
- ♦ Decide whether to replace or remove an amenity.
- ♦ Develop a working list of amenities that need to be added, such as picnic tables, trees, sidewalks, shelters, walking paths, playground equipment, and exercise stations
- ♦ Prioritize improvements for each city park.
- ♦ Determine the accessibility of each park by vehicle or on foot.

- ♦ Connect to neighborhoods where possible.
- ♦ Bring recommendations to the mayor and city council for park developments.

Develop a Parks Master Plan for Elsmere.

- ♦ Expand the current city park to include amenities suggested by the task force.
- ♦ Include an ongoing maintenance plan.
 - Establish community partnerships (scout troops, sports teams, and others) to assist with investments and ongoing maintenance.
- ♦ Establish a wish list for private donors to contribute towards.
- ♦ Seek grant funds.



Invest in Urban Trails and Community Gardens

The Elsmere Urban Trail



Focus on trail development, to include sidewalks, parks and connectors

- ♦ Connect with running and cycle enthusiasts to seek their input and involvement.
- ♦ Identify areas that need sidewalk repair or expansion.
- ♦ Identify potential trail connectors within the region.
- ♦ Identify potential for walking paths within existing parks.
- ♦ Prioritize projects to be addressed over the next five years.
- ♦ Connect with Trail Town USA.
- ♦ Identify funders.

Short-Term Strategy: Focus on increasing community walkability by adding sidewalks where none exist and repairing existing sidewalks.

Long-Term Strategy: Develop an Urban Trail strategy that connects to other trails in the northern Kentucky and surrounding region.

- ♦ Identify natural pathways such as those connecting neighborhoods to schools and public gathering places such as the library, retail outlets, the senior center, and existing bicycle and pedestrian pathways.
- ♦ Assess safety concerns for each path and prioritize for development.

- ♦ Partner with Northern Kentucky Tourism to market and promote the Urban Trail and offer trail maps at the Elsmere Station.
- ♦ Create an Urban Trail Visitors Tour map to highlight:
 - local architecture;
 - points of historical significance;
 - natural environment elements such as trees, flowers and plantings; and
 - public and commercial establishments of interest to tourist (parks, cafés, library).



Community Gardens

Work with existing organizations to pursue community gardens in Elsmere.

- ♦ Determine if there is a need for more public space dedicated to community gardens.
- ♦ Identify where sites may be available for garden space.
- ♦ Determine what needs must be met in order to provide space. For example insurance, ongoing maintenance, and distribution of products.
- ♦ Investigate ordinance options that will allow for farm animals within urban settings.
 - Identify possible locations where this type of ordinance would be appropriate.

Appearances Matter

Work on a plan for improving the appearance and safety of the city while providing a more welcoming atmosphere.

Conduct an inventory of problematic areas or unsightly concerns within the City of Elsmere. Seek persons with mobility concerns to participate with this committee.

Signage

- ◆ Focus on what draws your eye or captures your attention as you sit at a stop light or go past an intersection at the entrance to downtown.
- ◆ Are their signs that are distracting and unnecessary? Are there signs that should be there that aren't? Do visitors know where to park? Is there a place for them to park?
- ◆ How do the fire hydrants, fences, sign posts, curbs, parking stripes and hand rails along bridges or walkways appear? Have they been painted in recent years?
- ◆ Are all one-way and directional signs in place and visible?

Sidewalks

- ◆ Get someone in a wheelchair or with a baby buggy to go with you on a walking tour around town. How difficult is it for them to maneuver by themselves? Can they get to most locations?
- ◆ Record all problem spots by street address and photograph.

Blight and Safety

- ◆ Identify places which are unsightly or may cause a safety hazard.
- ◆ Describe the information in detail and identify by street address and photograph.

Consolidate information into one document and if necessary provide suggestions or recommendations based upon findings and submit to the city for review.



We Recommend

Investigate an ongoing sidewalk safety and maintenance plan. Use the KLC Sidewalk Safety Planning Guide as a resource.

Develop an overall signage program with a focus on improving the city's identity. Seek assistance from marketing professionals to make suggestions as needed.

- ♦ Implement a coordinated signage plan to improve "public" signage and improve city identification and promotional efforts.
- ♦ Remove out-dated and unnecessary signage and clean up problem areas.
- ♦ Incorporate the Urban Trail signage into city's overall signage plan.



Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge Concerns

Organize a team to investigate safety concerns related to the bridge owned by Norfolk Southern Railroad. Develop a strong statement based upon facts and map out a plan of action to implement.

- ♦ Identify a leader at the railroad who will be a point of contact for the community.
- ♦ Develop a list of factual concerns related to safety and the real need for improvements. Base these points on police records, traffic counts, injuries or accident reports, and any other factual aspects that relate to hazards caused by the bridge.

- ♦ Build a network of concerned citizens who will provide letters of support, make phone calls, and show up when needed, to advocate for an improved bridge. Ask these individuals to tell stories about how the bridge is hampering daily life.
- ♦ Be prepared for on-site visits from Norfolk Southern leadership. Provide printed materials that point to citizens' concerns and offer testimonies from real people.

Transportation

A few residents and students noted concerns about the accessibility of transportation in Elsmere. The Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky has recently studied ridership within the community and determined that providing additional service is not feasible based upon ridership numbers.

In addition to the recommendations of trail and path development noted within this plan, the following recommendations are made to address concerns related to accessible public transportation.

- ♦ Post bus route information at all public facilities.
- ♦ Include transit information on city's website and newsletters.
- ♦ Include in the Urban Trail map all bus stops and contact information for taxi-related services.
- ♦ Include public transit information in the welcome package recommended elsewhere in this plan.

Summary of Recommendations

The Kentucky League of Cities encourages and supports the City of Elsmere as they partner with local residents to continue working on the priorities set forth in this Strategic Plan.

To implement these strategies, we recommend the following activities:

1. Set up a task force to address each of the following initiatives:
 - ♦ Residential Redevelopment
 - ♦ Commercial Development – specific to Dixie Highway
 - ♦ Greenspace and Parks Improvements and Developments
2. Organize a team of volunteers to address concerns related to Norfolk Southern Railroad Bridge.
3. Conduct a summit to be composed of the mayor, city administrator, rental property owners, renters, code enforcement officer and at-large citizens to address rental property regulations.

Acknowledgements

The Kentucky League of Cities Community Consulting Services wish to thank the City of Elsmere and all the residents who participated in the public engagement sessions during the strategic planning process.

City of Elsmere

Marty Lenhof, Mayor

Nancy Bowman, Councilmember

Bill Bradford, Councilmember

Gloria Grubbs, Councilmember

May Lou Neal, Councilmember

Joanne Barnett-Smith, Councilmember

Alexis Tanner, Councilmember

Police Chief Tim Thames and the Elsmere Police Department

Fire Chief Paul LaFontaine and the Elsmere Fire District

Alex Mattingly, Elsmere City Administrator

Misty Ezell, Elsmere City Clerk

Jessica Lucius, Elsmere Finance Officer and Treasurer

Elsmere Senior Citizens Center

Denise Donahue, Elsmere Parks and Recreation Director

Erlanger Elsmere Independent School District Students and Dr. Kathy Burkhardt, Superintendent

To the many local residents who attended meetings, voiced their concerns, gave ideas and worked toward creating solutions, we extend a heartfelt thanks and encourage you to continue to partner with city officials to make these plans become a reality.



Kentucky League of Cities

Created by the residents of Elsmere, Kentucky
with assistance from the Kentucky League of Cities

2016