

America in Bloom 2016 EVALUATION REPORT



Community: Lexington, Kentucky

Population Category: Over 50,000

Evaluation Dates: July 7-8, 2016

Judges: Meg Whitmer and Katy Moss Warner

America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play – benefitting from colorful plants and trees; enjoying clean environments; celebrating heritage; and planting pride through volunteerism.

All evaluation criteria are adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community’s location.

This Evaluation Report is based upon your community’s efforts in each of the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points	Actual Points
1. Floral Displays	175.00	155.00
2. Landscaped Areas	175.00	157.00
3. Urban Forestry	175.00	158.00
4. Environmental Efforts	175.00	150.00
5. Heritage Preservation	175.00	162.00
6. Overall Impression	125.00	113.5
Total	1000	895.5
%	0.89550	
Bloom Rating	5	

Five blooms = 85% Four blooms = 72.50–84.95% Three blooms = 60.00–72.45% Two blooms = 45.00–59.95% One bloom = <45.00%

Community representatives to receive the Evaluation Report:

Name: Ann Garrity	Title: AIB – Lexington Chair	Email: anngarrity@gmail.com
Name: Linda Gorton	Title: Past Vice Mayor, Lexington	Email: lgorton@ky.gov
Name: Jim Gray	Title: Mayor - Lexington	Email: mayorlexingtonky.gov

General Observations and Recommendations:

Congratulations Lexington! You are truly a model America in Bloom city, earning the top rating of 5 blooms this year! You are also the winner in your population category! As a 3rd year participant in the AIB national awards program, Lexington clearly possesses the essence of Southern culture, charm, history and hospitality. Thank you for your warm welcome, gracious hospitality, and thorough, well-planned tour. Lexington's pride shows throughout the community with volunteers and partners working together to make their city a special and unique destination. Hosting the America in Bloom Symposium in 2018 is an exceptional opportunity to showcase and celebrate all of the wonderful things that make Lexington a 5-bloom city.

The tour gave us a clear sense of Lexington's commitment as a community to improving quality of life issues. So many wonderful projects were underway, either in the planning stages, under construction, or recently completed. All these projects dovetail nicely together to create a network of residents who are engaged in improving Lexington's urban outdoor spaces. *If the City of Lexington doesn't already have a webpage for volunteers, it may be a good idea to create one so that volunteer efforts can be quantified to learn how many volunteers, residents and staff are involved in creating and maintaining Lexington's quality of life.*

Lexington's distinct brand is recognizable whether one approaches from the air or the roadways. The wisdom of establishing the nation's first Urban Growth Boundary, enacted in 1958, coupled with the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program protecting farms from development have clearly distinguished this city in a positive way and are perhaps its greatest and most valuable assets. The resulting acreage of open green space surrounding the city distinguishes Lexington as a forward-thinking community that values its agricultural heritage as a primary component of its "brand". Protecting its brand and quality of life has become and should remain a top priority.

The Legacy Bike Trail is a wonderful amenity and important asset that supports and enhances Lexington's quality of life. Signs along the trail tell Lexington's story, its rail culture and economy and role in the Underground Railroad. This rolling history lesson is also a ribbon of public art-in-motion and a heart-healthy transportation alternative that will eventually encircle the city as a pedestrian and cycling green belt. Its popularity will continue to grow as more people discover and use it.

Lexington has a lot to offer visitors of varied interests. America in Bloom appreciates your participation the past three years, your well-planned tours, and your commitment to host the 2018 America in Bloom Awards and Symposium. Many thanks to Ann Garrity, Kay Cannon and Linda Gorton for your leadership, planning and hospitality skills. You created a wonderful, memorable Lexington experience for us and we look forward to your continued participation as a 5 bloom city.