

America in Bloom 2018 Evaluation Report

Community: Lexington, Kentucky

Evaluation Dates: June 25-26, 2018

Judges: Billy Butterfield and Sue Amatangelo (Lead)



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.

Seven Criteria (Codes)	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage
1. Flowers (FL)	60.00	40.00	66.67%
2. Landscaped Areas (LA)	72.00	51.00	70.83%
3. Urban Forestry (UF)	80.00	51.00	63.75%
4. Environmental Efforts (EE)	68.00	48.00	70.59%
5. Celebrating Heritage (CH)	66.00	48.00	72.73%
6. Community Vitality (CV)	56.00	39.00	69.64%
7. Overall Impression (OI)	88.00	61.00	69.32%
Other			
8. Evaluation Tour Preparation & Actions (ET)	13.00	9.00	69.23%
Scoring			
Total Points and Percentage	503.00	347.00	68.99%
Star Rating: 7			

Star ratings are based on overall percentage.

1 star = 0% - 9.99%

2 stars = 10% - 19.99%

3 stars = 20% - 29.99%

4 stars = 30% - 39.99%

5 stars = 40% - 49.99%

6 stars = 50% - 59.99%

7 stars = 60% - 69.99%

8 stars = 70% - 79.99%

9 stars = 80% - 89.99%

10 stars = 90% - 100%

Community representatives to receive the Evaluation Report (three minimum)		
Name	Title	Email
Paul Swoveland	AIB Lexington Host	Swoveland@msn.com
Ann Garrity	AIB Lexington Chair	Anngarrity@gmail.com
Jim Gray	Mayor	Mayorlexington@ky.gov
Linda Gorton	Past Vice Mayor, Lexington	Lgorton@ky.gov

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION:

Communities are required to provide the following prior to evaluation:

- Community profile organized to follow the criteria and metrics. For repeat communities, call out what is new and/or implemented due to judges' recommendations. Complete the Community Information pages - general information, metric implementation checklist, and contacts with emails of community members that will meet the judges.
- Evaluation Tour Itinerary with start and finish times for each day
- Community Map with boundaries and the tour route

The areas to be scored:

Judges will review Community Profiles, Community Maps, and Evaluation Tour Itineraries to confirm the appropriateness of the areas to be evaluated and contact communities prior to the tour so adjustments can be made.

- All areas (municipal, commercial and residential) to be scored must be within the boundaries of the entrant's community/municipality (except as noted below) and a representative portion of all areas must be included.
- Property to be scored, whether public or private, must be subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant's community/municipality.
- When a property does not meet these requirements, but the community's volunteers significantly impact the areas with labor and/or funding, then judges may include in their scoring the property not subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant community.
- A community may request recommendations for areas toured but not scored.

Metrics are noted with unique codes based on the criteria. Ratings include:

N/A (Not Applicable): Communities should strive to implement all metrics; however, judges will use N/A when a metric is not scorable in a community. An N/A metric is not included in the point totals and does not affect percentages.

Examples when N/A may apply in a metric: commercial/business areas do not exist; state or county statutes prevent implementation of a metric.

Not Meeting (0 pts.): Programs or procedures are not in place

Approaching (1 pt.): Programs or procedures are in place but not fully realized

Meeting (2 pts.): Programs or procedures are implemented but need improvement

Exceeding (3 pts.): Programs or procedures are implemented and succeeding but have not realized their full potential

Exceptional (4 pts.): Programs or procedures are exceptional.

Other:

- This Evaluation Report's scoring, general observations, and general and criteria recommendations are based upon the community's efforts in each of the criteria.
- Future projects and programs are not scored.
- The scoring for the seven evaluation criteria is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community's location.

General Observations and Recommendations (recommendations are indicated in italics):

Congratulations Lexington on your fifth year as an America in Bloom city and the host location for the 2018 National Symposium! The changes you are making every day are taking your community to new heights and creating a world class place to live, work, and play.

Situated in the heart of the Bluegrass Region and the epicenter of horse country, Lexington is a culmination of beauty, grace

and glory. From the green rolling hills, and white and black fences that paint the countryside to the cosmopolitan posture of the city, Lexington is making its mark for all and on all.



We've all heard the saying "Many hands make light work." The volunteer efforts as well as the city employees along with all the supportive organizations have done so much to make this a first-class city. The same is true of getting other larger Lexington and surrounding area companies involved with the America in Bloom Lexington efforts. Having the combination of city, business and residential involvement make for the strongest efforts possible. It also helps to increase your

volunteers, receive supportive funds and spread the word about America in Bloom within your community. Expand your reach by knocking on the doors of Lexmark, Keeneland, the U of K hospital system, Big XXXX Fans, Alltech Ag Feeds, Toyota, Temperpedic, etc. and ask for their support. That support can be through volunteerism which is something many companies today challenge their employees to get involved with on an annual basis. You could ask for an ad in the racing forum with information to call and get involved in AIBL for example or ask for donations to projects. Either way, think outside the box and find unique ways to reach out to all facets of your community and share your message of all the great things AIBL is doing for Lexington.

Keep the good going by making sure there is current information on the America in Bloom Lexington website. Routine updates will inspire and keep interested parties coming back to see what else is going on with AIBLex. All positive! List activities, and projects, post pictures and always let the residents and businesses know that you would love their help. It will also bring visibility to places within the community they may have not known about to experience.

The judges did not hear very much about summer programs for children or adults on our tour; however, upon doing a bit of research on the city website, we were in for a big surprise finding an extensive 2018 Parks and Recreation Spring/Summer Guide with 28 pages of classes, activities and ways to keep everyone active and involved throughout the summer months.

There is also a map of the parks with a description of the available activities at each location. *Help your residents find this information quickly and easily by adding a tab on the opening page for the website, on the sidebar and at the bottom of the page. In addition, be sure to add a link for each location that is quick and easy to use that will not only provide the address but more detailed information as to what facilities and activities are available at each park.*

The involvement of your residents and posting of the Master Plan for Parks and Recreation is a great example of community involvement and an open dialog with your residents. *Now, the next step is to follow through. Keep your residents posted on the progress you are making, even if they are small steps. They will appreciate that you are taking their suggestions into consideration and working hard on their behalf.*

Lexington, the judges believe that you are ready for the next step with America in Bloom which would be to enter the International Challenge organized each year by Communities in Bloom in Canada. The International Challenge involves winners from different National Programs (Communities in Bloom, Britain in Bloom, America in Bloom, Tidy Towns of Ireland, Japan in Bloom, Entente Florale, Comuni Fioriti and other national programs) competing with each other based on population categories. For additional information about the 2019 program please visit:

<http://www.communitiesinbloom.ca/how-to-participate/international-challenge/>



Your 2018 America in Bloom Judges, Billy and Sue, would like to thank everyone involved in America in Bloom Lexington for your warm welcome and your hospitality. You prepared a wonderful tour and made us feel right at home. We look forward to your return in 2019!

Our best to you,

Billy Butterfield and Sue Amatangelo

2018 America in Bloom Judges

Flowers Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings					
1. FLOWERS (FL): flowering annuals, perennials, bulbs, tropical plants, flowering topiaries, and colorful foliage and/or cut plant material for season-round interest in containers, hanging baskets, window boxes, raised planters, trellises, and in-ground beds	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
FL.01 - Management of flower display programs					X	
Plan of Action						
FL.02 - Action plan developed each season for procurement, scheduling, planting, and maintenance of flower displays					X	
Design						
FL.03 - Unity and Variety: plant combinations create visual interest and dramatic effect while appearing coordinated					X	
FL.04 - Suitability of Plant Selections: plants selected for environmental conditions and flourishing together					X	
FL.05 - Distribution and Location: displays found throughout the community and at key locations						X
FL.06 - Seasonal Displays: seasonal displays with spring, summer, fall, and/or holiday displays			X			
Maintenance						
FL.07 - Watering program to maintain growth in place					X	
FL.08 - Fertilization: appropriate fertilization program using slow-release, liquid fertilizers, and/or soil amendments				X		
FL.09 - Grooming: regular pruning, dead-heading, removal and replacement of dead plants					X	
FL.10 - Plant health programs in place to monitor and manage pests and diseases (IPM/Integrated Pest Management)					X	
FL.11 - Health and Vigor: plants are robust and floriferous					X	
Community Involvement						
FL.12 - Flower displays are funded all or in part by volunteer contributions		X				
FL.13 - Volunteers participate in the design, planting, and/or care of flower displays				X		
FL.14 - Civic groups, garden clubs, Master Gardeners, school programs, etc., sponsor plant sales, plant swaps, or educational sessions that contribute to the quality and implementation of the community's flower displays					X	
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
FL.15 - Judges to enter text below						X
Exceptional use of displays downtown including baskets and containers						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
1. Flowers (FL)	60		40		66.67%	

Flowers (FL) Recommendations:

As your Community Profile says, you have learned how to “attract attention with colorful plants.” From the 266 plus planters on the streets and buildings downtown to areas and planters around businesses, throughout your parks, and into the residences with your “Curb Appeal Contest”, you have attracted not only the attention, but the participation from many businesses, homeowners and volunteer groups. Nothing catches the eye more than colorful annuals and perennials.



Capitalize on all that you’ve already done and build enthusiasm by picking a flower of the year or even a flower of the season. You could participate with garden centers and growers to assure that the variety you choose is available for



purchase by residents and businesses. Get everyone excited by running articles in the local newspaper, putting notices in utility bills and by city officials keeping the excitement alive. You could have the most “Creative Container Contest” using the selected flower, then highlight the flower in marketing materials and signage to tie together this promotion. You’ll start to get people to notice the beauty you’ve created, and they’ll want to get involved. Have students draw and color the flower of the year along with their favorite place in

Lexington giving them exposure to your America in Bloom Lexington efforts and the wonderful places in Lexington.

Fall or Christmas color would be a good way to extend the length of time that color is in your streetscapes. This is the time of year that residents and visitors will walk the downtown shops and visit the eating establishments, so the added color would further add to the spirit of the season. *You could leave your center thriller plant and add red dogwood or birch branches along with pine and spruce greenery that will withstand the cooler temperatures at that time of the year. You could also try using decorations that will add color but not perish in the cold. This maintenance free container decoration on the right can be used year after year and has a complimentary piece that would be beautiful added to the street lamps downtown. For more information contact the America in Bloom community of Holland, Michigan.*



The Wellington Park Daffodil Drift is a great way to honor a community champion. No doubt, the early spring burst of color from this garden has to be eye catching. *To keep this beauty going, particularly since the garden is so visible, consider planting the area with something that will grow during the summer months to fill in the void after the daffodils*

have declined. Suggestions include daylilies, allium 'Millennium' or carex 'Ice Dance'. Using perennials planted among and/or around the garden, will come back year after year with very little maintenance and will provide beauty throughout the summer months as well as spring. There are two times to accomplish the addition of summer blooming plants: when you are adding new bulbs to the garden, and when it is time to split the daffodil bulbs. For now, planting a few perennials around the perimeter of the garden may help to keep some color in the garden later into the summer. Be careful not to remove the daffodil bulbs you've already worked so hard to plant.

The hanging baskets with BabyWing white begonia were stunning and for your first year were extremely well done. Using this variety helped you to reduce the amount of water and fertilizer that was needed with the Wave petunias used in previous years. *Next year mix up the white with pink BabyWing begonias to give more color and depth to the baskets.*

The addition of floral containers to the University of Kentucky college campus would help to bring in a bit of color to the campus, provide a less stressful atmosphere for current students and create a welcoming feel to parents of potential students. The Bluffton University in Bluffton, Ohio is a great example of how both container and in-ground plantings can make a difference. By partnering with a local greenhouse operation, the school was able to make the additions without worrying about the maintenance of these areas.



There are a few overpasses and bridges in Lexington that could benefit from the addition of floral hay baskets. These baskets can provide four-season color and should be set up on an irrigation system. Solicit the assistance of the garden clubs and/or the master gardeners in Lexington to plant and maintain these baskets. This could be a great place to plant the Wave petunias, the Mayor's favorite flower.



Greenhouse 17 is a wonderful place for women to go to be protected and feel safe from domestic violence. The women are also able to get involved in the CSA program which is a tremendous undertaking and requires many hands to accomplish. Utilize the help of the area Master Gardeners and the many Lexington Garden Clubs for planting and maintenance. You can also have the Master Gardeners come routinely to provide educational seminars which will benefit the women and the garden.



With the amount of flowers and color that you have throughout the community, you could consider a variation of the popular “Color Run.” While the color in Color Run usually denotes paint, mainly on the runner, you could alter it a bit to showcase the different color flowers that the runners encounter as they run from area to area. The color of paint that gets tossed on the runner could coincide with the color of the flowers that they are running by. While “Color Run” is a for-profit company, you could either partner with them, or alter it enough that you create your own event that concentrates on raising awareness of the flowers and the businesses that participate along the way.



Landscaped Areas Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings					
	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
2. LANDSCAPED AREAS (LA): plants and related programs for the leadership, design, installation, and maintenance of landscape (shrubs, ornamental grasses, vines, evergreen topiaries), turf, and groundcovers						
Leadership and Policy						
LA.01 - Management of planting of public landscaped areas					X	
LA.02 - Municipal landscape ordinance requires landscaping and maintenance for new and/or improved commercial development			X			
Plan of Action						
LA.03 - Planning for restoration of natural areas					X	
LA.04 - Program for management of invasive plants					X	
LA.05 - Promotion and installation of demonstration/display gardens with interpretive signage; i.e. pollinator, wildlife, native, low-water use					X	
LA.06 - Recognition program for attractive landscapes in place				X		
Design						
LA.07 - Unity and Variety: plant combinations create visual interest while appearing coordinated					X	
LA.08 - Suitability of Plant Selections: plants selected for environmental conditions and are flourishing together					X	
LA.09 - Distribution/Locations: landscaping found throughout the community and at key locations					X	
Maintenance						
LA.10 - Grooming: pruning of plants, removal and/or replacement of dead plants					X	
LA.11 - Plant Health: programs such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests					X	
LA.12 - Weed Management: programs in place to manage weeds (removal, mulching, etc)				X		
LA.13 - Health and Vigor: Plants are robust					X	
LA.14 - Turf Care: regular mowing, edging, and removal/replacement of dead turf					X	
LA.15 - Turf Health: programs such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management) in place to monitor and manage diseases, pests, and weeds					X	
Community Involvement						
LA.16 - Volunteer donations contribute to funding landscaped areas in public areas					X	
LA.17 - Volunteers assist in design, installation, and care of landscaped areas and turf in public areas					X	
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
LA.18 - Judges to enter text below						X
Both Public and Private gardens were exceptional.						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
2. Landscaped Areas (LA)	72		51		70.83%	

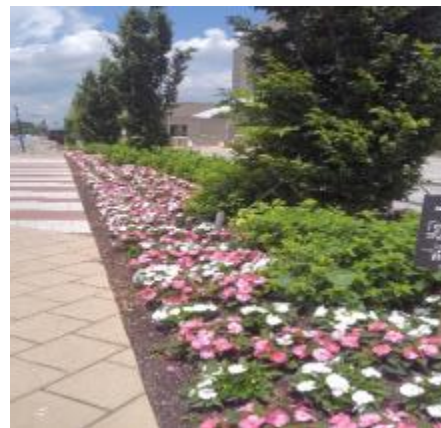
Landscaped Areas (LA) Recommendations:

Landscaping is said to add 12% to the value of real estate. If that corresponds to cityscape or commercial properties, then you've increase the value of the properties in your community by 12% or more. The streetscape, parks and other public amenities are very well maintained, and this encourages businesses and homeowners to follow suit.

All this beautiful landscaping requires a lot of regular maintenance. Trimming, weeds, pest control, and re-planting all take a lot of



labor. *There is a program in Sumter County Florida, though IFAS, at the federal prison where the inmates that want to learn a trade take a Certified Horticulture Professional course and graduate with a certificate. They get hands-on experience in landscape maintenance, so when they are released they not only have a trade, but the education to secure a new job. Also, check with the city of Madisonville, Kentucky (an America in Bloom community), about how they are working with low-threat inmates from the county corrections facility. These inmates are nearing the completion of their sentence and this program helps reacquaint them with the community while giving back. This is a model program and can have advantages in a number of areas for the city and in some cases provide a useful skill for the inmate.*



Water quality and quantity are becoming more important as our population increases and we develop more land. Leaving or creating landscape easements or barriers along the water's edge helps to improve the aquatic environment. Rain gardens in the more developed areas do their part. Creating the urban services boundary years ago has helped to retain large open land areas for water recharge. Bringing the Town Branch Creek up from the gutters that it has been relegated to over the years is a great way to improve the landscape, while bringing water with its soothing sound into a crowded urban area. We await the Town Branch Commons linear urban park with its water features and rain gardens.



Signage in the landscape is visible, useful and should be expanded. We noticed good signage in many of the parks and gardens. Garden geeks love to learn new plants that they can use, as well as what is going on with the area and/or land and signage is an easy way to educate them. When they see a plant that they like, and know a little about it, they are more likely to go out and buy it and install it in their landscape. Continue to expand the signage program that you have set up in McConnell Springs, in Woodland Park and at the Arboretum. Signage like this is a good way to expand the ranks of gardeners and educate all.

The University of Kentucky Arboretum is more than an arboretum; it is a resource for adults and a playground for the younger generation. With trial gardens, display gardens, play grounds and an educational component, it's a very valuable resource for all ages. They should be commended for what they do to promote horticulture to Kentuckians.

Growing and encouraging gardeners of the future is being addressed at Yates Elementary school by its science teacher, Josh Radner. Mr. Radner has not only planted a garden with vegetables, pollinators, trees and vines, he has made it so that the students become totally involved on a day-to-day basis. He has created a living 24/7 science lab that is surrounded by the windows of the school where students are encouraged to stop

and see what is going on outside. The program runs through the summer when school is out by way of a club that students voluntarily join and participate. What a great way to get pre-teens interested in both science and horticulture. We heard there are 42 schools with gardens in the area, but this one should be held up as an example of how it can and should be done. *Every elementary school in Lexington should consider this same type of learning environment that has been created for the students of Yates including teachers like Josh Radner whose*



passion is contagious. Keep the gardens growing by applying for grants specifically designated for school gardens. Many can be found at: <https://kidsgardening.org/garden-grants/> USDA's Farm to School Program is housed in the Food and Nutrition Service's Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS). OCFS helps child nutrition program operators incorporate local foods in the school's lunch and summer food program through grant making, training and technical assistance and research. OCFS received additional funding appropriated through the FY 2018 Omnibus Bill for the Farm to School Grant Program. Over the next two grant cycles, OCFS will release an additional \$5 million in farm-to-school grant funds to support farm-to-school activities across the nation. This means there will be at least \$7 million in available farm to school funds in fiscal years 2019 and 2020! Additional funding will help reach more communities seeking to incorporate local products into the school meals program, integrate agricultural education in the classroom, and cultivate and expand school gardens. The FY 2019 Farm to School Grant Request for Applications (RFA) will be released in fall 2018! Visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-grant-program> for more information.

Keeping parks and beds weed free is an ongoing job that never seems to end, yet when garden beds have weeds they are noticeable and can quickly become unattractive and get out of hand. *Stay on top of these areas by applying mulch that will help to keep weeds at bay. Focus on the more visible areas of the city and parks, so there is no detracting from all that you have worked so hard to accomplish on the floral side.*



A requirement that businesses add and maintain landscaping should be added if not already a part of your landscape ordinance. This will go a long way in softening the harsher lines of the buildings and parking lots of businesses. If you already have a requirement in place, then your

Compliance

*Office should
work closely with
these businesses*

to bring them into compliance. For larger parking lots, be sure to recommend islands that are planted with trees, shrubs and/or grasses to help cool the area, lessen stormwater runoff and make a stark barren area more attractive.



Urban Forestry Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings					
3. URBAN FORESTRY (UF): trees and related programs for the leadership, management, design, installation, and maintenance on public and private lands	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
UF.01 - Qualified personnel on staff or access to trained individuals					X	
UF.02 - Tree board/commission is active					X	
UF.03 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for tree preservation on public and private property					X	
UF.04 - Municipal ordinance(s) enacted/enforced for protection of trees during construction					X	
UF.05 - Currently a Tree City USA community and/or has the Growth Award designation				X		
Plan of Action						
UF.06 - Tree inventory for public areas is complete and current			X			
UF.07 - Annual tree planting program for public areas				X		
UF.08 - Management program for dead, imperiled, and/or invasive trees					X	
UF.09 - Recognition and protection of heritage trees					X	
UF.10 - Effective communication to residents of recommended trees, proper planting, "Right Tree in the Right Place," and/or maintenance				X		
Design						
UF.11 - Variety: appropriate selection of tree species planted					X	
UF.12 - Placement: appropriate spacing and planting area for optimal root and canopy growth					X	
UF.13 - Planting: correct planting depth (root flare at/above grade)				X		
UF.14 - Arboretum in place with labels and descriptive signage				X		
Maintenance						
UF.15 - Tree Health: program in place to monitor and manage diseases and pests				X		
UF.16 - Watering, Mulching, and Pruning: program for watering new trees; proper mulching (i.e., no volcano mulching); appropriate pruning, removal of dead limbs, and canopies raised adequately above vehicle and pedestrian areas				X		
Community Involvement						
UF.17 - Volunteer donations contribute to funding tree planting in public areas					X	
UF.18 - Residents participate in Arbor Day activities					X	

UF.19 - Volunteers assist in tree planting and care				X		
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
UF.20 - Judges to enter text below						X
Abundant number of arborists on staff and available.						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
3. Urban Forestry (UF)	80		51		63.75%	

Urban Forestry (UF) Recommendations:

Lexington is serious about trees and through the dedicated efforts of John Saylor and Tim Queary, the entire community has become a tree hugging city. Everywhere you look there are tree preservation and reforestation efforts and if you haven't been involved in a tree activity in the last year, you really can't call yourself a true Lexingtonian.

Lexington has received the title "Tree City USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation for more than 30 years, the longest in the state of Kentucky. They also have the distinction of having two campuses listed in the "Tree Campus USA" program which helps colleges and universities around the country establish and sustain healthy community forests. Well done, Lexington!

Recently the city designated the Bur Oak as their city tree. In late 2017, the Lexington's Tree Board invited the community to vote for Lexington's official tree from three finalists that thrive in the Bluegrass Region: Bur Oak, Shumard Oak and Chinquapin Oak. The Bur Oak was the clear winner and is a perfect fit to represent Lexington, as they once dominated



prairies throughout the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. The state's co-champion Bur Oaks with diameters of 8.1 feet reside in Woodford County, a part of Lexington and Bourbon County, just on the outskirts of Lexington. Now that you have a city tree, what will you do? *Start with creating programs around the Bur Oak for all ages. Each Arbor Day, plant a Bur Oak in a visible area of the city and tie a bow in the classic Lexington Blue around it. Add interpretive signage at the two champion trees. Hand out Bur Oak saplings at your Arbor Day events and*

create a brochure highlighting the history of the Bur Oak in Lexington and other fun facts about this tree. Whatever you choose to do, just keep the information and recognition of your city tree fresh and always flowing.

The Emerald Ash Borer continues to be an issue for Lexington as only 40-50% of the trees have been affected. But that doesn't mean the city has given up or forgotten. *Be sure to protect any Ash Trees that could quickly and easily become victims of EAB. If you haven't already, you'll want to begin the process of treating your historical trees immediately. All species of North American ash appear to be susceptible as well as the native White Fringe Tree. Larval galleries have been found in trees or branches measuring as little as 1-inch in diameter. Even though it is an investment that will be ongoing, the treatment has had tremendous success in saving many large and historic trees. Tree-age is a product that has had great success on the University of Findlay's campus in saving their beautiful, old ash trees. This can be done by a licensed tree company that uses the product as a trunk injection in the mid- to late-spring after the trees have leafed out. According to the USDA Forest Services research, the most effective injectable product was emamectin benzoate, and it provided two to three years of nearly complete EAB control. All EAB adults who fed from treated*



leaves died within four days and the larval densities reduced by 99%. Compare that with Dinotefuran (Safari) which provided only one year of protection with only a 58-80% adult mortality and 57-68% reduction in larval densities.

https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/disturbance/invasive_species/eab/control_management/systemic_insecticides/

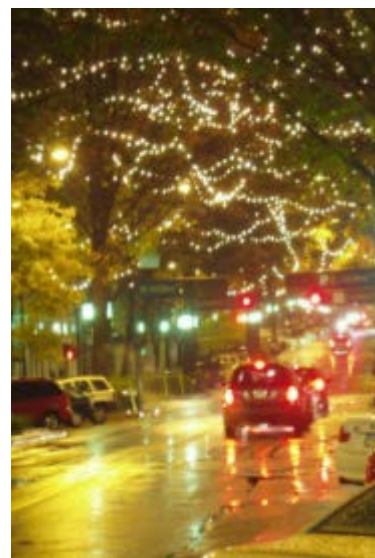
Keep in mind that this small borer can completely wipe out all of the ash trees in a city in a matter of a few years. Planting now to replace those trees that you are certain to lose will make a big difference in the overall canopy of your community. Solicit the help of spotters in your community that can help to identify and track the movement of EAB in your city. Also, begin hanging the purple EAB traps in your historic Ash trees to keep a close watch on their progress. You can find more information on the U.S. Department of Agriculture website. Keep the information in front of your residents through continuous distribution of the “Stop the Emerald Ash Borer” door hangers and updates on the website.

Although few, the city should be sure to take down the trees affected by EAB as soon as possible to avoid the dead tree being a danger to those passing under or near it whether it be on city, business or residential properties. If not already addressed through an ordinance, you will need to add the removal of trees that are failing and/or dead in your tree ordinance.



A great way to highlight our beautiful trees and add an element of safety to the area is to add low voltage up lighting. Solar-powered lamps are very effective and easy to use requiring no wiring, plus they can be easily moved. Consider adding uplights to your trees downtown.

There's just something about a tree that is all lit up in the evening that attracts people and automatically elevates an area. A great example of holiday like lights that have been added to downtown trees throughout the year is in Greenville, South Carolina. This community recently went through a redevelopment of its city and brought a dying downtown with every storefront filled and real estate prices soaring. Now, visitors gasp in delight when first turning onto Main Street downtown and see the trees all lit up.



The Adopt a Tree program at the Henry Clay home is a great example of getting direct support from individuals that want to preserve the trees on this exceptional property. Protecting the state champion Hawthorne and Birch are paramount. Since the tree inventory on this property is 20 years old, it will be important to work on an updated inventory as soon as possible. Ask for the help of the Tree Cats, students that are assisting the city with its tree inventory. They know what to do and can be a great help in quickly updating the inventory at the Henry Clay home, so you can be fully aware of the variety distribution and any issues that you may not be aware of.

Stacey Borden from the University of Kentucky described a software program being implemented to manage their tree inventory on campus. The Tree Plotter allows you to filter the information on the map by a number of different parameters such as diameter, species, condition, etc. One of the ways the college uses this software is to select all Ash of a certain diameter to schedule treatment for the Emerald Ash Borer. The program also includes the ability to calculate the ecosystem services of each tree. *As the city begins to embark on a new tree inventory, perhaps it can utilize the same software and tap into the expertise of the university.*

The Tour des Trees is an annual weeklong 500+ mile cycling adventure that is taking place in Ohio this summer. The primary purpose for this organization and the adventure is to educate and engage communities in the Tree Research and Education Endowment Fund. This organization has been in existence since 1992 and has cycled its way through the United States, Canada and United Kingdom planting trees, educating children and highlighting the work done by arborists. The research done by this group has produced better methods for urban tree planting and care and has generated programs to connect children with the environment and careers in the green industry. *Since you already have a champion for this organization on staff, John Saylor, Lexington should consider working with the local communities of Kentucky and arrange to bring this annual event to Lexington.*

According to Tresine Logsdon, the Fayette County Public Schools Sustainability Curriculum Coordinator, the tree canopy has been increased in 63 schools, but unfortunately the AM Wells Elementary School seems to be quite barren. Trees have a number of benefits, particularly to school children. They provide shade, offer a gathering place for friends and a comfortable place to relax or read a book. It also has a cooling effect on the surrounding area providing relief from the hot afternoon sun. The additional benefits include added beauty, stress relief and assistance with storm water runoff. *Adding trees to this property will have positive effects on students, the community and your environmental efforts.*

The true gem of the city is the newly reopened historic Courthouse Square. Vacant for most of the past decade, it is now the new home of the Lexington Visitors Bureau, VisitLEX administrative offices and the Breeders Cup corporate offices. It will soon house a number of other businesses and restaurants. This iconic building



will continue to
bring beauty to

downtown Lexington for many years to come. *Although landscaping never seemed to be included around the courthouse, the addition of ornamental trees on the property can enhance the beauty of the building and provide shade and a cooling effect on the property. You can also plant a Bur Oak or two recognizing it as your city tree.*



The temporary bump outs on Loudon Road are doing their job but are a bit unsightly. Make these bump outs permanent including landscape plantings to visually enhance the street and calm traffic.



In order to be more environmentally friendly and provide a healthy environment for trees, the University of Kentucky has begun the process of removing grass from some key areas on campus and under their trees. This will reduce the amount of chemicals and fuel used to cut and trim the grass and will increase the delivery of water to the roots of the tree. *The city of Lexington should monitor the success of this program and if the results ring true, start a program in some of the local parks in areas that might benefit from mulching versus grass.*

Reforest the Bluegrass is a program born out of a need to reforest the banks of the streams and tributaries in Lexington that had been shaved right down to the water's edge. The purpose of adding trees along the banks of the rivers was to shade the water keeping the temperature cooler which will in turn reduce the amount of algae that grows due to a high content of phosphorus that is naturally prevalent in the rich limestone that makes up this region.

Reforest the Bluegrass, is an annual volunteer tree planting event that plants numerous trees each year. Private citizens, civic groups, environmental organizations, school and church groups, corporations, agencies, natural resource professionals and others work together to make Reforest the Bluegrass a success recreating and restoring a forest habitat that was once active to the inner Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. To date, volunteers have planted more than 130,000 tree seedlings, and the program has been praised as one of the largest urban forestry projects in the U.S. The statistics surrounding this project are staggering and show what a success this program is:

- More than 5,000 volunteers have participated
- More than 150 acres of floodplains were restored
- Over 130,000 tree seedlings were planted
- Less than \$105,000 of local government funds were spent, plus \$75,000 of donated funds
- If the projects had been carried out by paid workers, the cost would have been \$750,000
- It's a family-friendly event and may be the only opportunity a child, growing up in a city, will have to plant a tree
- The project has been a cooperative effort of the LFUCG Division of Parks and Recreation, the Division of Streets and Road (Urban Forester) and the Division of Planning (Storm Sewers).



Don't forget to mulch the trees in the city parks to help them preserve water, keep the weeds down, deliver nutrients to the roots, insulate the soil and protect the roots from compaction. At the time the judges toured Lexington, we were already halfway through a hot summer and many trees were without the protection that mulch provides. Try to keep the most vulnerable and historic trees routinely and consistently mulched throughout the year.

Environmental Efforts Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
4. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS (EE): environmental leadership, policies, plans and programs for resource conservation; pollution control; trash, recycling, and reuse; and alternative transportation						
Leadership and Policy						
EE.01 - Environmental Advisory Board or Green Team in place					X	
EE.02 - Pet waste policies developed and enforced					X	
EE.03 - Electric/alternative fuel vehicle(s) used by municipality				X		
EE.04 - Electric vehicle charging station(s) provided				X		
EE.05 - Stormwater management program in place					X	
Plan of Action						
EE.06 - Litter and/or environmental clean-up programs in use					X	
EE.07 - Brownfield clean-up programs in place				X		
Resource Conservation						
EE.08 - Buildings are LEED certified and/or follow the standards					X	
EE.09 - Rain gardens and/or bio-swales in place					X	
EE.10 - Home energy audit program available		X	NS		NS	NS
EE.11 - Rain barrel program offered			NS	X	NS	NS
EE.12 - Low-flow water device incentives available		X	NS		NS	NS
Trash, Recycling, and Reuse Management						
EE.13 - Curbside recycling collection available			NS	X	NS	NS
EE.14 - Yard waste composting available or offered			NS	X	NS	NS
EE.15 - Prescription drug drop-off offered			NS	X	NS	NS
EE.16 - Hazardous waste and/or electronics waste collection or drop-off offered					X	
EE.17 - Plastic bag and/or foam container collection available					X	
Community Involvement						
EE.18 - Participation in Earth Day celebrations, Bike to Work Days, Walk to School Days, and similar opportunities that enhance public awareness of environmental issues					X	
EE.19 - Garden clubs, Master Gardeners, school curricula, and/or Soil and Water Conservation District, etc. provide educational opportunities for rain barrel usage, backyard habitats, and other environmental initiatives					X	
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
EE.20 - Judges to enter text below						X
Newly created Citizens Environmental Academy graduated its first class.						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
4. Environmental Efforts (EE)	68		48		70.59%	

Environmental Efforts (EE) Recommendations:

Lexington is working hard on its environmental efforts, and it is making a positive impact on the entire community.

A number of Lexington's buildings, including many with historical significance, have been lovingly restored and/or repurposed to continue to provide depth and beauty to the streets of the city. Occupying the historic Fayette National Bank Building, the award-winning firm of Deborah Berke Partners embraced the building's historic features while adding artistic details to create 21c Museum Hotel Lexington. Positioned in the heart of downtown, it was the perfect place to revive and repurpose as a hotel to accommodate the local events, a high-end restaurant and an art museum.

The Bread Box is a mixed-used development also located in downtown Lexington that is worthy of a substantial overview in the environmental efforts section of this evaluation. There is a lot of good going on in this 100-year-old bakery building, that has been reinvented to house a variety of tenants, each working to make Lexington a better place including:

- West 6th Brewing
- Smithtown Restaurant
- Broke Spoke Community Bike Shop
- Magic Beans Coffee Roasters
- Foodchain
- The Bread Box Studio Artists
- The Bread Box Farmers Market
- The Plantory
- Rock and Roll Girls
- Bluegrass Distillers



West Sixth Brewing is leading the way with an eco-friendly business model. The brewery not only likes to make good beer, but the social impact it is making on the community is a top priority. It supports the direct work of non-profits through a number of the products it brews and sponsors events its founders believe in. The brewery is environmentally conscious in everything it does. It publishes a report that includes social, economic and environmental sustainability showing just how important being sustainable is to the company. *With all the sustainable products, programs, and proprietors in Lexington, a sustainable bike tour would be a great addition for visitors to your community. A food-to-table tour would also work well as this is an attractive topic to all generations.*

The Plantory, also located in the Bread Box, hosts an accessible co-working hub that fosters collaboration and nurtures growth for community-minded businesses and nonprofit organizations. As a new business getting started, costs for office space and the items needed to run a successful business can put a stranglehold on your budget expenses. The Plantory provides all the tools needed to run a startup/small business efficiently and cost effectively including co-working and shared resources, networking and collaboration, financial support and community engagement.

The offices can be considered environmentally friendly using a single location for a number of businesses and being a single

source for office supplies, equipment and furniture. Membership costs \$100-\$275/month. *Have a listing of the entrepreneur businesses as free advertising to meet the businesses and to meet the board members. Help to give the entrepreneurs utilizing their space a leg up by posting their business on your website along with contact information. This will help to get their message out and will provide an opportunity for other business owners to consider their product and/or service.*

The city of Lexington could also use the services of one of these businesses for grant writing, as this is a very time-consuming process and in many cases falls to the bottom of the list of things to do in many communities. Yet, receiving grants can be the most effective way to move your community forward.

Foodchain is an organization with a focus of forging links between the community and fresh food through the education and demonstration of sustainable food systems. This aquaponics farm complete with Talapia tanks teaches area residents about alternative agriculture methods, where food comes from in an urban environment, and is a supplier of the freshest greens grown right down the street from the local restaurants. They host monthly community meals incorporating local produce, hold youth cooking classes and are in the process of building a teaching and processing kitchen. The judges would have liked to take a closer look; however, the available hours were limited. Chances are, others have found themselves in the same situation. *Foodchain may want to consider expanding their hours, so those who want to see the good work you are doing will be able to.*

The Legacy and Town Branch Trails are a great start to getting the residents of Lexington on the road to good health and will help to attract bicyclists from other communities to come to Lexington for a day or overnight trip. The trails will also contribute to a cleaner environment by reducing the use of motorized vehicles. The coming together of these two trails will only increase the versatility and use of the trails. You'll want to begin a plan to connect these two trails with a third trail that



can help students get from downtown to the University of Kentucky and the Arboretum on the south side. *Map out bike trails throughout the city using side streets and add additional bike trail signs to mark the path, as they wind through the less traveled but scenic streets. This does not always require mapping out permanent bike lanes on major thoroughfares. It can be done by using residential streets which will help to show off the beauty of the town on and beyond Main Street. Adding route signs will keep riders on course and can take them past areas of the city that are safe from*

major traffic and perfect for young riders. Have maps of these trails available at city hall and on the city website. The next step will be to work with neighboring communities to create a master plan that will link trails between all neighboring cities. This will attract not only local residents but also visitors that will want to enjoy both the city and countryside of the area.

Take the bike trail map on the city website, and elevate it to the next level by highlighting points of interest in and around the city. In addition to schools, add other landmarks and special places to see on the bike trail map on or close to the trail for

those bikers that would like to see what else they can take in while using the trails. Add short trips off the trail if there is something of unique interest. *Visitors will appreciate knowing that there are some very special places in Lexington that should not be missed even if they are off the beaten path. Side trips could be included making the entire trail system more than just a transportation pathway. Create an app including this information as well as the trail maps, so it can be easily used while traveling on your bike.*

The judges learned that a herd of 17 goats were recently hired to clean up areas of the Idle Hour Park in Lexington that had become over grown. Referred to as, "goatscaping" they pretty much just eat their way through invasive species and anything else in their path including Kudzu, Winter Creeper and Honeysuckle which are all invasive to Lexington. Goats are low-maintenance animals that can eat about three percent of their body weight in a day. Typically 15 goats can do an acre in a couple of weeks. The use of goats to clear overgrown parcels helps to reduce the use of chemicals and increase a city's capacity to go green. Other cities, including Washington DC and Chicago are turning to "goatscaping" along with using the services of sheep and llamas to replace men and machines making this process both environmentally friendly and cost saving. Continue this practice in areas of the city that traditionally need help with overgrowth. *Since the goats can also be an attraction*



to residents and visitors, Parks and Recreation could create an environmentally focused educational game for kids of all ages by listing clues to where the goats will be this week on the city website. A scavenger hunt where they need to find clues and solve puzzles similar to the popular Pokémon Go game can keep children out in the great outdoors all summer long.

The Bluegrass Area Woodturners are turning tree limbs, such as black maple, that have fallen or been pruned from trees into useable items like bowls and trivets. *Look also to the local schools to see if there may be an application in one of their classes. Work with the Woodturners to hold classes for older children and/or scouts to teach them a hobby/skill. Trees that are historic that lose a limb and can be repurposed and should include a historical information card as a keepsake to and an Inscription of the date of the "birth" of the tree on the bottom of the art piece, so the purchasers knows they have purchased something very special. The city of Holland, Michigan can provide additional information on how they turned the trees that fell in its city during a tornado into beautiful decorative bowls that were used as a fundraiser.*

The newly installed roundabouts on the University of Kentucky campus are examples of a trend that is picking up steam across the nation. Their popularity is largely due to the safety benefits, significantly reducing collisions and fatalities, reduced fuel consumption, and construction costs that are at least \$150,000 less than installing traffic lights. Although this method of traffic control may not work at every intersection, the city should begin incorporating these roundabouts in areas where there is a need to improve traffic flow and reduce expenses. Since many residents may be unfamiliar with how a

roundabout works, education will be paramount.



Multi-use containers for trash and recycling are found all over downtown, and the containers used are attractive and add to the streetscape. You will want to continue the same recycling efforts in all of the city parks by adding multi-use containers or separate recycle bins to all of your current containers. Once you are able to get residents and visitors into the habit of recycling, you'll not want to turn back. Containers come in all shapes and sizes perfect for every location and environment and if you find animals to be an issue in the parks, there are containers that will help to keep the wildlife at bay.

Recycling is making a difference at Yates Elementary school where the collection of plastic bottle tops has resulted in new picnic tables for the school. The students have also collaborated on creating art pieces that have helped to bring beauty and color to the hallways. The school is teaching students how to grow food, compost and become more aware of its environment by looking out the window rather than at computers or phones. The greenhouse fan is run by solar power, and the garden also includes a rain garden.



Storm water management is a vital practice in Lexington. The city's storm water management practices are sound and key to solving water drainage in all areas of the Town. The judges spent two days dodging the raindrops on their tour of Lexington. During that time the roadways became filled with water very quickly but in all instances drained just as fast. We were shown several storm water retention ponds and rain gardens all across the city that functioned beautifully. *Lexington can enhance its storm water practices even further by adding educational kiosks to the rain gardens. The kiosk can provide residents and visitors with information on what a rain garden is, how it works, and how it helps manage storm water runoff. In addition, consider using permeable paving for trails, bike lane, city parking lots and wherever there may be a need to drain water efficiently.*

There are a number of LEED certified buildings and homes in Lexington. LEED buildings save energy, water, and resources, plus generate less waste and support human health. *The downside to this program is the expense of becoming certified.*

Other non-LEED programs that give a certification but can be more cost effective and worth looking into include:

- *BREEAM*
- *PHIUS-Passive House*
- *Net Zero Energy Building*
- *Living Building Challenge*
- *Green Globes*
- *NAHB Green Homes*
- *Energy Star*
- *IREM Certified Sustainability Properties*

The city's environmental efforts are exceptional and include:

- Green check program
- Electronics recycling center
- 25 community gardens
- Seeds -- middle school summer camp working the gardens
- Citizens Environmental Academy
- Live Green Lexington
- Blue Grass Pride
- Green Fest
- Watershed Festival
- Great American Cleanup -- Coordinate a cleanup anywhere and receive free bags, gloves and other supplies
- Free Trash Disposal Day -- residents may dispose of up to one pickup truck load of household waste
- Party for the Planet -- a celebration of Earth Month at the Arboretum

Congratulations Lexington on making great strides in your environmental efforts and setting a wonderful example of how to be a green city. Cincinnati has created a plan to work toward becoming a 100% green city by the year 2035 in an effort to build a more sustainable future for their city. *You can view its plan at: GreenCincinnatiPlan.com and perhaps pick up a few ideas to adopt in Lexington.*

Celebrating Heritage Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings (NS = Not Scored)					
5. CELEBRATING HERITAGE (CH): recognition, designation, protection, commemoration, and celebration of historical, cultural, natural, agricultural, and industrial resources	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
CH.01 - Historic preservation ordinance provides designation and/or protection from demolition					X	
CH.02 - Incentives offered to promote preservation: tax credits, waived permit fees, eased setbacks, available rebates, etc.				X		
CH.03 - Effective communication about ordinances, policies, and restoration methods				X		
CH.04 - Land trusts and/or conservation easements are available			NS	X	NS	NS
CH.05 - Historic Preservation and/or Architectural Review Board in place			NS	X	NS	NS
CH.06 - Historical Society is active			NS	X	NS	NS
Plan of Action						
CH.07 - National Register of Historic Places district and/or individual designations in place					X	
CH.08 - Natural and/or agricultural areas are protected				X		
CH.09 - Archives, artifacts, cemetery records, and oral histories in place and properly stored				X		
CH.10 - Historical publications/websites, interpretive signage, and programs in place					X	
Commemoration						
CH.11 - Signage in place for historic neighborhoods and/or structures					X	
CH.12 - Historical museum(s) and/or interpretive displays maintained					X	
CH.13 - Cemeteries, monuments, and/or plaques in place and well maintained					X	
CH.14 - Community heritage promoted through tours (guided or self), brochures, Smartphone apps, etc.					X	
CH.15 - Parades, festivals, and other events commemorating a community's heritage are held					X	
Community Involvement						
CH.16 - Volunteers participate in planning and implementing recognition of a community's heritage through historical tours, parades, festivals, etc.					X	
CH.17 - Volunteers participate in maintaining historical sites and structures					X	
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
CH.18 - Judges to enter text below						X
The completed rehab of the Old Fayette County Courthouse.						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
5. Celebrating Heritage (CH)	66		48		72.73%	

Celebrating Heritage (CH) Recommendations:

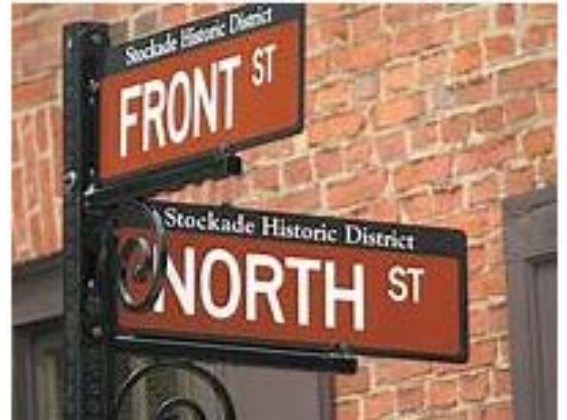
By enacting the nation's first Urban Growth Boundary in 1958, Lexington was well on the way 60 years ago to preserving and celebrating its heritage. The Purchase of the Development Rights program will protect working farms from development for years to come and is over halfway to its goal of 50,000 acres. Bourbon distilleries, tobacco barns, cattle and horses are all part of Lexington's past and should be preserved, remembered and celebrated. The many farm-to-table restaurants and farmers markets that are opening in Lexington are a present-day tribute to this Central Kentucky heritage. Kentucky is #1 in the country for the sale of horses, and horse breeding and racing are staples of Lexington.

Not only has Lexington taken steps to preserve its agricultural heritage, it has set the example by preserving the Lafayette Hotel, built in 1920, and using it as its Government Center. The residents and visitors can enjoy this beautifully preserved building that is on the National Register of Historic Buildings.



There are five historic districts in Lexington. They are identified by signs, but these signs were hard to find and at times cluttered by other signs. *Lexington could make identifying these neighborhoods easier for residents as well as visitors. Consider installing signature brown "historic district" street signs within the historic district, so residents and visitors will know the boundaries of*

that district. The City may be able to secure a grant from a state Landmarks Preservation Foundation that works with Historic Landmark Commissions to underwrite these historical markers.



Lexington has a strong Department of Historic Preservation that is responsible for providing assistance to owners of historic properties and reviews projects on historic buildings. This encourages the preservation of historic properties. Maintaining an historic building can be very costly and time consuming. *Work closely with the residents living in your historic districts by providing information on opportunities for grants and funding that are available as well as educational "how-to" classes so that these historic buildings can continue to be preserved. This can be done through a page on the city website, perhaps under "Neighborhoods and Housing" or a separate "Historic Lexington" website.*

A walk around town to visit the historic buildings and gardens with a guide, much like we took on our tour of Lexington, highlighting the buildings, gardens and heritage of Lexington could be developed. This could give families, residents and visitors another reason to spend time in the downtown core and learn more about its history and heritage. With the availability of WiFi, an historic tour could be developed that people could take on their own and could encompass the more

rural areas, including horse racing, parks and residential areas. As you continue to develop your trail system, an historical bike tour could also be created.

One of the highlights of the judges' tour was viewing the many book benches, a tribute to Kentucky authors that were added around the city. It is a wonderful collaborative effort between the Arts Connect, LexArts and the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning with initial funding by VisitLex, the Downtown Lexington Management District, and the Corridors Commission. Thirty-five book benches are illustrated to celebrate Lexington's Literary Heritage. What a great collaborative effort by a number of organizations within the city that was an inspiration for children to read! We can't wait to hear what your plans are for next year!



The judges were delighted to see the historic American Basswood tree at the Henry Clay tomb in the Lexington Cemetery. It's not just the largest tree in Lexington, but the largest American Basswood in the nation. On a plaque that sits at the base of the tree, the notation reads "The National Arborist Association and the International Society of Arboriculture jointly recognized this tree in this bicentennial year (1987) as having lived here at the time of the signing of our constitution." *Having a tree of this historic significance in your community is truly something special and should be celebrated every year.*

Identify your historic trees through your tree inventory with historic plaques and/or markers. *Include the variety and year the tree sprouted. Create a brochure that can be housed in City Hall and or the Chamber of Commerce office mapping these trees on a walking tour along with fun and educational information such as:*

- *What the world was like when the tree was a little sapling*
- *The mode of transportation*
- *What President was in office*
- *What war (if any) going on*

These historical trees and the information that you are able to collect can be worked into the elementary school curriculum. Children can dress up in the costume of the period when the tree was planted, visit the trees and share information about that time period with their fellow students.

If you are looking to have some fun, learn about history or just get in a bit of exercise, Lexington has festivals and events that will keep you coming back week after week after week. Throughout the year, you can find something that will keep you

entertained, gaining knowledge or just enjoying the city or countryside. Whether you bike, run, love music or horses, there is something for everyone including:

- Thursday Night Live
- Roots and Heritage Festival
- The Rolex Three-Day Event at the Horse Park
- Friday night movie screenings at Jacobson Park and Triangle Park
- Picnic with the Pops at Keeneland
- Pumpkinmania at Transylvania University
- Festival Latino de Lexington
- Fourth of July Festival and parade
- Annual Midsummer Night's Run Race
- Bike Lexington Family Ride and Program
- SummerFest outdoor theatre
- Ballet Under the Stars at Woodland Park
- Lexus Smooth Jazz Festival and Jazz at Ecton Park

The recently renovated and opened Old Fayette County Courthouse is a treasure that has been brought back to life. Celebrate this building and all your other notable buildings with a festival that will highlight and celebrate these historic landmarks and the history of Lexington.

Community Vitality (CV) Criterion Definition	Metrics Ratings					
6. COMMUNITY VITALITY (CV): policies, programs, and outdoor activities and facilities that lead to a vibrant community and a sense of well-being. Includes parks, playgrounds, dog parks, sports fields, water activities, trails, and other outdoor recreational opportunities	N/A	Not Meeting (0 pts)	Approaching (1 pt)	Meeting (2 pts)	Exceeding (3 pts)	Excelling (4 pts)
Leadership and Policy						
CV.01 - Clean Air (such as No Smoking) policies implemented					X	
CV.02 - Master plan in place for public green space and parks				X		
CV.03 - ADA accessibility in public outdoor areas including playgrounds				X		
Outdoor Facilities and Events						
CV.04 - Outdoor recreation facilities meet community needs				X		
CV.05 - Walking, biking, and exercise trails exist					X	
CV.06 - Outdoor performances/events for art, dance, theatre, music, and/or cinema					X	
CV.07 - Run/walk/bike races and marathons held					X	
CV.08 - Benches and seating available near walking, exercise, and playground areas					X	
CV.09 - Trees or shade sails are in proper areas to provide shade for spectators and/or participants				X		
CV.10 - Playground equipment exists and age-appropriate ranges are offered					X	
CV.11 - Farmers' Markets are available					X	
Community Involvement						
CV.12 - Community gardening sites are in use					X	
CV.13 - Volunteer involvement in planning, funding, and/or and implementing civic events such as organized runs, walks, etc.					X	
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
CV.14 - Judges to enter text below						X
The ConnectLex Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
6. Community Vitality (CV)	56		39		69.64%	

Community Vitality (CV) Recommendations:

Vitality is defined as the state of being strong and active. A strong and active community requires facilities that allow residents and business owners places to go and things to do to stay physically fit.

If you can think of an activity, chances are Lexington has it. Lexington provides year-round activities and numerous ways for residents and visitors to stay active and involved.

The Lexington Park system is a great place to start. Offering more than 100 parks nestled within the city's neighborhoods, and within walking or biking distance, the parks are a great place to swim, hike, picnic, play horseshoes, golf and have fun on the playgrounds. They are beautiful, safe, well-kept and take into consideration youth, adults and those with special needs. Some of the parks have archery, skating, basketball, baseball, fishing and getting involved in organized activities is really easy to do.



Help children and adults with special needs enjoy their local parks by providing ADA accessible trails, ramps and activities in all parks. Add tables specifically designed to accommodate wheelchairs to all parks and for easy access, place these tables on cement pads with access directly off of trails/paths. Even though the park may not have an ADA accessible play area, the trails and tables will still allow families to enjoy the park for picnics and family gatherings.

Consider upgrading the ADA accessible playground at Woodland Park to a rubber playground surfacing system such as those from Surface America. These surfaces provide a cleaner/neater surface, a playground that is easier to navigate and doesn't require daily maintenance to keep the area safe. Wood chips require constant maintenance, must be turned over occasionally to prevent decomposing, do not have good drainage qualities, and about 25% of the material must be replaced each year. All good reasons to make the switch! In the meantime, monitor these areas daily to keep mulch coverings, particularly those in ADA areas well groomed so that the base is not exposed leading to potential danger and difficulty navigating the area.



Jacobson Park is listed as having boating, fishing and lake access and with the exception of the pools and splash parks appears to be one of the few direct connections the city has to water activities. *If the lake is suitable, the addition of a kayak launch ramp that is also ADA accessible, a canoe launch, and two-man paddlewheels would provide more things to do*

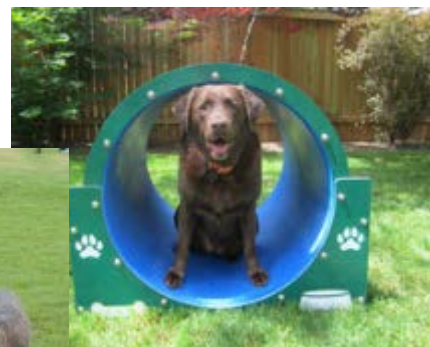
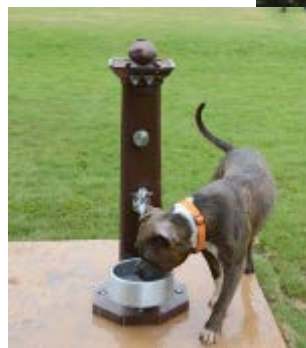
around the lake, especially on those hot summer days.

Exercise stations would be a great addition to the current trail system, particularly to those parks where you find a larger population of runners/joggers/walkers. Fit-Trail is an outdoor exercise system that can be installed along a walking or jogging trail. It contains instruction signs and exercise equipment designed for the novice or conditioned athlete. These exercise systems, suitable for all ages, add an extra element to an exercise routine. Fit Trail www.fittrail.com/10station.html has a both a 10- and 20-station fit trail available. The typical trail length for a 10-station fitness system is between ¼ mile to 1 mile long and for a 20 -station fitness system, between ½ mile and 2 miles long.



If you like to ride a bike, you are in luck living or visiting Lexington. May is bike month, and June is Bike Lexington. The Horsey 100 rolls through Lexington, and the Legacy and Town Branch trails will keep you pedaling all year long. Lexington has invested in a ride share program with 500 bikes in the city and 200 on campus, so anyone will have access to this mode of transportation and has added bike lanes throughout the city. The judges also noticed the prevalence of bike racks downtown. *Additional bike racks could be added to the parks and at the Children's Garden at the Arboretum at the University of Kentucky as well.*

Lexington takes care of its four legged friends as well with five dog parks of which the judges were able to view two. These are great places, particularly downtown, to be able to get your dog out to stretch his or her legs and for both the dog and the owner to meet new friends. Having water available to the dogs particularly on a hot day or after they have been out running and playing is essential. *If water is not tapped into these parks, you'll want to add a fountain that is easily accessible by the dogs and will provide clean, fresh water.*



Adding agility equipment to the dog parks will add to the fun and help to make the day out even more enjoyable and exciting for your dogs. Companies such as Dog-On-It Parks provide the safe, fun exercise and agility equipment as well as fountains, water features, benches and tables. You can find more information at: www.dog-on-it-parks.com

Horses anyone? Yes, indeed! If you love horses, ride horses or just enjoy the lush green rolling hills and fences of horse country, Lexington is the place to be. The Horse Capital of the World does its people proud with polo, harness races, the World Equestrian Games, Keeneland, the Kentucky Horse Park, the Saddlebred Horse Show and the Rolex Three Day Event, just to name a few. You'll find just about everything there is to do for the enjoyment and beauty of horses and more in Lexington!

The Therapeutic Recreation program through the Parks and Recreation Department is outstanding. It is providing inclusion and a place for children with special needs to interact with their peers and have fun. Most activities are for ages 13 and up. *Don't forget that our younger children need the stimulation and want to have fun as well, so an expansion of your programs to include more classes for those under the age of 13 will be helpful to their development and well-being. In the activities for all ages that qualify, look into becoming certified as a Special Olympics participant. These programs give our special needs youth the opportunity to compete and in the long run build self-esteem and courage. Programs can include everything from running to equestrian events.*

Now that the Symposium for America in Bloom is behind you, look into the possibility of hosting the Special Olympics Kentucky state games in Lexington, particularly the equestrian events.

McConnell Springs is a beautiful respite right in the middle of an industrial park. This facility allows easy access during a lunch hour as a place to quickly get away from the hustle and bustle of the busy city life. *While reading the McConnell Springs website, it was noted that amongst the guidelines of what is not allowed in the park, smoking was not included in the list. Since cigarette and cigar smoke can take away from the beauty of the park, can lead to cigarette butt litter which can be an environmental hazard, and can leave behind toxins and the tobacco mosaic virus, adding no smoking to your list of items not allowed will only benefit this beautiful park and will assure those that come as a healthy, natural place to visit.*

Getting our children outdoors is vital. The University of Kentucky Arboretum, especially the Children's Garden, is working to not only get our kids outside to play but to add the element of reading in the garden. The Children's Garden is also a place where kids can go to be kids. Playing, digging in the dirt, day camp, experiencing the great outdoors and everything around us, is what the Children's Garden is all about. *Work with the local library to create a program together that involves summer reading incorporating the garden and selected titles that are fun and educational. Set goals for the number of books read from different educational topics and for each age group. Work with the local supermarkets, restaurants, etc. to reward children that have reached each of their goals to receive a frozen treat, a paperback book to keep or a pass to an activity or event.*

A real gem of Lexington is its small local neighborhoods of which there are many. Small locally owned stores, restaurants and services are all within an easy walk or bike ride. This ability to be able to reach these proprietors without driving a motorized vehicle adds to walkability index of a city and offers surprising benefits to our health, the environment, finances and our communities. *Identify these neighborhoods the same way you would identify your historic districts. Cities such as Chicago have created wonderful pockets that make each neighborhood unique and take on the ownership and pride of those living within that neighborhood. Highlight a neighborhood each month on the city website and in the local newspaper along with the people of that neighborhood that are making a difference in Lexington.*



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Ol.17 - Volunteer funding and participation in community revitalization and improvement programs, such as river sweep, home repair programs (CHIP), disaster relief, clean-up days, etc.				X		
Ol.18 - Programs are available for residents to fund public amenities such as memorial benches, brick pathways, etc.				X		
Ol.19 - Volunteer involvement in Adopt-A-Spot Programs, Habitat for Humanity Projects, River Sweep, etc.					X	
Ol.20 - Recognition programs for volunteers					X	
Ol.21 - Volunteer hours recorded					X	
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note						
Ol.22 - Judges to enter text below						X
The blue horse Wayfinding signs coupled with the Walk Your City Signs are helping visitors find their way around Lexington and are a great combination.						
Totals:	Possible Points		Actual Points		Percentage	
7. Overall Impression (OI)	88		61		69.32%	

Overall Impression (OI) Recommendations:

Lexington is a vibrant, beautiful city that radiates a comfortable vibe and makes one instantly feel right at home. The streets and sidewalks are in good shape and, if not, are being repaired. Lamp posts, wayfinding signs, bike racks and benches are all in good shape and appropriately placed. Graffiti, billboards and postings are not visible and volunteer efforts are evident and substantial. Floral displays, landscaping, banners and the numerous murals all add to the beauty of the downtown streets.

Sometimes we have to put up with traffic signal or other large utility boxes on our streets which can take away from the attractiveness of the area. Lexington has started to use these boxes as a way to communicate with the public. You can also have fun with these boxes in areas where a little color and whimsy can add to the area by hiring artists to provide their creative touch.



Occasionally a business or two moves out of their space downtown, leaving an empty storefront. This is something that typically can't be helped; however, *you can enhance that empty storefront by adding window clings highlighting historical locations and buildings around the city or places not to miss when visiting. The clings are easy to put up, easy to take down, and can be used again in another empty storefront.*



The addition of SPIN is a great idea. The dockless bikeshare short-term rental program allows users to rent a bicycle just for the time that they need it and can be locked and left anywhere. *Although the system requires that you download a phone App to be able to find bikes and pay for your rental, informational signs near popular bike rack locations can help everyone to understand that the bikes are available for everyone's use, how easy it's done and the environmental beauty of bike sharing and using bicycles as a mode of transportation.*

Wellington Park is a beautiful respite that sits close to a residential area on the southwest side of the city on Clay Mills and New Circle Roads. It is one of the earliest areas to incorporate the Reforest the Bluegrass program, and it is working well. There are a number of attractions in this park including a dog park split into big dog/little dog areas, a three-mile paved circle around the park suitable for walkers and runners, the Lexington Women's Recognition Garden with memorial bricks, a children's Five Senses



Garden and the Daffodil Drift, honoring the Community Champions. The judges would like to provide a few recommendations for this park:

- *Add a sign on the New Circle Road side of the Community Champions garden letting all who pass by know that it is there.*
- *Add recycling containers alongside of the trash barrels in this park.*
- *Create cement pads to add sculptures that can be changed out every six months to a year. Visit the St. Charles, Illinois website: <https://www.stcparks.org/st-charles-sculpture-in-the-park-launches-13th-annual-exhibit-with-new-website-application-process/> to learn more about its Sculptures in the Park program.*
- *Although there is a temporary restroom facility that is surrounded by a beautiful work of art, you'll want to consider adding more permanent restrooms that are ADA compliant, so everyone can enjoy this park.*
- *The addition of ADA compliant tables will also add to the enjoyment for those that are wheelchair bound.*

Dumpsters and trash cans can be a real eye-sore in cities when they sit out in the open. You can improve the look of a city by shielding or hiding these necessities. While dumpsters are not being used, keep them behind a gated structure that will add not detract from the area. For trash bins, on days other than the weekly pick up, keep these containers behind buildings and out of sight of those passing by.



Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET) Definition	Metrics Ratings		
8. EVALUATION TOUR PREPARATION AND ACTIONS (ET): community's readiness prior to and the action during the Evaluation Tour	N/A	Unmet (0 pts)	Met (1 pt)
Prior to the Evaluation Tour			
ET.01 - Community Profile provided to judges at least two weeks prior to their arrival			X
ET.02 - Community Profile includes contacts with emails		X	
ET.03 - Community Profile from a returning community makes it clear what is new and/or implemented from judges' recommendations (scored as N/A for a new community)		X	
ET.04 - Evaluation Tour itinerary and Community map with boundaries provided to judges at least two weeks prior to their arrival		X	
During the Evaluation Tour			
ET.05 - Evaluation Tour provided a representative cross-section of the community			X
ET.06 - Judges met with municipal leaders			X
ET.07 - Judges met with the business and/or non-profit community			X
ET.08 - Judges met with the media			X
ET.09 - Judges met with volunteers			X
ET.10 - Judges were asked to give a presentation(s)			X
Final Wrap-Up			
ET.11 - Enough time was allotted for judges to work on the Evaluation Tour Report in a quiet place with adequate WiFi availability		X	
ET.12 - Community participated in a wrap-up session at the end of the Evaluation Tour			X
Judges' Discretion: Recognition by the judges of an item of special note			
ET.13 - Judges to enter text below			X
The wrap up session was well done with the appropriate individuals attending.			
Totals:	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percentage
8. Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET)	13.00	9.00	69.23%

Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions (ET) Recommendations:

Thank you for providing an extensive list of those participating in the America in Bloom Lexington tour along with their contact information. Next year you will want to be sure that information is included in the community profile.

The judges would like to have proper time to do their reading and research on your community prior to arriving so receiving the community profile at least two weeks ahead of making their trip is important to be properly prepared.

Providing the judges at least two hours at the end of each day to work on their evaluations is required. This benefits your community so that the judges can compile the information from the day's activities and collect the questions that they need to ask the following day.

Thank you for a wonderful two days in Lexington!

DISCLAIMER:

All information is given to the best of America in Bloom's knowledge and is believed to be accurate. Your conditions of use and application of recommendations and/or suggested products are beyond our control. There is no warranty expressed or implied regarding the accuracy of any given data or statements. America in Bloom specifically disclaims any responsibility or liability relating to the use of the recommendations and/or suggested products and shall under no circumstances whatsoever, be liable for any special, incidental or consequential damages which may arise from such use.

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2018 Community Recognitions

Community: Lexington, Kentucky

Recognized Criterion: Urban Forestry

Lexington takes its trees very seriously, and it's safe to say the entire community has become a tree-hugging city. Everywhere you look, there are tree preservation and reforestation efforts, and if you haven't been involved in a tree activity in the last year, you really can't call yourself a true Lexingtonian. Designated a Tree City USA for more than 30 years, the longest in the state of Kentucky, the community also have the distinction of having two campuses listed in The Tree Campus USA program. Reforest the Bluegrass, is an annual volunteer tree planting event that has been a huge success recreating and restoring a forest habitat that was once active to the inner Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. To date, volunteers have planted more than 130,000 tree seedlings, and the program has been praised as one of the largest urban forestry projects in the US. If the projects had been carried out by paid workers, the cost would have been \$750,000. And if all that wasn't enough, how about Lexington's first-ever Tree Week? An entire week devoted to celebrating the trees of Lexington is scheduled for October 6th through the 14th.

Noteworthy Project or Initiative: Citizens Environmental Academy

This spring the first Citizens Environmental Academy class graduated. It is a year-long program designed to educate residents, provide a deeper understanding of the city's environmental efforts, and get them involved. One of the accomplished projects was the storm water remediation protecting the Blue Hole at McConnell Springs, a historical natural feature. Lexington noted the CEA in its profile as their Best Idea and the judges agree.