

2018

STRATEGIC PLAN

Lexington, Virginia

I

Healthy &
Physically
Active

II

Economically
Healthy

III

Learning

IV

Safe

V

Engaged

CITY COUNCIL

Lexington City Council voted to adopt the Lexington Strategic Plan on January 3, 2019.



Council member David G. Sigler, Mayor Frank W. Friedman, Council member Michele F. Hentz, Council member Leslie C. Straughan, Council member Marilyn E. Alexander, Council member Dr. J. Patrick Rhamey, Jr., and Council member Charles "Chuck" Smith

CITY MANAGER'S MESSAGE



City Manager
NOAH A. SIMON

It is my pleasure to present the Lexington Strategic Plan. This plan reflects the input of engaged citizens, community and business partners, Mayor and Council members, and City staff. Lexington began the strategic planning process in the summer of 2017. The vision provides the foundation for the plan's five key outcome areas: Healthy and Physically Active, Economically Healthy, Learning, Safe, and Engaged. We developed the goals and strategies in each outcome area through analysis of citizen needs and desires, local and national trends, and information provided by experts within the city organization. The Strategic Plan is a tool that clearly articulates priorities to the Lexington community and will direct the development of the budget and Capital Improvements Plan. I want to convey my appreciation to all of the citizens who provided their time and input to the process, the Mayor and Council for their leadership, and City staff for their hard work and commitment to Lexington.



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WHAT IS THE STRATEGIC PLAN?

The Lexington Strategic Plan is a road map that directs the city's pursuit of its vision and desired goals on a short term, long term, and ongoing basis. This strategic plan is the product of months of diligent work by the Lexington City Council, citizen groups and City staff, and provides a benchmark of where we currently are, where we would like to be, and how we plan to get there.

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Stage 1: City Council Brainstorming Sessions

City Council met several times with consultant Craig Gerhart of Gerhart Enterprises, Inc. to brainstorm the vision statement and talk about their aspirations for Lexington. This resulted in the creation of five vision elements.

Stage 2: City Staff Develop Policy Briefs

Members of City staff formed five groups to develop policy briefs exploring each of the five Vision Elements. These briefs were presented to City Council, who then solidified goals for each vision element.

Stage 3: Citizen Groups Define Strategies

Citizens, Council members, and members of City staff formed groups which met several times and determined strategies and action steps for each of the goals defined by Council in the previous stage.

Stage 4: Review and Adoption

City Council reviewed the overall goals, strategies and vision statement and voted to adopt the Strategic Plan on December 6, 2018.

Stage 5: Begin Implementation

City staff and City Council have begun pursuing strategies and initiatives in order to reach the goals of the Strategic Plan.



READING THIS PLAN

Performance Indicators

Vision Elements

Components of the vision statement.

Goals

Planned achievable targets that the city strives to achieve.

Strategic Action Items

Specific projects, programs or actions departments use or implement to accomplish goals and objectives. Strategic action items serve as detailed work plans that lead resource allocation.

Term

The desired time frame in which strategic action items should be completed. **Short Term** items should be completed within the next two years. **Long Term** items should be completed in the next five years. **Ongoing** items will occur continuously.

Department Key

Each strategy in the Strategic Plan has one or more city departments assigned to it. These departments take ownership and are responsible for completing the task.

CM	City Manager
F	Finance
PW	Public Works
P&D	Planning and Development
FD	Fire
PD	Police
HR	Human Resources
Y	Youth Services
LSB	Lexington School Board
O	Outside Organization(s)

Budgeting and Review Process

Strategic planning and budgeting are integral components of good management. The strategic plan charts direction, while the budget provides resources to implement the plan. A strategic plan neither grounded in fiscal reality nor linked to the budget would be only a dream. On the other hand, resource allocation without strategic thinking would be shortsighted and unresponsive to future conditions.

Strategic planning guides the budget process. It establishes and affords management an opportunity to reevaluate existing allocations of funds. Lexington will develop strategies and action plans that detail what will be accomplished to achieve strategic planning goals and objectives each year. These action plans, together with performance measures, provide the strongest links between the operating and capital budgets.

Since government funding continues to be limited, strategic planning helps the city strive to “do more with less” while remaining focused on results. City Council will assess progress on the Strategic Plan periodically and will conduct a review of the plan every two years.



ENVISION LEXINGTON

The Vision Statement

Lexington is an inviting, open-minded and welcoming city. Our community is known for its cultural, recreational and educational opportunities. Accomplishing this vision requires a solution-focused and fiscally responsible city government, a vibrant and economically healthy downtown, and an engaged citizenry interested in friendly, livable and safe neighborhoods.

The Vision Elements










- I Healthy & Physically Active
- II Economically Healthy
- III Learning
- IV Safe
- V Engaged



VISION I: Healthy & Physically Active City

GOAL I

Increase accessibility for the disabled and continue efforts to achieve compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Ensure that all city projects under Public Works include ADA planning and compliance.	 	Ongoing
Consider offering "Did You Know" education to select private groups to encourage voluntary compliance or accommodation for ADA issues. Targeted groups to educate could include downtown businesses, realtors, landlords, and/or remodelers and developers.	  	Short Term
Conduct an ADA assessment to look at improvements to city streets and walkways.	 	Short Term
Prepare an overlay map consistent with the city zoning map that locates ADA survey results.	 	Long Term

The quality of life for all citizens is important as is the improvement of access for all persons with disabilities. Lexington strives to comply with ADA standards for the betterment of all persons, be they citizens or visitors. Although our historic city is challenged with limited rights-of-way and aged infrastructure, every effort will be made to bring accessible assets into compliance with the ADA as infrastructure improvements are made citywide.

VISION I: Healthy & Physically Active City

GOAL II Increase awareness and availability in adult recreational opportunities

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Build a working group including community organization representatives that could support recreational opportunities and evaluate appropriate methods to market existing recreational resources that are sustainable over time.		Short Term
Create regular open-gym opportunities for various age groups.		Short Term
Study transportation options that include pick up and drop off at health and recreation facilities via the Maury Express and/or Rockbridge Area Transportation System.		Long Term
Encourage the development and marketing of community events that support recreation; potentially run a section in the local paper each week for races, hikes, birding, clean-up days, and sports enrollment deadlines.	 	Ongoing

Many opportunities exist in Lexington for youths to be involved in recreational opportunities. However, the choices for adults to be involved with organized recreation is more limited. While passive recreation such as the Woods Creek Trail is available to all, adults desire to be involved with organized activities such as adult softball, volleyball, and soccer. The development of these opportunities would make Lexington a more attractive place to live as a young or middle-aged adult.

VISION I: Healthy & Physically Active City

GOAL III Examine city employee wellness program opportunities

Strategic Action Items

Departments

Term

Work with OneDigital, a health and employee benefits company, to assess wellness program opportunities for employees and determine the following: What is wellness? Does it include only health? What is financial wellness? What metric should be used to measure wellness?



Short Term

A wellness program will provide employees with tools and knowledge to improve their physical and mental health. In addition to the benefits afforded to city employees for improving their health, the city would expect to experience reduced insurance costs, fewer employee absences, earlier illness diagnoses, and reduced worker's compensation claims. A financial wellness program would reduce employee stress by providing financial planning tools for day to day budgeting and in the preparation for retirement.

VISION I: Healthy & Physically Active City

GOAL IV Improve walk-ability and bike-ability for recreation and transportation






Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Utilize Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission to inventory current sidewalks, walkways, bike paths, and ADA access. Create a plan for improvements.	P&D	Long Term
Define the city trail system and plans for creating connectors with various trails in Lexington to those in Rockbridge County, W&L, and VMI. Connections to consider include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brushy Blue, Boxerwood trails, Kendal trails • Connections from city parks to the trail system 	P&D PW	Long Term
Improve downtown walk-ability.	P&D PW	Ongoing

Lexington is a compact urban area, but improvements can be made to the existing sidewalks and bike infrastructure to increase mobility. A bike/pedestrian plan is needed to inventory sidewalks and bike lanes, which would help determine deficiencies and needed improvements. The national trend is toward increased walking and biking as a healthier mode of transportation. Lexington should participate by making appropriate infrastructure investments allowing citizens to walk and bike more.

VISION I: Healthy & Physically Active City

GOAL V

Improve Jordan's Point to be a destination for outdoor activities

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
In conjunction with stakeholders, identify opportunities to increase recreation at the area including fishing, biking, paddling, running, walking, and swimming.	 	Short Term
Develop a master plan for Jordan's Point Park incorporating the above elements.	  	Long Term

With the planned removal of the Jordan's Point dam, the interaction of the park and the Maury River will change markedly. Lexington anticipates this change and will advertise a request for proposals for a new master plan for Jordan's Point Park to improve existing facilities and experiences at the park.

VISION II: Economically Healthy City

GOAL I Exert positive influence on regional economic development





Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Continue to lead in economic development for Lexington, and play an important supporting role for development in the surrounding area.	CM O	Ongoing
Offer incentives where appropriate.	CM	Short Term
Consider creating an economic development position.	CM HR	Long Term
Facilitate conversations between public and private transportation providers to ensure that they are meeting the needs of our residents and visitors.	CM O	Ongoing
Consider creative solutions to growing, recruiting, retaining, and improving our workforce. This also helps with population growth.	HR CM	Ongoing

Lexington is a regional hub for dining, retail, and entertainment. Attracting commercial activity both within city limits and in the county increases the quality of life for residents and attractiveness to the area for visitors. The city partners with the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Lexington, and other local governments and local entities to achieve this. Staffing of an economic development position may enhance future efforts in this regard. The offering of tax incentives may be helpful in promoting desired economic development.

VISION II: Economically Healthy City

GOAL II

Ensure adequate population and demographic mix for a healthy community

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Incentivize and encourage multi-family and high-density development or redevelopment in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.	CM 	Short Term
Consider ways to increase affordability of units for lower-income residents.	CM 	Ongoing
Compensate public employees with competitive wages, raises, and benefits.	CM 	Ongoing
Encourage development and redevelopment of upper floors in downtown properties as a means of increasing downtown population.	CM 	Ongoing

A demographic balance and adequate population growth rates are necessary for economic vitality in a community. Including several thousand college students who come and go throughout the year, Lexington is home to about 7,045 residents with a median income of just under \$35,000 per year, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Encouraging and promoting the development of affordable housing and a mix of housing types is a must.

VISION II: Economically Healthy City

GOAL III Diversify tax base and reduce reliance on property taxes

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Explore the best use of currently underutilized city-owned properties.	CM P&D F	Ongoing
Consider incentives to encourage development that would increase the tax base.	CM P&D	Ongoing
Consider creating new fees, such as fees on stormwater, and/or increasing existing fees	CM PW F	Short Term
Evaluate the feasibility of capturing the development value of Brushy Hills (and possibly Moore's Creek) without giving up ownership of it.	CM F P&D	Long Term
Consider making improvements to conserve energy in city-owned buildings where appropriate.	CM F	Ongoing

Lexington currently relies heavily on property taxes to sustain itself and provide services to the public. This can cause stress on Lexington's overall economic health, as well as on property owners. To create more of a balance, the city will explore additional development opportunities, assess energy consumption, and consider new sources of revenue. City properties should be used for the highest and best use.

VISION II: Economically Healthy City

GOAL IV

Maintain and update infrastructure and align fees with costs

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Continue to make infrastructure a priority by following the recommendations in the Financial Roadmap.	PW CM	Ongoing
Make infrastructure a priority in the Capital Improvements Plan budget.	PW CM F	Ongoing
Continue to aggressively pursue grants from Virginia Department of Transportation.	PW	Ongoing
Consider new stormwater fee to cover new investments and improvements in infrastructure.	CM PW F	Short Term
Support and expand infrastructure, such as RANA, that makes Lexington attractive to new and expanding businesses.	CM PW F	Ongoing

As a small city originally chartered in 1777, Lexington's landscape and infrastructure have very much evolved with the times, often meaning there is a need for improvements. An updated infrastructure system improves the quality of life for residents and attracts new and expanding businesses. Lexington's current initiatives reflect support for maintaining infrastructure, including ongoing waterline and sewer replacement projects as well as major street resurfacing and reconstruction in the downtown area. The city will take deliberate measures to continue prioritizing infrastructure by aligning its long term planning and policies with this goal, ensuring sound financial management along the way.

VISION II: Economically Healthy City

GOAL V Promote entrepreneurial opportunities

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Assess how tourism is marketed and at what cost.	CM F O	Short Term
Encourage local business-to-business activity.	CM O	Ongoing
Be aware of opportunities for small businesses, such as grants.	CM O	Ongoing
Encourage the development of a business ecosystem, which includes incubators, maker spaces, accelerators, etc.	CM O	Ongoing
Play a role in finding continued funding for new business training and support, such as Launch Lex, possibly using Industrial Development Authority funds.	CM F O	Short Term
Consider a sustainable funding method for Main Street Lexington such as additional Transient Occupancy Tax with a cap.	CM F O	Short Term

Lexington's historic downtown is known for its thriving small business community which provides visitors, residents and college students with a central hub in which to shop, dine and be entertained. Promoting entrepreneurial activity throughout the city will help fuel the economy, provide job opportunities, and serve the many interests of the public. To do this, Lexington will assess its current relationships with regional partners such as Tourism and Main Street Lexington, as well as seek its own funds to encourage the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

VISION III: Learning City

GOAL I



Provide access to K-12 education that is competitive with top-ranked schools in the broader region

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Examine data on school quality.	CM LSB	Short Term
Examine evaluation tools with respect to progress and equity.	LSB	Ongoing

Quality education is a key factor in bringing diverse families to Lexington. In order to enhance the quality of life for city residents, the schools need to offer a quality education. Both Lexington City Schools are 100 percent accredited through 2019 and have SOL pass rates above the state level. Harrington Waddell Elementary School is award winning. Lexington City Schools continues to grow in technological advances. Rockbridge County High School offers many choices post-graduation, including employment, military, technical/vocational school, two-year college for transfer to a four-year school, or certification leading to employment, or acceptance into a four-year college or university. In order to promote success after high school, students need access to a high school education that is competitively ranked in US News and World Report to top-ranked schools in Albemarle, Roanoke Counties and Harrisonburg.

VISION III: Learning City

GOAL II Increase availability of fulltime affordable daycare









Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
<p>Study demand and determine whether there is a gap in childcare services in Lexington. Then identify the city's role in addressing this opportunity.</p>		<p>Short Term</p>
<p>Publicize information about opportunities for pre-school and childcare through multiple media accessible to the broadest possible population. This information should describe the specific care and education available, the eligibility requirements, the hours at which it is offered, waiting lists for enrollment, and any available scholarships or subsidies.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>

For most families in Lexington, both parents work outside of the home. Affordable, high quality, full time childcare is necessary, yet limited. Early childhood programs have proven to benefit children, both academically and socially, well into adulthood. Lexington has many early childhood education programs that benefit the Pre-K age group. There are three half-day preschools in the area, and five full days (two Montessori), and all of them are modestly expensive. Lexington would benefit greatly from more affordable full-day early childhood education/daycare programs

VISION III: Learning City

GOAL III

Explore adult education opportunities that generate business, provide apprenticeships and workforce development, or encourage expansion of lifelong learning opportunities

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Work with local and prospective employers; identify skills-gaps in the local workforce.	 	Short Term
Continue to participate in workforce development and retention efforts with regional partners (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, the Shenandoah Valley Work Force Development Board, Career and Technical Education, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, etc.).	  	Ongoing
Evaluate if the existing Community Center can be used more efficiently to provide day care/preschool space and evening classes. (Use would have to conform to the loan criteria.)	  	Long Term

Lexington is fortunate to have a broad array of higher education options both within the City and in the nearby surrounding areas. The Dabney S. Lancaster Community College (DSLCC) is a two-year community college in the Virginia Community College System and is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the Associates Degree in Arts and Sciences and the Associates Degree in Applied Sciences. Workforce training programs are also available at DSLCC and can be developed as requested.






Within Lexington are two nationally recognized four-year institutions of higher learning: the Virginia Military Institute and Washington and Lee University. Although vastly different in their approaches, these schools produce high-quality graduates, many of whom consistently return to the area to live and raise their families. These same individuals are often active in the community, serving on numerous city boards and community committees.

VISION IV: Safe City

GOAL I

Rank in the top three cities in the Commonwealth in terms of fewest part 1 crimes

Part 1 Crimes include: murder and non negligent homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft, and arson.

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Maintain Lexington Police Department's accreditation by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Committee		Ongoing
Continue and strengthen collaboration between the various local and regional law enforcement agencies; cooperate fully and collaborate on a daily basis; train together and respond to calls together	 	Ongoing
<p>Educate the public regarding the importance of crime prevention and reporting, specifically in domestic violence, child abuse and illicit/illegal drug use by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air public service announcements provided by the police department and Department of Social Services • Maintain and update the city's website and social media platforms to highlight information about the Citizens Crime Link, updates/initiatives in crime prevention, and upcoming events ongoing as needed • Produce posters with content encouraging reporting of crime and emphasizing the city as one that cares about its residents • Revitalize Community Watch program • Continue sponsoring special events such as the annual Community Cookout and partnering with the Lexington Police Foundation • Complete the process of becoming a Certified Crime Prevention Community, demonstrating the city's commitment to crime prevention. Once certified, more services can be provided 	 	Short Term/ Ongoing

The Lexington Police Department attained state accreditation status in 1998, and the department has since been assessed every four years in order to maintain this status, with an upcoming assessment in January 2019. Accreditation plays a major role in contributing to the effectiveness of the police force in keeping Lexington safe. The Lexington Police Department works closely with and maintains mutual aid agreements with its surrounding law enforcement agencies. The Lexington Police Department desires to achieve more effective communication between the department itself and members of the general public. The department seeks to increase participation in existing programs as well as implement new services or initiatives which can assist with crime prevention. Crime prevention and, ultimately, a safer locality, cannot be achieved without the collaborative effort of both law enforcement and the community it serves.

GOAL II

Achieve and maintain at least a class 3 ISO rating

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Achieve and maintain a class 3 ISO rating through improved training and reporting	FD	Short Term
Increase number of firefighters certified as Level II with the overall goal of all firefighters being Level II	FD HR	Long Term
Improve training records for ISO recognition and credit	FD CM	Ongoing




The Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification is a numerical rating assigned to each community based on an in-depth analysis of their Fire Department, Emergency Communications, and Water Supply. The Public Protection Classification (PPC) program is a tool developed by the ISO for property and casualty insurers to properly assess their risk by rating fire protection services throughout the specific community. The numerical classification assigned to each community then relates to the insurance rates and insurability of properties within that community. Each community is assigned a PPC score between 1 and 10 to the department, with Class 1 representing "superior property fire protection" and Class 10 indicating that an area doesn't meet the minimum criteria set by the ISO.

In developing a PPC, the following major categories are evaluated:

- Emergency Communications
- Fire Department
- Water Supply
- Fire Prevention
- Public Fire Safety Education Programs





The Safe City visions for Lexington of achieving and maintaining an ISO Class 3 rating recognize the value of quality fire protection services and the real cost savings related to home and business insurance purchases that this rating brings to the residents and businesses of Lexington. Based on current rating feedback from ISO, it was determined that the best course of action towards this goal was to improve points earned from ISO in the area of Training and Training Records.

GOAL III Provide and improve pedestrian and bike accommodations and awareness

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
<p>Improve street lighting by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing lighting assessment. • Encouraging VMI to install temporary street lighting from North Main Street to athletic training facility until the aquatic center is built. 		Short Term
<p>Provide new sidewalks and improve the condition of current sidewalks where needed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing city-wide sidewalk survey with assistance from Shenandoah Planning District Commission. • Using results from sidewalk survey and lighting assessment to plan for future improvements and needs. • Constructing bike lane and widening sidewalks from Stop-In to Route 11 Bridge. • Improving the intersection at Jordan Street and Main Street. • Considering paved or raised crosswalks or speed tables in strategic locations. 		Ongoing
<p>Implement a more robust visibility ordinance to address sight concerns and restrictions at intersections.</p>		Long Term
<p>Continue to implement Main Street Lexington's Downtown Enhancement Plan.</p>		Ongoing

Pedestrian and bike accommodations are an integral component of an efficient transportation network. Improving and expanding these facilities, particularly for those with disabilities, strengthens community inclusion, health, and overall quality of life. Expanded use of these facilities will additionally benefit the environment. Making these modes of travel more accessible, efficient and safe will improve the community's overall independent mobility and access to the broader transportation network. These initiatives may also bring a positive economic impact to Lexington by providing links between local and regional historic, cultural, scenic and recreational opportunities.



GOAL IV Provide and improve infrastructure

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
Prioritize and coordinate various upgrades to water and sewer lines; replace primary water distribution lines, and as priorities are established, educate the public and publicize the impacts to neighborhoods, businesses and schools.		Ongoing
Plan for contingencies, such as a "grid", and educate citizens about their responsibilities.		Long Term
Continue relocating utility lines, particularly in conjunction with scheduled infrastructure projects.		Ongoing
Develop and implement a plan to document the knowledge and experience of long-term employees so that the information they have can be used for future projects.		Short Term

America’s infrastructure is rapidly deteriorating. The global infrastructure ranking continues to decline. The overall American Society of Civil Engineer’s infrastructure grade is a D+. Our city is not immune to this endemic problem. Much of Lexington's infrastructure is between 60 and 100 years of age. Deferring replacement will only cost more in future dollars. Sound infrastructure is a necessity for public safety, health and welfare, quality of life, and economic prosperity. Smart planning and project delivery will be required to stretch tax and fee payer dollars to the maximum extent possible. People will not want to live, work, or visit a Lexington with crumbling streets and walks, bridges, or utilities. Continue to follow the road map set forth in current water and sewer infrastructure plans.

VISION V: Engaged City

GOAL Increase and diversify community involvement and civic awareness



Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
<p>Launch a community survey to measure and define current engagement levels and gather intelligence on community interests and communication platforms for best use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outsource the creation of the survey to ensure its effectiveness. • With results from the survey, define a system to quantify engagement with segmented audiences; match outreach platforms with desired audience segments. • Establish measurable goals using current success rates defined from survey outcome. 		Ongoing
<p>High Touch: Increase overall city presence in the community in a proactive and positive way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there is a community event, the city should be there to represent itself, create awareness and inspire engagement. • A city representative should speak to students at university orientations and high school on an annual basis to educate on issues and services and encourage participation. • Distribute informational brochures to long term renters. • Incorporate central phone system with the ability to transfer calls to all city departments. • Increase engagement efforts between local and regional groups. 		Long Term
<p>High Tech: Continue the initiative to increase and improve digital media efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let audience dictate messaging platform and message people where they already are. • Record and broadcast City Council meetings via Facebook Live for accessibility from home. • Create content that is fun and marketable to community interests. • Explore new ground such as Snapchat or city-wide wifi while continuing to evaluate and improve on current services. • Continue to educate, promote, and create awareness of Alert Rockbridge. 		Ongoing

VISION V: Engaged City

GOAL

CONTINUED

Increase and diversify community involvement and civic awareness

Strategic Action Items	Departments	Term
<p>Design an internship program focused on city engagement efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit university and high school students or young professionals in the area with interest in and experience with marketing, public relations, communications, or a related field. Duties would involve assisting city communications officer in carrying out communications-related duties. 		Ongoing
<p>Design a City Ambassador program with universities and high school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet regularly with City Ambassadors to discuss community issues, events, and happenings. Each Ambassador, in turn, is empowered and will report information back to his or her respective group using online and offline communication platforms. 		Short Term

The rise of innovations in technology has provided citizens with new and unprecedented opportunities to directly engage policymakers and government officials. These new communication platforms, including social media, have proven to help close the feedback loop between citizens and their government. Being a small town, Lexington is naturally tight-knit, and information seems to travel fast. However, the city sees an opportunity to improve current methods of engagement - online and offline. The city strives to be inclusive and responsive to citizens' needs in order to enhance the management of public finances, and bring about greater transparency, accountability and social inclusion, resulting in tangible improvements in people's lives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this Strategic Plan involved thorough input and research from city staff members of all levels, as well as insightful input from City Council-selected citizen groups. Each of the individuals below played a part in creating the final product.

Strategic Plan Consultant

Craig Gerhart, Gerhart Enterprises, Inc.

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Citizens

Charles Aligood; Alicia Arbaugh; Atin Basu; Harlan Beckley; Casey Brower; Anthony Buenafe; Terry Burt; Felicia Bush; Jean Clark; Chuck Coleman; Carroll Comstock; Brian Dearing; Sharon Dull; Mimi Elrod; Mollie Fox; Kelly Fujiwara; Natalie Garvis; Jamie Goodin; Montrose Hogan-Cooper; Ben Grigsby; Mason Grist; Steve Grist; Rich Hastings; Tammi Helwig; Stefan Janjic; Bob Lera; Connie Loughhead Carter; Tracy Lyons; David Millon; Matt Niebur; Bruce Patterson; Elizabeth Ramsey; Mark Reed; Jess Reid; Lyndon Sayers; Melissa Gladwell Sayre; Tinni Sen; Jeff Schatten; Katie Shester; Tammi Simpson; Kurt Speers; Summer Sullivan; Ross Waller; Chuck Watts; Stephanie Wilkinson

