

Top Ten Ideas/Innovations to Advance the Bluegrass

Discussed at *InnoVision* Work Sessions

(in alphabetical order)

1. Alternative Regional Transportation. Develop a regional vision for alternative transportation in Central Kentucky, focusing on future needs, inter-city public transportation, and alternatives to automobiles. Alternatives may include light rail (e.g., R.J. Corman Lexington to Frankfort route), high speed rail, and monorail options, bus rapid transit, expansion of traditional bus service including city-to-city routes, improvement of freight rail system, community cars/car sharing, and pedestrian and bicycling travel. Such a regional vision of alternative transportation would complement the Bluegrass Area Development District's review/evaluation and prioritization of unscheduled highway, roads, bikeway, pedestrian, and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) needs at the local and regional level.

Similar concepts are included in Destination 2040, Scott County Vision 2020, Clark County Community Action Plan and has been advocated by the Bluegrass ADD.

2. Arts & Entertainment Trail with Regional Calendar and Wayfinding Signs. Develop a Bluegrass Arts & Entertainment Trail to identify and promote arts and entertainment venues and events. Promote the trail by installing way finding signs, encouraging partnerships among local, regional and state tourism/main street agencies, providing a web-based regional calendar of events, and publishing collateral printed materials. An existing model of such an effort is the KAHT (Kentucky Artisan Heritage Trail) in Madison, Jackson, Rockcastle counties.

Similar wording is also found in Destination 2040, Madison County Economic Development Plan, Paris/Bourbon County Tourism, Scott County Vision 2020

3. Conservation Corridors Linking Preserves & Trails. Develop conservation corridors and engage in planning to link preserves and/or areas important for their ecological characteristics including habitat, water quality and biodiversity, and scenic beauty. This innovation may include scenic view-shed protection and corridor planning along roads such as US 60 and US 25 and could result in regional corridor agreements. Initial steps in this innovation may include efforts to link areas currently under protection of the Purchase of Development Rights program and to develop a Kentucky River Trail system creating public access and connecting nature preserves such as Lower Howard's Creek near Boonesborough, Palisades, and Raven Run. This project would complement the Alternative Regional Transportation Vision to integrate a vision for greenways, trails, and bikeways and opportunities for eco-tourism and adventure tourism.

Potential partners include Bluegrass Tomorrow, Rural Land Management Board, Fayette Alliance, Bluegrass Conservancy, and the Bluegrass Area Development District.

Similar wording is found in Comprehensive Plans of Paris/Bourbon Co., Lancaster/Garrard Co., Nicholasville/Jessamine Co., Madison Co., and Danville/Boyle Co.; the Scott County Vision 2020; Clark County Community Action Plan; and the Bluegrass Area Development District' Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

4. Diversity/Young Professionals Summit/Creative Talent Development. Through the recently formed Young Professionals Diversity Council (a partnership of Lexington Young Professionals Association LYPA, the Urban League and Bluegrass Tomorrow), develop a Young Professionals/Diversity Summit providing a strong voice for social capital, creative talent and inclusiveness in future planning. Also pursue quality of life enhancements targeted to appeal to creative talent with a focus on the following: Develop a wireless WiFi cloud over the Bluegrass, providing expanded wireless service in cities throughout the Bluegrass and connections along major transportation corridors. Promote capacity and accountability for women-owned and minority-owned business enterprises. Expand the regional impact of programs such as the Black Males Working sponsored by First Bracktown Inc. and similar efforts intended to promote leadership and scholarship among African American, Hispanic and other minority men and women.

Similar concepts are found in Madison County Economic Development Plan and Woodford County Community Chamber Plan, Commerce Lexington Next Generation Study.

5. Early Childhood Education Advocacy. Improve early childhood education throughout the region. Develop regional public policy statements with Central Kentucky Regional Public Policy Council advocating for strong emphasis on early childhood education. Also includes: Promote existing efforts such as the “Success By 6” program through the United Way of the Bluegrass and the Childhood Development Centers in the STARS for Kids Now program for quality learning. Facilitate the cooperation of partners including United Way, Central Kentucky Public Policy Council, Community Action Council, Commerce Lexington, Bluegrass ADD, Bluegrass Tomorrow, regional school systems.

Similar language on early childhood development is found in United Way of The Bluegrass Strategic Plan and Community Action Council Strategic Plan.

6. Equine Economic Development and Healthcare. Protect and promote the region’s signature equine industry and related agricultural opportunities. Efforts may include: Implement recommendations of the LFUCG’s Equine Task Force, including coordination of a cluster of equine-related entities into an equine economic development partnership to promote equine economic development and equine healthcare. Support continued development of a Bluegrass Horse Farm Trail (in progress) similar to the Bourbon Trail to market our precious bluegrass soils and farms. Develop an economic development plan to cultivate equine CEOs, farm managers, equine professionals in the Bluegrass for the World Equestrian Games on the benefits of moving or expanding their business into the Bluegrass.

Potential partners include U.K. Equine Initiative, Kentucky Thoroughbred Association, Farm Bureau, Kentucky Equine Education Project, Commerce Lexington, Bluegrass Tomorrow.

Similar language is found in Destination 2040, LFUCG Equine Task Force Plan, Bluegrass Area

Development District's CEDS Plan, and Woodford County Master Plan & Community Chamber Plan.

7. “Green” Local Action for Environment and Energy Efficiency. Develop and advocate local action for environmental protection and energy efficiency in the Bluegrass region. Consideration should be given to: Develop plans for a Regional Zero Waste Management System. Promote energy efficient and environmentally positive residential, commercial, and governmental buildings. Develop a “Buy Bluegrass” campaign including locally-produced food and other products. Encourage participation in Local Governments For Sustainability in surrounding counties, Mayor’s Climate Protection Agreement, or develop a locally adapted Bluegrass Environmental Agreement.

Potential partners include Bluegrass Area Development District, Tracy Farmer Center for the Environment, Bluegrass Partnership for a Green Community.

Similar wording is found in Destination 2040, Scott County Vision 2020, and Clark County Community Action Plan

8. Health Care/Heart Health Corridor Economic Development Initiative. As an initiative of regional economic development, develop the concept of a Heart Health Corridor, creating synergies between Lexington and Louisville hospitals and universities, to promote health care economic development and recruitment of talent and business to Central Kentucky. Expand the role of the Bluegrass as a healthcare hub to link with healthcare providers in Louisville. Potential partners include Commerce Lexington, Bluegrass Alliance, and other health care economic development professionals.

Original concept that is not found in other plans examined.

9. High-Tech Manufacturing & Health Care Workforce Training Academy. Since the high-technology skills needed in central Kentucky are so similar for many industries, create a High-Tech Manufacturing & Health Care Workforce Training Academy focusing on the high tech skills needs of manufacturers and health care industry. The academy would address post-secondary, adult degree and/or certification needs. Models of existing programs are in place at Toyota, United Parcel Service, and Greenville S.C.

Potential partners include Commerce Lexington, Bluegrass ADD, KCTCS, and public and private school systems of the region.

Similar concept in Madison County Economic Development Plan in cooperation with Bechtel-Parsons Bluegrass.

10. Regional Visioning & Planning (Vision Team Bluegrass). Create a unified Bluegrass community plan to promote regional visioning and strategic planning for land use, economic development, and quality of life initiatives. A Regional Planning effort would also encourage regional participation in local comprehensive plans. Many think a new Unified Regional Planning Task Force (Vision Team Bluegrass) should be created to explore fully the issues and context under which unified regional planning could occur in partnership with regional

organizations specifically the Bluegrass Area Development District, Commerce Lexington and Bluegrass Tomorrow and other cooperative intergovernmental arrangements.

Similar Regional Planning strategies are also included in Destination 2040, Scott County Vision 2020, Bluegrass Area Development District's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, Madison Co. Economic Development Plan, and Woodford Co. Comprehensive Plan.