It’s the year 2028. The City of Elk River is recognized by the *Star Tribune* as the state’s #1 community, citing its vibrant community, economic health, high quality of life, and excellent community recreational facilities. What led to this statewide recognition?

- Keep taxes in check.
- Article is about how the town went bankrupt.
- Places where seniors and children can be active.
- New businesses.
- Spent taxes wisely.
- Repair and upgrade aging recreation facilities.
- 169 highway improved transit with city.
- Increased public safety facilities and personnel.
- Improved Highway 10 transportation and increased number of residents.
- Open more industrial parks and increased tax base (business).
- Funded improvement to recreation facilities with local option sales tax.
- Stronger, cooperative, involved community stakeholders.
- Definition of vision/plan for Elk River.
- And communicated vision - increase community buy-in in the process.
- Demographically healthy community seen as (enhanced?) by increased participation in all youth activities/senior activities.
- Community working together.
- Excellent schools.
- Sports legacy.
- Community events facilities.
- City Council engaged.
- Rehabilitated older neighborhoods.
- Outdoor parks and recreation opportunities.
- Good transportation.
- Early Childhood Family Education
- Small town feel with modern amenities.
- Vibrant commercial district.
- Community events.
- Statewide recognition.
- Leaders took action regardless of cost.
- More businesses in Elk River (larger employers).
- New community center opening and inviting to broad cross section of community.
Leaders had a comprehensive vision for a growing community.

More job opportunities in Elk River.

Citizens took a pro-active role in building the future.

Good regional transportation to jobs and education.

Business friendly environment.

Improved access to health care.

Community center for all citizens (including youth, families, and seniors) sparing no expense.

The start of community input in needs of the city, not what I want, but what is good for the city.

Emphasis on all city growth including EMS, police, fire, public works, park and recreation, schools to attract community growth, families, and business.

Two sheets of ice and outdoor rinks.

Adequate parking and access.

Schools attract families; facilities must be excellent along with community resources.

Referendum turned down – democracy!

Limit spending before referendum.

Huge cost – too much!

Council isn’t listening to people.

Notices of meetings after the meetings took place.

City Council should listen to the people.

Build a new community center.

Proactive community involvement to solve funding infrastructure issues.

Good emergency low enforcement and fire departments.

Updated roads.

Good community leadership.

Affordable housing and taxes.

Needs of all generations from youth to seniors to be addressed.

A city government that is responsive to the needs and desires of the citizens.

What role might our entire community play in order to help create the best possible future for Elk River?

Voters voted and council respected decision.

Increase awareness of needs of volunteer opportunities.

Residents are engaged and understand the needs of the recreational facility project.

Broad based representative group comes forward to lead (representatives from different groups).

Groups that will benefit from facilities will strongly help pay for the facilities.

Be good stewards by taking care of what we have.

Youth athletics organizations cooperate and provide input.

Positive messaging on social media and other community communications.
- Fiscally responsible.
- Non-profits to help those in need.
- Flexible attitude to come up with best outcome.
- Well organized volunteer organizations.
- Community meetings.
- Online surveys.
- Incentives from city and business to encourage community residents to provide feedback.
- Information booth at the Taste of Elk River.
- Community open minded and thinks.
- Big picture and long term.
- Support local businesses and services.
- Community involved/engaged/informed.
- Council and State representatives build partners to create regional facilities here.
- Economic development director to build commercial section.
- Communication campaign to pass a referendum/bond – whatever it takes.
- What can the VFW, Legion, and other groups do, youth groups, charitable gambling, seniors, hockey community, rotary, etc.
- Be engaged as much as possible into the input on projects to improve city needs.
- Better parks – recreation – sports facilities.
- Citizens attend more meetings – notices!
- Involve more private investment.
- More citizens become active.
- Way to get ideas across to citizens.
- Accept things that are best for community.
- Strong families.
- Participation.
- Atmosphere of volunteering.
- Open to change.
- Inclusiveness.
- Business and citizen financial investment.
- Needs of entire community addressed.
- Support of youth and aging programs.
- Support of needs of growing community despite personal use.

How can I help Elk River become front page news in ten years?

- Focus on forward point of view.
- Work toward a better community experience.
- Stay involved (active) – voting; volunteer.
- Provide safe environment.
- Get to know your neighbors.
- Support local businesses!
- Attending local event; Elk River football, hockey, school plays, city concerts etc.
- Let your voice be heard or expect growth you might not like.
- Support local business.
- Get involved.
- Volunteer time/talent.
- Volunteer help at/in areas that don’t/might not have personnel to head it.
- Get out and vote.
- Get to know your neighbors.
- Have night out events.
- Get involved in groups.
- Spend ONLY what we can afford.
- Respect the outcome of the citizen’s vote.
- Vote.
- Volunteer.
- Be informed i.e. attend City Council meetings.
- Keep an open mind, listen, and share ideas.
- Be an ambassador for the community to make Elk River a destination city.
- Attend more meetings.
- Keep informed.
- Make suggestions.
- Vote!
- Know who your councilmen/women are.
- Good role model.
- Participate.
- Proactive in community not reactive.
- Get out of comfort zone.
- Ask questions.
- Step up.
- Educate and advise.
- Ask realtors and builders: why do homeowners leave Elk River?
- Check our own facts. Just because it’s in the newspaper doesn’t make it entirely true.
- Bring multiple commissions/associations together to bring solutions.
- Come to community meetings.
- Actively involved in promoting.
- Stay positive.
- Talk to City Council with feedback (don’t wait for meeting).
- Actively involved in fundraising.
- Lead the business conversation (😊).
- Communicate the facts.
- Sharing ideas with neighbors to create dialogue.
- Respect the decision of the leadership.
- Share the collective vision.