



**Council Listening Session #2**  
**Thursday, May 10, 2018**



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 law 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.