

# LEXINGTON: PRESERVING ITS PAST, POSITIONING FOR THE FUTURE



**T**hrough the years, Lexington, Missouri's antebellum-style homes, Civil War heritage, historic buildings and exquisite antiques have lured many people to the area. In fact, these attributes continue to attract visitors to local shops, museums, old homes tours, theatrical events and festivals throughout the year.

Add to that a colorful backdrop that emphasizes the arts—in all of its forms—and it's easy to see the richness of Lexington's culture, as it meshes traditional looks and feels with contemporary hues, sights and sounds. Thanks to a partnership with the University of Missouri Extension, the Community Arts Pilot Project (CAPP) promises to further elevate Lexington's stature and allure as a strong tourist destination.

"To see all of this come together is quite remarkable," said City Administrator Mark Rounds. "What's equally compelling is the fact that the people, residents and business owners, donate their time and talents to make this City what it is. There's no shortage of committees and work groups collaborating on this or that. And when you put it all together, you have a city that is positioning to grow

its economic infrastructure on the strength of a solid business community, tourism, arts council, health care and historic downtown. As a city official, it's hard to ask for more."

The Lexington Missouri Main Street initiative promises to underscore the City as a scenic destination. With community support and grant funds, plans are underway to revitalize the City's downtown Main Street. Still in its preliminary stages, Lexington Main Street has submitted a grant application to help keep revitalization plans moving forward, established a volunteer steering committee and will soon establish a board of directors.

Expected outcomes are to enhance the social, cultural and environmental well-being of historic downtown within the context of historic preservation. Ultimately, Lexington Main Street is expected to drive not only more tourists to the City, but spur economic development. Lexington Main Street is a part of a statewide initiative called Missouri Main Street Connection.

Lexington's health care community also offers a unique value proposition. The City leads many rural communities when it comes to health information technology and telehealth. This is due in part because Lexington

is home to one of the premier rural health networks in the country, the Health Care Collaborative (HCC) of Rural Missouri.

The 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and its collaborating partners, have worked together to bridge barriers to quality health care. With the use of telehealth, wait times for patients to receive mental health care services are drastically reduced. With one in four Americans suffering from a mental health condition, telehealth has allowed area mental health providers to see double, sometimes triple, the amount of patients in a given day.

Lexington, the Lafayette County seat, is home to a critical access hospital, Lafayette Regional Health Center, one federally qualified health center (FQHC) and two additional FQHCs within a 30-mile radius. The community benefits by having a place to receive care regardless of ability to pay.

Electronic health record implementation is helping providers meet government-mandated Meaningful Use Standards – another

**Photo: Lexington's historic downtown is situated near the bluffs of the Missouri River. Total population is 4,726 residents, according to latest Census data.**

initiative that has a strong local focus. Other initiatives include addressing disparities in oral health care by re-establishing clinics as health homes for patients, where primary care, behavioral health and oral health care are provided under one roof.

In another instance, an area clinic has incorporated an intergenerational approach to practicing medicine by pairing seasoned medical doctors with nurse practitioners fresh out of nursing school.

“The emphasis on health and wellness in Lexington, and in the county as a whole, is impressive,” Rounds said. “Many of our high school students are receiving early exposure to the health professions. This is an added bonus because rural health care has unique challenges. We are fortunate that several of our nonprofits and public health organizations take such an active role in the health and wellness of our citizens.”

As Lexington continues to make bold moves to build its infrastructure, whether it’s unfurling plans for construction of a new state-of-the-art hospital, opening art studios, turning old, abandoned rail lines into stretches

of scenic fitness trails, or making moves to revitalize its downtown, Lexington is positioning for the future – while staying true to its legacy.

For more information about the city of Lexington, visit [LexingtonMo.com](http://LexingtonMo.com). □



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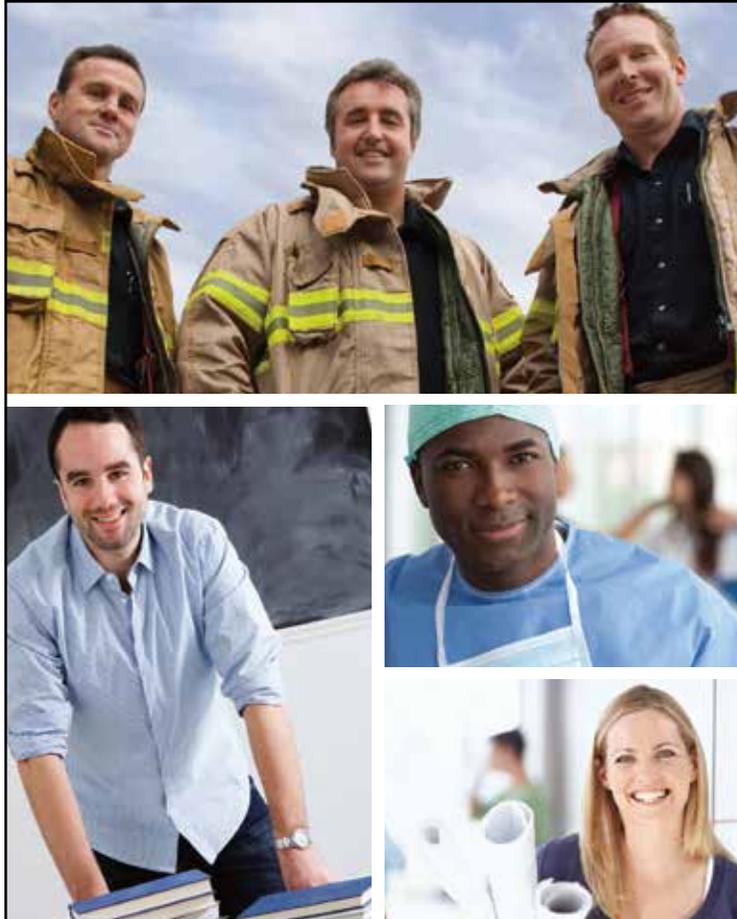
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