

**NEWS  
RELEASE**

September 17, 2010  
CITY OF PADUCAH, KY



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**City of Paducah Receives Enterprise Cities Award  
for its Tree Voucher Program**

*Pictured from left to right: KLC President Elaine Walker, Planner Ben Peterson, City Commissioner Gerald Watkins, Planning Director Steve Ervin, and KLC Acting Executive Director Neil Hackworth.*



**PADUCAH, KY**—The Kentucky League of Cities (KLC) honored the City of Paducah with an Enterprise Cities Award for its Tree Voucher Program. The award was presented to City Commissioner Gerald Watkins, Planning Director Steve Ervin, and Planner Ben Peterson at an awards luncheon today at the KLC Annual Conference and Expo in Louisville, Kentucky. The Enterprise Cities Awards go to municipalities in four population categories that have

demonstrated entrepreneurship, innovation, and excellence in local governance.

The City of Paducah won in the 15,001- to 40,000-population category for the Tree Voucher Program, which was initiated after the January 2009 ice storm. Planning Director Steve Ervin says, “The Tree Voucher Program has been a tremendous success with every neighborhood benefiting. This program will have a long-term impact. In ten years, the trees will have matured, and Paducah will be a more aesthetically pleasing place to be.”

Many Kentucky cities, including Paducah, endured a horrible ice storm in January 2009. The storm critically damaged approximately 50% of the tree canopy in McCracken County. The Mayor and Board of Commissioners took a long-range view of how to help in the recovery of the urban forest canopy by implementing a Tree Voucher Program. The program allowed city residents to obtain a voucher for \$25 off a tree from participating nurseries. Planning Department staff has tracked every tree planted and the



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type of tree using the Geographic Information System (GIS). The program has helped citizens replant 950 trees throughout all areas of the city.

Out of the available 1,250 vouchers, 76% were issued. The City of Paducah is entering into discussions with entities including the Paducah School System, Barkley Regional Airport, and Murray State University's Paducah campus to use the remaining vouchers to enhance the grounds at each of those facilities.

KLC has given Enterprise Cities Awards since 1999. Entries are judged in seven key areas: innovativeness or creativity of the project, long-term value to the community, adaptability to other cities, use of public/private partnerships, ability to achieve project benchmarks, community-citizen participation and program efficiency. "Cities learn from each other," said Neil Hackworth, KLC executive director. "In these challenging times, it is a priority that communities are innovative and resourceful to serve citizens. These cities have demonstrated the kind of initiative that can serve as examples for all Kentucky cities."

Founded in 1927, KLC is a membership organization of more than 380 cities across the Commonwealth. For more information about KLC, visit [www.klc.org](http://www.klc.org).

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