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Officials get ideas on trip to Mason, Ohio

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Several city and county officials say their trip to Mason, Ohio, gave them a wealth of ideas for the Nicholasville and Jessamine County area.

Twenty-seven people from Jessamine County went on a two-day trip to Mason in southwestern Ohio on Nov. 15 and 16. Mason is similar in population and size to Nicholasville, and it was rated in the Top 100 places to live by Money magazine this year.

Jessamine Chamber of Commerce Director Nancy Stone said one of the things she liked about Mason was “its cleanliness and friendliness.” But the main thing she noticed was the business attitude the city government had.

“The thing I saw that most impressed me was the service attitude from the top down,” Stone said. She noted that citizens are called “clients.” The departments in the new city



A group of Jessamine County leaders traveled to Mason, Ohio for a two-day trip to learn how that city became a Money magazine Top 100 city.

hall appeared to work well together, and also referred to each other as clients.

Stone said the most important thing to take away from a trip like this is ideas.

“You can look at what worked there and tweak it to work for you,” Stone said.

Nicholasville Fire Chief Charles Brumfield went on the trip as well. He

said the tour didn’t focus on Mason’s fire department, but getting to share ideas with other people from Jessamine County made the trip worthwhile.

Brumfield said Mason had some differences from Nicholasville.

“Location is everything; Mason is between two major interstates,” Brumfield said.

County Magistrate Tim Vaughan was impressed with Mason’s new community center, which had an indoor pool, track, basketball court and play ground. He said the center was built with budget surplus money.

“Their ability to bring good-paying jobs to the community was amazing,” Vaughan said. He said Mason funds its governmental operations mainly through payroll taxes, not property taxes.

Vaughan also took note of how officials in Mason stringently follow plans for land use and economic development.

“They have a very aggressive, proactive economic development plan in place,” Vaughan said.

Vaughan said it was important not to just take trips like this to sightsee, but to implement some new ideas, if possible, back home. He acknowledged Mason was different due to its location close to interstates. But he believes the proposed I-75 connector in Jessamine County could attract more business.

“The I-75 connector would benefit us greatly,” Vaughan said. “We want to move from a bed and breakfast community to more and more people living and working here.”

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