

## Purpose

The First Impressions (FI) Program is a structured community assessment that enables communities to learn about the first impression they convey to outsiders.

The program will help your community learn about its strengths and shortcomings through the eyes of first-time visitors.

FI offers a fresh perspective on the appearance, services, and infrastructure of each community.

FI can serve as a tool for community readiness. Community readiness can be thought of as community members' collective willingness to take on new projects or their state of openness to community change.



# FIRST IMPRESSIONS



## Strengthening Communities

FI is a service offered through the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK).

The program was first developed by Andy Lewis, University of Wisconsin Extension Associate Professor, and James Schneider, Grant County (WI) Economic Development Director. It has been conducted in over 1,000 communities across the US and Canada.

CEDIK adapted this service in order to better help meet the need of communities throughout Kentucky.

## How does the program work?

- Unannounced visits are coordinated to your community by professionals in community development, small business owners, community leaders and more.
- Volunteer teams will record their observations, document their experience and interactions with community members, and give constructive feedback.
- Photos and responses from all reviewers are compiled and presented back to the community by a CEDIK representative.
- Suggestions and resources will be offered to address the areas identified for potential improvement.
- The community uses the knowledge gained through this program to serve as a basis for community action.



**CEDIK Programs**  
Empowered People.  
Thriving Communities.

## The Process

### Team Members

- Chosen based on communities' target audience(s)

### Past Perceptions documented

- Any preconceived notions about the community will be recorded

### Quick-Pass Impression

- Drive through the community quickly without stopping to create an instinctual impression without focusing too much on detail

### Community Entrances

- Enter the county from main highways and county roads in order to get a clear overview of all the entrances

### In-Depth Perceptions

- Educational
- Residential
- Healthcare
- Natural Resources
- Social and Cultural
- Civic Engagement
- Government and Public Services
- Recreational and Heritage
- Industry
- Restaurants and Lodging
- Additional Amenities

### Lasting Impressions

- Assets, challenges, and opportunities of the community will be identified by the visitors and then elaborated on by the CEDIK representative in the community assessment report

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### Contact CEDIK:

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Community and Economic  
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**FIRST  
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**UK** University of  
**Kentucky**

College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment