

## Crossing the generations

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The Elizabethtown City Council and Mayor Jeff Gregory have demonstrated an interest and openness in bringing youth into the governmental process.

A symbol of that interest occurs at the opening of each meeting. Borrowing an idea from former mayor Pat Durbin, the Pledge of Allegiance at each meeting is being led by a class from local schools. Often shared on social media afterward, the video never fails to bring a smile as today's community leaders join with the children to declare their dedication to America and its "liberty and justice for all" principles.

The council also recently took a practical step toward engaging the ideas of young people.

The moderate-severe disabilities class at T.K. Stone Middle School partnered with students from the elementary education program at Western Kentucky University on a leadership project. Its goal: Make Elizabethtown more inclusive and accessible. The students in Cain Alvey's class made a presentation asking council to install talking crosswalks downtown. The project emphasizes safety for all pedestrians, including those who are blind, visually impaired or deal with cognitive delays.

"Normally, talking crosswalks tell you the name of the street you are crossing and when it is safe to go, which allows people who are blind or have low vision to navigate where they are going," eighth-grade student Erin Willoughby said. "In Mr. Alvey's class, we take field trips to downtown Elizabethtown. If we get talking crosswalks, it will be easier to know when it is safe to cross the street. It will also allow the people like me to explore downtown without a guide all the time."

Alvey described it as a "project to make Elizabethtown more accessible to individuals regardless of their ability level."

Council members discussed a pilot program to see how talking crosswalks would work

downtown.

Obviously, cost and utilization are important issues to consider, but hopefully these students soon will be able to experience the impact of a their idea on the lives of their hometown.

*This editorial represents a consensus of The News-Enterprise editorial board.*

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