



## TML District Meetings Scheduled for January

When the final session of the 108th TN General Assembly convenes on Jan. 14, 2014, state government leaders will address numerous issues of interest and concern to Tennessee's towns and cities.

It is imperative that local officials are aware of the potential impact these issues might have on municipalities before lawmakers begin their deliberations.

TML staff will be on hand to

present updates on the latest events and news affecting municipalities at the state and national levels.

Please don't miss the opportunity to attend these important meetings. Notices for the December meetings have been sent. If you haven't done so already, please RSVP to attend the meeting in your area.

Contact TML for more information at 615-255-6416.

<b>Jan 7, 2014</b> 1:30 - 3:30 pm	District 1	Johnson City Memorial Park Community Ctr
<b>Jan 8, 2014</b> 10 am - 1 pm	District 2	Kingston City Hall
<b>Jan 9, 2014</b> 10:30 am - 12:30 pm	District 7 & 8	Medina City Hall

## Barker resigns; Kelley new TML president

At the Nov 21 meeting, the TML Board of Directors approved the appointment of Dale Kelley, Huntingdon mayor and former TML President, to fulfill the remaining presidential term left vacant by Humboldt Mayor Allen Barker.

Barker lost his re-election bid and therefore, tendered his resignation during the November meeting.

Under the League's by-laws, the president is to be elected at the annual conference. As such, Mayor Barker's resignation creates the possibility of a six-month period in which the League would be without a president.

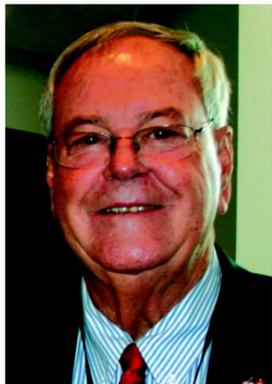
The TML board felt it wouldn't be prudent to enter the 2014 legislative session absent a president.

After giving consideration to several factors including preserving the rotation of the office of the president among the grand divisions and respecting the terms of ascending officers, the TML executive committee unanimously voted to recommend that Mayor Kelley be appointed to serve out the remainder of Mayor Barker's term.

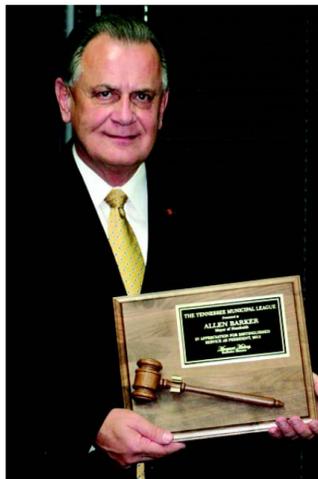
The executive committee reasoned that as a former TML president, Mayor Kelley is familiar with

the role and responsibilities of the League's president.

Moreover, as the mayor of a west Tennessee city, his appointment preserves the regular rotation of the office of the president. By appointing Kelley the regular order of ascension will not be disturbed and it will allow ascending officers to serve their full terms. And finally, Kelley only served half of his presidential term, when he resigned in 2010 to accept a position in Gov. Bill Haslam's Cabinet as his special ad-



Kelley



Barker

visor for legislation.

"I know that you join me in expressing our gratitude to Mayor Barker for his exemplary leadership as our president. While I regret his premature departure from the League presidency, I am pleased that Mayor Kelley has agreed to serve," said TML Executive Director Margaret Mahery.

that they will put more money into the ability to borrow monies."

Schroer said state funds went down by \$7.5 million and local matching funds, where communities give dollars to help fund their projects, is down by \$4.4 million.

As a means to get long awaited projects off the ground, the department implemented an Expedited Project Delivery (EPD) system at the first of the year and began prioritizing projects, something Schroer said wasn't a part of earlier administrations.

"Most of it may be political...the way it was done in the past," he told Haslam. "A legislator or someone would ask TDOT for a new bypass. TDOT would agree to a study, which would appease the person. Once TDOT studies a project, it gets a life... We're not doing that anymore."

So far, five local governments have undergone an EPD project evaluation for their projects, which seeks to create 60-plus percent efficiency in a less expensive, faster manner. "We don't want to build roads they don't want," Schroer assured the governor. "This is a partnership between local communities and the state, and we want to be sure

that what we build for you, will work for you."

## State attorney general opines local regulation of pseudoephedrine illegal

BY JOSH JONES  
MTAS Legal Consultant

Amid a surge of interest in recently-passed local government legislation to require a prescription for the purchase of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine products, the Tennessee Attorney General has opined that such local regulation is in violation of Tennessee law.

Some 19 Tennessee cities have passed such laws, in an effort to restrict the use of pseudoephedrine in making methamphetamine.

The opinion, No. 13-99, declares that the General Assembly, via T.C.A. § 39-17-431, has preempted the entire field of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine regulation and supersedes state statute.

In determining whether the General Assembly occupied the entire field of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine regulation the Attorney General looked to the Meth-Free Tennessee Act of 2005 and the 2011 "I Hate Meth Act," both of which suggest comprehensive state regulation and contain explicit statements of preemption. The 2011 Act specifically prohibits any local jurisdiction from passing local laws and ordinances which are contrary to the statute.



In an effort to shutdown local meth making labs across the state, several Tennessee cities have passed laws requiring a prescription for pseudoephedrine. A recent AG opinion, dated Dec. 6, says that such local laws supersede state statute and therefore, are illegal.

With the publication of this opinion Tennessee cities are on notice that, absent legislative action by the General Assembly, any local ordinance attempting to regulate the sale of ephedrine or pseudoephedrine is vulnerable to challenge. While the opinion is not binding, a

court hearing a challenge to a local ordinance would give it great deference. Any city that has passed or is considering such an ordinance should consult their city attorney.

A copy of the opinion is available at <http://www.tn.gov/attorney-general/op/2013/op13-099.pdf>.

## Supreme Court declines to hear state sales tax case

BY ELAINE S. POVICH  
Stateline.org

While online retailers rake in Cyber Monday sales following Thanksgiving weekend, states face the loss of an estimated \$23 billion in sales tax revenue annually because of laws that prohibit most online tax collections. On Dec. 2, The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear a case that might have settled the issue.

The question is whether states can impose sales taxes on online sales from locations outside their states. Such collections are currently banned unless the seller has a physical location in the state, but some states have tried to impose the taxes anyway.

For example, if Amazon has a distribution center in your state, you pay sales tax on that purchase, but if the seller doesn't, there's no tax. This has led to a crazy-quilt of collections.

According to the nonpartisan, anti-tax Tax Foundation, 12 states have adopted laws that allow them to collect state sales taxes from out-of-state Internet sellers any-

way, using criteria such as having an "agent" or a "local affiliate" of the company in the state. Those states are: Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois (struck down by the state supreme court), Maine, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas and Vermont.

The New York law was the focus of the U.S. Supreme Court on Monday. The high court's decision—with no elaboration—not to take the case leaves those laws alone. Illinois has appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court in a separate case, giving the high court another opportunity to potentially weigh in.

"This decision further illustrates why a national solution is needed to level the playing field for local brick-and-mortar retailers and help them compete more effectively against out-of-state internet sellers," said Sen. Richard Durbin.

Cyber Monday is expected to be the busiest online shopping day of the year. The National Retail Federation projected more than 131 million people will shop on See SALES TAX on Page 3

## TDOT says lean times ahead for city transportation projects

### Agency to address \$8.5 B backlog

BY VICTORIA SOUTH  
TML Communications Coordinator

The state's transportation department is taking a closer look at leaner alternatives for road projects, in the shadow of an \$8.5 billion project backlog. At the state's recent budget hearings, TDOT Commissioner John Schroer described to Gov. Haslam the complexities of the nation's most recent transportation bill, MAP21-Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century—which went into effect Oct. 1, 2012, and is funded through Oct. 2014.

With the department's budget proposal of \$1.8 billion for next year, TDOT's estimate of 1.8 billion is made up of state dollars, at \$810 million, federal dollars, of \$965 million, and other revenue of \$37.7 million. The state portion of highway user gas tax is 20 cents per gallon. It's been that number since 1989, and diesel tax at 17 cents per gallon since 1990. TDOT does not receive all of these funds, but 60 percent of gas, 70 percent of diesel, 50 percent of special petroleum, and 80 percent of vehicle registration.

Schroer combined the bitter

with the sweet, citing Tennessee as one of only five states in the nation with zero transportation debt. Traditionally, Tennessee foregoes the trappings of interest rates in favor of gas taxes, an increasingly precarious method as more people choose commuter rail and other transit opportunities and cars become more fuel efficient.

Schroer cited the difficulties of planning the state's transportation projects years into the future, without a clear-cut vision of available funding. "The state could lose about \$850 million in the first year, and \$300 million in subsequent years from its federal funding," he said. "Some of our projects take years and we are already looking at MAP 21 two years from now."

"I think Congress is less likely to keep subsidizing from the general fund and there will be a huge discussion on how transportation in this nation will be funded," he added. "They (the Feds) take money out of the general fund and put it into a loan account. And since Tennessee doesn't borrow money, it takes the money that we're able to have. I'm very concerned it will continue and



that what we build for you, will work for you."

The study examines key factors: such as safety, operational issues/congestion, economic development and multi-modal issues.

"We looked at areas where cities have requested large bypasses and realized that we can do work on existing road and save significant dollars—and do it quicker," Schroer added. "If we can save more dollars on major projects, we can help more citizens along the way."

The five projects are: State Rt. 262 in Macon County, State Rt. 52 in

Fentress County, State Rt. 19 in Lauderdale County, State Rt. 56 in Jackson County and State Route 128 in Hardin County.

TDOT is currently working out the details of a separate bypass project with local officials in Bolivar, according to department spokesperson B.J. Doughty.

The EPD program for the 2015 fiscal year will reduce the cost of the five projects to \$9,236,700 from an estimated cost of \$180,385,000. TDOT said it will analyze another 25 projects this year to consider for the program.



**BARTLETT**

Bartlett was recently one of two small towns in the top 10 of "America's 10 Best Small Cities to Move To," as designated by Movoto Real Estate. Bartlett ranked 8th on the list, with Movoto citing its low crime rate, high median income and stable of "historic plantation homes." Movoto based its list on demographic and other data collected on about 100 cities with populations under 60,000. Six criteria were surveyed, including cost of living; crime; median household income; unemployment rate; median home price; and homes for sale per capita. Movoto turned to the U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, FBI and its own real estate market data to research the statistics. Hendersonville was ranked 5th.

**BRENTWOOD**

For two years in a row, Brentwood has been named the most business-friendly city among the 50 most populous cities in Tennessee. Brentwood is the first city to top the eighth annual list compiled by The Beacon Center of Tennessee, the state's free market think tank, for consecutive years. In the report, the Beacon Center ranked each city in three main categories: economic vitality, business tax burden and community allure. The cities received a score in these categories while the think-tank also took into account other statistics such as violent crime rate, population growth, median household income, cost of living and high school graduation rates. Brentwood residents rely on a pool of businesses and office space in a small area — mostly on the northern and southern boundaries of the city — for lower rates on their property taxes. Only about four percent of the land is zoned for commercial use, but tax revenue from these businesses pays for about 60 percent of the city's operating budget.

**BRENTWOOD**

Library patrons who want to search for materials or even register for a class now have an app for that. The Brentwood Library App works on any mobile and tablet device and provides access to the library's resources. The free app allows users the ability to search the Brentwood Library's catalog, access their accounts, renew a book or place an item on hold, access eBooks and AudioBooks and register for a class or event held at the library. To get the app on their devices, users search for "Brentwood Library" in their Apple or Google app stores or point their smart phone's browser to [brentwood.boopsie.com](http://brentwood.boopsie.com) to download it.

**CHATTANOOGA**

The city was voted as the host community for the 2015 Amateur Softball Association/USA 16U National Championship. Chattanooga presented the bid to 300 voting delegates at the ASA/USA Softball Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City, OK, which included representatives from the Chattanooga Amateur Softball Association, Chattanooga Sports Committee, Chattanooga Youth & Family Development and Chattanooga Choo Choo. The Championship is projected to bring close to 145 travel teams to Chattanooga for a week, producing an estimated economic impact to exceed \$2 million.

**CLEVELAND**

Cleveland has been ranked 25th on Milken Institute's "Best-Performing Small Cities" list for 2013. The city jumped from its 2012 position of 119. Additionally, Cleveland was ranked fourth in value for one year of job growth. This category measures job growth in the metropolitan area versus the national average for 2011-2012. The city was ranked 18th for five-year growth. According to Milken, the job growth and strength of the local economy are used as key indicators for the rankings. Sustaining jobs, average salaries and technology growth are also considered.

**COOKEVILLE**

The city recently earned the gold seal in the Valley Sustainable Communities Program sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority. The designation should help increase economic development along with attracting more businesses and creating jobs. Melinda Keifer, the city's economic development coordinator,

credited the Cookeville Unplugged energy program for pushing the city forward to complete the program. The city recruited and trained energy leaders to help save energy at 22 facilities. "We started a culture of being sustainable and being good stewards of taxpayers dollars saving money and energy," Keifer said.

**COLUMBIA**

Maury Regional Medical Center and Murfreesboro-based National HealthCare Corporation are awaiting final approval to build an \$18-million nursing home in Columbia. The two organizations applied for a certificate of need from the Tennessee Health Systems Development Agency in July. The facility is tentatively named the NHC/Maury County Regional Transitional Care Center and would be a 112-bed skilled nursing home. A skilled nursing facility is a certification that allows for Medicare reimbursement. The new facility will be created by relocating and replacing the 92-bed NHC Healthcare-Hillview, 2710 Trotwood Ave., and the 20-bed Maury Regional Hospital Skilled Nursing Unit to an 11-acre site at 5004 Trotwood Ave., according to the certificate of need. The estimated project cost is more than \$18 million. MRCM Chief Executive Officer Alan Watson said the hospital's current facility is located in an older section of the building, which contributed to the need for a new location. The new facility would help manage patients who leave after a short-term care stay but may need a higher level of care than can be provided at home.

**FARRAGUT**

Farragut has been named the second most business-friendly city in Tennessee for 2013 by the Beacon Center of Tennessee. Farragut's ranking was less than a percentage point under the score earned by this year's winner - Brentwood. Farragut was named the Most Business Friendly City in 2006 and 2011 and earned the third place ranking in 2012. The Beacon Center bases its analyzes on a number of factors and scores each city in three categories: economic vitality, business tax burden and community allure. Farragut has consistently ranked toward the top, due to its lack of property tax, low crime rate and strong job growth. This year, the town was first place in the business tax burden category, maintaining both the lowest individual and business tax burdens in the state. Farragut also jumped 10 spots in the economic vitality category moving from 16th place in 2012 to sixth place in 2013. The town ranked second place in the Community Allure category.

**FRANKLIN**

The city has been designated as a Valley Sustainable Gold Community by the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Valley Sustainable Communities Program, initiated by TVA Economic Development, helps communities improve existing sustainability programs and increase their ability to attract new investment in the community. The program documents a community's assets to increase the likelihood that it will be viewed as progressive and competitive by companies looking to invest in new or expanded locations.

**FRANKLIN**

The city recently received the Outstanding Planning Award from the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) for the Carothers Parkway & East McEwen Drive Integrated Growth Plan. Initiated in the summer of 2012, the plan provides direction for developers, utilities, and staff rights-of-way for future development along the two major roads and allow developers to understand the limits of where they can develop. The plan is a joint effort of the Engineering and Planning and Sustainability departments. Consultants Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. were hired to oversee the project, which involved a series of meetings with various staff members to define the project's scope as well as meetings with more than 15 developers, who have shown interest in the area. The plan can be found on the city's website.

**JONESBOROUGH**

Work to improve safety while maintaining a continuous traffic flow at Jonesborough's Five Points inter-

section is now under way, and officials say the project could be complete by summer. Five Points, as it is known locally, is the intersection of two state routes — Tenn. Highway 81 and Tenn. Highway 353 — and Jonesborough's Depot Street. The project to improve the intersection is the result of a partnership between the town and the Tennessee Department of Transportation, which was forged due to the number of accidents that have occurred there over the years. TDOT adopted the state-funded project in 2012 and announced its plans for construction in January. Construction began in late November, with an estimated completion date of May 15.

**MURFREESBORO**

The city's police department is creating safer roadways for motorists and pedestrians with the launch of a new program aimed to reduce incidents of aggressive driving, road rage, traffic crashes, as well as serious injury and fatal crashes. The violations the unit will be looking for and enforcing include: following too close, speeding, weaving in and out of traffic, and disregarding traffic signs and signals. The team will also focus on seatbelt usage, distracted driving — like texting, and noise violations. Officers will be equipped with unmarked police cars, radar, a video recorder and other onboard technologies to capture and record violators' behavior.

**MURFREESBORO**

A former medical clinic will reemerge as the city's Police Department headquarters. The city council approved spending \$4.7 million to purchase the leased building on Highland Avenue. The clinic moved into a new building in the Gateway area near Thompson Lane and Medical Center Parkway. Officials are looking at retrofitting the clinic building by 2015. The city hopes to hire consultants to provide architecture and engineering work by January 2014, possibly bidding out the project within a year.

**NASHVILLE**

More than 35 years after they started playing at Greer Stadium, the Nashville Sounds are set to play baseball in a brand new ballpark. The Metro-Nashville Council approved a \$65 million financing plan and voted to issue municipal revenue bonds to cover \$37 million in the construction of a 10,000-capacity ballpark north of downtown. Mayor Karl Dean proposed the ballpark a month ago. Construction should start in the first quarter of 2014. The ballpark will sit between Jackson and Harrison streets. The historic Sulphur Dell site is the original home of professional baseball in Nashville.

**Mountain Goat Trail project projected to have \$1.2 M impact**



Photo by Dan Henry

An old rail bed at the intersection of Industrial Park Road and Parton Farm Road (also known as Pigeon Springs Road) in Tracy City is targeted for an all-access RTP expansion. The Mountain Goat Trail Alliance in Grundy County recently received a \$200,000 grant for continuing work on the all-access trail system following the old Mountain Goat Railroad line.

The Mountain Goat Trail in Franklin and Grundy counties could have more than a \$1.2 million net annual economic impact on the Monteagle Mountain community and cities along the 35-mile route, according to a recent report the "Mountain Goat Trail Economic Impact Analysis," as reported by *The Times Free Press*. The trail is a rail-to-trail project to convert 35 to 40 miles of the abandoned Mountain Goat Railroad right of way into a multiuse recreational corridor. The project plan consists of work to build a smooth, bikeable trail from Cowan to Palmer. The first piece of the trail in Sewanee is complete almost to the Franklin-Grundy county line.

The study looks at a completed trail's impact on the local economy in an area of about 175 square miles, three to four years after the entire trail is 80- to 90-percent complete and passable on a road bicycle. The trail could see an estimated 100 users per day, most of them local, with the

most economic impact coming from out-of-town visitors who stay overnight in the area.

The report was produced through a University of the South Brabson Center for Global Commerce Carey Fellows study.

According to the study's authors, the gross annual impact is estimated at \$2.3 million to \$2.5 million before the costs of goods and supplying services are deducted to derive the "total value added," essentially the net gain in financial impact of a substantially complete trail shown in the study to be at least \$1.2 million annually.

The study's authors also say the trail's impact deserves continued analysis as more segments are finished. A \$200,000 grant awarded for the project over the summer will fund another two miles or so of trail work around Tracy City and Palmer. Work on Phase II of the trail between Sewanee and Monteagle will start in spring 2014.

**Columbia new hub for Charter**

Charter Communication opened a new regional office in Columbia that serves as a hub for its Tennessee and Louisiana operations. The recently remodeled 50,000-square-foot building, 1757 North Point Road, houses the main executive offices, a regional equipment and technical materials distribution center and is the primary technical training center for both states. About 80 employees work at the new location.

Charter representatives said they can serve customers more efficiently by moving its executive lead-

ership, located throughout East Tennessee and Louisiana, to a centralized location. Warehousing operations were also consolidated into the Columbia facility.

Training for all Tennessee and Louisiana technicians will now happen in Columbia. The facility will also distribute materials to northern Georgia, Alabama and parts of Mississippi.

Charter praises the new facility for creating more collaboration opportunities, as having the operations under one roof increases employee interaction.

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## High Court declines to hear Internet sales tax case

SALES TAX from Page 1

this single day, up about 2 percent from last year. And the research firm comScore expected Cyber Monday estimated sales of \$2 billion, up from about \$1.47 billion last year.

States are backing federal legislation called the "Marketplace Fairness Act" that would allow sales taxes to be collected no matter where the purchase is made on the internet. The Senate passed it in May and President Obama supports it.

The House has yet to vote, but House Judiciary Committee chairman Bob Goodlatte, R-Va., has indicated he is mellowing on the legislation, which has been opposed by anti-tax groups. Goodlatte had been concerned that the tax would be a burden for small business, but he suggested if the tax is made simple and inexpensive, he could look at it favorably.

The National Governors Association favors the bill, calling it common sense legislation that upholds the principles of federalism and levels the playing field between Maine Street and e-street—and would give states a way to collect some of the estimated \$23 billion lost annually from online sales. The National Conference of State Legislatures estimates the amount of "lost revenue" by state.

Online retailers had been the biggest opponents of the legislation, but that has begun to change with the decision of Amazon and Wal-Mart to support the bill. The big companies say it's unfair to require businesses to collect sales taxes only in states where they have a physical presence.

## Tennessee November revenues \$22.1M less than budgeted estimate

Tennessee revenue collections for November were above those of the prior year, but below budgeted estimates. Finance and Administration Commissioner Larry Martin reported today that state revenue collections for November were \$798.9 million, which is 3.99 percent above November 2012.

"While sales taxes and franchise and excise taxes came in below budgeted levels for November, our overall November revenue growth was the strongest so far this year," Martin said. "Although they can be a bit unpredictable, it is important also to note that April is typically our biggest month for F&E collections. Nonetheless, the continued softness in revenue growth raises the risks of a revenue shortfall for the year.

"Therefore, we are committed to keeping expenditures in line with revenue collections so that Tennessee will continue to have a stable, balanced financial management in any economic climate."

November sales tax collections reflect retail sales that occurred in October. Black Friday and after-Thanksgiving retail sales will be reflected in next month's report.

November collections were \$22.1 million less than the budgeted

## States eagerly await Black Friday, holiday sales tax revenue

BY ELAINE S. POVICH  
Stateline.org Staff Writer

Not just retailers and shop-till-you-drop gift buyers look forward to Black Friday and the bustling holiday shopping season. State tax collectors are hoping for a big haul from taxes on those sales.

About 10 percent of annual state sales taxes come in to state coffers in January from holiday season sales, topping most other months in which about 7 percent or 8 percent of the taxes are collected, according to an estimate by Ron Alt, senior research associate at the Federation of Tax Administrators.

Remittances in January 2013 were 12 percent higher than they would have been if the holiday sales were excluded, said Alt. "States do bring in a lot of sales tax in the final quarter (of the year)," he said. "Those generally show up in the January numbers, particularly from large retailers who remit monthly."

According to figures compiled by the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, June generally is the biggest single month for state sales tax collections, because of accruals at the end of the fiscal year in most states, said researcher Lucy Dadyan. Other than June, January shows up as one of the best months in the calendar and "that's in general attributable to holiday season shopping," she said.

National figures can be skewed, but monthly state receipts show the importance of holiday sales. For instance, in Maryland in January of this year, \$404 million was reported in sales taxes, the best of any month except June, when tax collections were about \$717 million. The same held true in 2012, when Maryland reported \$421 million in sales tax receipts in January, the best of any



The National Retail Federation says holiday sales can represent as much as 20 percent to 40 percent of annual sales. In 2012, holiday sales represented 19.3 percent of total retail industry sales for the year.

month except June at \$706 million. Charles Zogby, Pennsylvania's secretary of the budget, said in his state "it's fairly clear" that sales taxes spike during holiday season. He said January and February combined sales tax receipts were \$110 million above the monthly average for any other two months. "Black Friday being the marquee of that holiday (shopping), it's an important part of our sales tax revenue stream," he said.

Rockefeller senior fellow Don Boyd noted that the sales tax coverage in most states is broader than just sales of tangible goods. Restaurant meals and hotel taxes, for instance,

wouldn't necessarily increase due to Black Friday shopping, he said, so the shopping bulge is not quite as important as a percentage of sales tax receipts as it is for retailers' percentage of business. "It's probably less than the big retailers who rely on this time of year," Boyd said.

### National Picture

The National Retail Federation says holiday sales can represent as much as 20 percent to 40 percent of annual sales. In 2012, holiday sales represented 19.3 percent of total retail industry sales for the year.

The federation projects sales late this month and in December will increase by almost 4 percent, to \$602.1 billion, over 2012's 3.5 percent growth. Significantly, this is higher than the 10-year average holiday sales growth of 3.3 percent, the NRF said.

Just a slice of those sales occur on Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, so named because it typically is the date when store profits go "into the black" for the rest of the year. Just like tax holidays — dates on which the states suspend sales taxes on back-to-school or other goods — some analysts say that the special days just shift buying to those dates and do not increase sales or sales taxes overall. But unlike sales tax holidays, holiday shopping is not tax free.

"While you might pull a lot of people in (for Black Friday), how much of it is taken away from other sales dates?" said Alt. "But there are some people that claim that just the aspect of a 'special day' and special sales get people to buy things that they ordinarily wouldn't."

Barring unforeseen events at the federal or global level, this promises to be a good year for holiday shopping, according to NRF President and CEO Matthew Shay.

"Overall, retailers are optimistic for the 2013 holiday season, hoping political debates over government spending and the debt ceiling do not erase any economic progress we've already made," Shay said.

### Online Sales Taxes

One federal action that would make both states and brick-and-mor-

tar retailers happy would be the online sales tax bill making its way, slowly, through Congress.

Shop.org, a NRF website that tracks online sales, forecast online sales to grow between 13 percent and 15 percent during the 2013 holiday season.

"Online and mobile continue to be a leading area of growth for retailers," Shay said, citing the shop.org projection.

The legislation, officially called the "Marketplace Fairness Act," would allow states to require sellers on the Internet to collect state sales taxes just like stores with four walls and a door. State officials say it could mean another \$23 billion annually in lost revenue. They say it's not a tax increase, just a collection of taxes rightfully due.

The bill passed the Senate on a bipartisan 69-27 vote in May and is supported by President Barack Obama. Online retailers had been the biggest opponents of the legislation, but that has begun to change with the decision of Amazon and Wal-Mart, two of the nation's biggest online retailers, to support the bill. The big companies say it's unfair to require online businesses to collect sales taxes only in states where they have a physical presence such as a distribution center.

A couple dozen state lawmakers travelled to Washington recently to press for the legislation in the House, which so far has not acted. "If we don't get this done this session, 50 states are being held hostage," said Alabama state Rep. Gregory Wren, a Republican.

One alternative to making all online sellers collect and remit sales taxes to the states is the "small seller exemption," which would exempt online sellers doing less than \$1 million in business. This is attractive to some on Capitol Hill. But a study by the University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research found that the impact of such an exemption would be minimal, because it would only affect a very small percentage of online sellers, only 26 out of 1,000 or about 2.6 percent.

estimate. The general fund was under collected by \$22.1 million and the four other funds were equal to the November estimate.

Sales tax collections were \$2.0 million less than the estimate for November. The growth rate was positive 3.97 percent. Year-to-date the growth rate for four months is positive 3.53 percent.

Franchise and excise combined collections for November were \$34.7 million, which is \$16.4 million below the budgeted estimate of \$51.1 million. Year-to-date the growth rate for four months is negative 11.38 percent.

Gasoline and motor fuel collections were \$0.5 million more than the budgeted estimate of \$71.8 million. For four months year-to-date collections are \$6.4 million below the budgeted estimate.

Tobacco tax collections for the month were under collected by \$2.1 million.

Privilege tax collections were \$2.2 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$21.1 million.

Inheritance and Estate taxes were over collected by \$0.7 million for the month.

Business tax collections were \$0.4 million above the November

estimate.

All other taxes were under collected by a net of \$1.0 million.

Year-to-date collections for four months were \$123.2 million less than the budgeted estimate. The general fund was under collected by 118.6 million and the four other funds were under collected by \$4.6 million.

The budgeted revenue estimates for 2013-2014 are based on the State Funding Board's consensus recommendation in December 2012 and adopted by the first session of the 108th General Assembly in April 2013.

The State Funding Board met Dec. 10 to hear revenue projections for the remaining fiscal year. A panel of state economists estimated that tax growth would run anywhere from 2.2 percent to 3.5 percent. The board is to analyze the projections, come up with a consensus estimate to present to Gov. Haslam and the Tennessee General Assembly to use in planning next year's state budget.

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



State Rep. **Sheila Butt** was awarded top honors by the National Foundation for Women Legislators during the organization's annual leadership conference in Washington, D.C. Butt received the award for her dedicated legislative service, overall passion for state and country, and steadfast commitment to conservative Tennessee values. Butt is the House State Government Committee vice chairman and represents House District 64, that encompasses most of Maury County.



Butt

Retired Rutherford County Schools Director **Harry Gill, Jr.**, has accepted the position as Smyrna's new town manager. Gill replaces former Town Manager Mark O'Neal, who recently accepted a position with the engineering firm Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood in Nashville. Gill also served as the first principal at Cedar Grove Elementary on the west side of Smyrna.



Gill

Lt. **Tim Ware** has been promoted as Dyersburg's new fire chief following the retirement of Chief Robert Veal.

**David Sparks** has been hired by the town of Farragut as its new assistant engineer. He replaces Chris Jenkins, who left to take a position with another company. Sparks is originally from Hickory, N.C. With a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, Sparks formerly worked in Greensboro for a consulting civil engineering surveying firm, and has also owned his own construction company. He most recently worked for the Tennessee Department of Transportation and served as a project manager with Architectural Graphics Incorporated.

After almost two months on the job, East Ridge City Manager **Andrew Hyatt** has already made an impression with the local business community. The East Ridge Merchants Association hosted a welcome ceremony in Hyatt's honor so that he could meet and greet citizens, business owners and local dignitaries. Growing up just north of East Ridge in Cleveland, Hyatt said the city was a perfect fit for him, and he feels that the community and the city should continue to work hand-in-hand to make East Ridge a better place. Hyatt formerly served as the city manager of Fairview for several years and prior to that, served as Etowah city manager.



Hyatt

**Joseph Napolitan**, internationally known political consultant, author, and an adviser to former Gov. Bredesen's runs for mayor of Nashville and governor of Tennessee, has died in Massachusetts. He was 84. A former soldier, he joined John F. Kennedy's presidential campaign and subsequently worked for the presidential campaigns of President Lyndon B. Johnson and Vice President Hubert Humphrey. He advised candidates and leaders around the world. Bredesen brought Napolitan on board to help with his first mayoral campaign in 1987.



Napolitan

Brentwood's first police officer and Police Chief **Howard Buttrey** has passed away. He was 81 years old. Brentwood hired Buttrey on Feb. 1, 1971, and he retired on Feb. 19, 2000, after 29 years of service with the city. Even before coming to Brentwood, Buttrey made his career in law enforcement serving with Belle Meade Police and Metropolitan Nashville.

**Melissa Peagler**, former Morristown senior planner, has been appointed as town administrator of Dandridge. Peagler started her new position on Dec. 9.



Peagler

## Akbari elected to TN House

In a special election, Democratic nominee Raumesh Akbari won the House District 91 seat held for four decades by Rep. Lois DeBerry, who died July 28.

Akbari, 29, an attorney, defeated Libertarian candidate Jim Tomasiak, 3,087 to 369. The representative-elect works in the family business, Akbari Corp., a hair salon and maker of salon products, and is responsible for hiring, compliance, and "community outreach."

Akbari grew up in Memphis and is a graduate of Cordova High School, Washington University in St. Louis, and Saint Louis University School of Law, where she was president of the Black Students Association.

Her twin sister, Raumina Akbari, is a student at the University of Tennessee medical school.

Akbari will face a re-election bid in 2014, when all 99 seats in the House are up for election.



Akbari

## Alexander accepts "Restoring the Balance" States' Rights Award

U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander spoke before the National Conference of State Legislatures and accepted its "Restoring the Balance Award." The Award is given to members of Congress who have worked successfully to advance and protect states' rights in United States' federal system of government. Examples of Alexander's work include the Marketplace Fairness Act - which would allow states to decide for themselves whether to require remote sellers such as online retailers to collect state sales taxes that are already owed on a sale - and his efforts to move decisions about whether schools and teachers are succeeding or failing back to states and local communities.



Alexander

Alexander spoke at the National Conference of State Legislatures' fall forum, which included hundreds of state legislators, state staff and others from around the country.

## MTAS welcomes Cyndy Edmonds as online training coordinator

The Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) is happy to welcome Cyndy Edmonds as its new Online Training Coordinator. Her start date was Dec. 9 at the Knoxville office. While new to MTAS, Edmonds has served the University of Tennessee since 1996 in various assignments involving video production and training presentation.

Most recently, she worked in the Office of Information Technology and collaborated with faculty and students in producing and delivering online courses and curricula.

In her new job, Edmonds will be working closely with Macel Ely, MTAS training program manager along with the rest of the training staff.

"With Cyndy's hiring, an important component in strengthening our online training capabilities is now available to us," said Jim Thomas, MTAS executive director. "After talking with her, I know she's anxious to meet everyone and hear all of our ideas about online training."

**New Codes Coordinator**  
**Kelley Myers** has also joined



Edmonds



Myers

MTAS in the Knoxville office as the municipal codes coordinator. Prior to her work with MTAS, Myers spent 20 years as a paralegal in a private litigation law firm. She has a paralegal certification, along with an advanced certification.

## NATIONAL BRIEFS



**The fast-growing e-cigarette industry is pitching its product as a safer and cheaper alternative to tobacco cigarettes.** So far, the business has escaped the reach of regulators, but that is changing quickly. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration appear poised to label e-cigarettes a "tobacco product," a distinction that would give the agency power over their marketing, manufacture and sale. The lack of regulation has turned e-cigarettes into a commercial Wild West, where basement chemists and giant corporations alike concoct mixtures that taste like everything from peach schnapps to Mountain Dew. The novel flavors concern anti-smoking advocates, who note that teen e-cigarette use recently doubled within a single year. Researchers aren't sure of all the chemicals released by the products, but some say there's ample reason for worry. The American Lung Association, which favors strict regulation, cites a recent study that found chemicals such as formaldehyde and acetone in exhaled e-cigarette vapor. E-cigarettes use tiny atomizers to turn nicotine-infused liquids into an aerosol, which is inhaled by the user. They've been sold in the United States since the mid-2000s, but the Electronic Cigarette Industry Group says sales have boomed in recent years, turning the gadgets into a \$2 billion a year business. The group's president, Eric Criss, said e-cigarettes are intended to be a safer alternative for people who already smoke. The science behind that claim is far from settled. The industry points to research - some of it funded by e-cigarette interests - that shows the products to be less risky to users, sometimes called "vapers," and bystanders alike. Robert West, a health psychology professor at University College London, maintains that a global switch from tobacco cigarettes to atomized nicotine would save millions of lives a year. Stanton Glantz, director of the Center for Tobacco Control Research & Education at the University of California at San Francisco, agreed that e-cigarettes appear to be less harmful than tobacco but said they're hardly risk-free. He said most smokers don't give up tobacco cigarettes entirely when they use electronic ones, so their health

doesn't improve much. And while bystanders aren't exposed to secondhand smoke, he said, initial research shows that they're still inhaling nicotine, an addictive substance, along with toxic chemicals and ultrafine particles that can cause heart problems. The FDA says a federal appeals court has given it the power to regulate e-cigarettes as though they are tobacco products. The agency has a proposed regulation in the works, and while officials won't say what it contains, public health advocates and industry representatives expect the FDA to assert its authority over e-cigarettes.

**According to Reuters, Americans in most major U.S. urban areas are driving less, and in some cases a lot less, due to improvements in technology as well as shifting attitudes toward taking to the road.** A recent report by the Texas Public Interest Research Group (TexPIRG) found that the main drivers of the change are more people working at home, fewer people commuting to work by private car and many young professionals opting not to own a car at all. The report used U.S. government transportation and census data to chart who is driving where in urban areas and found that Americans, on average, drive 7.6 percent fewer miles now than when driving peaked in 2004 on a per-capita basis. "We see an increased use of public transportation, green transportation and walking among the nation's millennials," said Sara Smith, a researcher with TexPIRG. Many millennials, the generation that came of age after 2000, are using information technology to plot routes by foot, by bicycle or on public transport. They also use smartphones to arrange for hourly rental cars when they need vehicles. Americans between the ages of 16 and 34, on average, reduced their driving miles by 23 percent between 2001 and 2009. From 2006 to 2011, the average number of miles driven per resident fell in almost three-quarters of the largest U.S. urbanized areas for which up-to-date and accurate data was available, it said. Higher costs for gasoline and car maintenance, as well as economic malaise, also caused many to cut down on driving.

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## STATE BRIEFS

**Online sales tax to begin Jan.2014**  
This holiday season will be the last one you'll be able to shop tax-free. Tennessee will soon get its share of online sales tax revenue on many of those items starting in January 2014. Amazon.com officials said with online shopping so popular and convenient, they don't expect to see a drop in Tennessee customers just because they will start paying sales taxes. Gov. Haslam signed the online sales tax bill into law back in 2012 but gave Amazon two years before they are required to start collecting. Haslam has said in the past the state is expected to generate millions of dollars once Amazon starts collecting the taxes.

**Driving records accessible online**  
State officials are giving Tennessee residents an online option to access driving records. The Department of Safety and Homeland Security announced that it has launched an online service that allows people to download or print copies of their official driving records by going to <http://www.tn.gov/safety>. Officials hope the online option will reduce the wait time at driver services centers. A \$2 convenience fee will be assessed to each online transaction, in addition to the \$5 state fee set by the Tennessee General Assembly for a copy of a driver record.

**Arlington lawsuit concludes**  
After 21 years of litigation, a federal judge has dismissed the lawsuit originally filed over conditions at the now-closed Arlington Development Center in Memphis. Judge Jon Phipps McCalla of the U.S. District Court, Western Division, entered an order and final judgment that the state has "complied with all material provisions of the Exit Plan" that was filed in January. The lawsuit was originally filed in 1992 after a letter from DOJ detailed poor conditions for the residents of Arlington Developmental Center. People First of Tennessee later filed a separate lawsuit. Since the suit was originally filed, quality assurance and protection from harm programs have been developed in Tennessee that have been recognized nationally as models for other states. In January, the parties agreed to an exit plan aimed at resolving the litigation. Under the agreement, the state enrolled a small number of additional people in the Arlington class to receive home- and community-based services, provided additional efforts to assist class members in nursing homes to

transition to the community, and unveiled plans to demolish the former residential cottages on the Arlington campus. The state completed the exit plan two months ahead of schedule.

**State employees to relocate**  
Tennessee plans to move all the state employees now working in the Donnelley J. Hill State Office Building in Downtown Memphis a few blocks away into the One Commerce Square Building. State officials had indicated that some workers or departments may move to other state office spaces around Shelby County. But General Services spokesperson Kelly Smith confirmed that all 596 employees in the Hill Building will be moved to One Commerce Square. The relocation is to occur by June 1. Tennessee is leasing 104,673 square feet in the One Commerce Square tower, at Main and Monroe. The fate of the state-owned Hill Building, with 14 stories and 121,505 square feet, has not been determined.

**New Mobile App for state's Wildlife Resources Agency**  
The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency has a new mobile app that allows users to take along the latest agency info whenever they go. The new app includes access to all hunting, trapping, fishing and boating guidelines. Hunters can keep a hunting diary, access their harvest logs and upload their trophy photos. Fishing enthusiasts can access a mobile fish identification guide. The app can also help users get directions to Wildlife Management Areas, check stations, Hunters for the Hungry processors, fishing spots, boat ramps and wildlife viewing areas. And users can use the app to purchase licenses, renew boat registrations and report harvests. The app is available from the Apple app store and will be launched on Android in Google Play soon. More information is available at <http://www.tnwildlife.org>.

**Arts commission seek ideas**  
At a public forum, the Tennessee Arts Commission listened to ideas about strengthening the arts in the state. More than 100 people gathered in Nashville to express their opinions at the commission called the meeting, one of four statewide, to help it develop a new strategic plan. The plan gets revised every five years to chart the path forward for arts programs and funding statewide, and the next version is due in June. Some people spoke of geo-

graphic disparities in public art, how to make art materials and projects more accessible across demographic groups, and how to better connect artists who aren't part of formal arts organizations. Pulling from more than 1,400 surveys completed by arts groups, the commission has identified arts education advocacy and arts as economic development as priorities. But there is also a chronic lack of funding. The surveys showed that only about a third of art organizations in Tennessee feel they have a "seat at the table" when it comes to public discussions about how limited funds should be spent. Artists and business leaders touted the intrinsic value of art in improving community pride, helping children learn, building tourism and sparking development.

**Judiciary Museum unveils website**  
The Tennessee Judiciary Museum is kicking off its first anniversary celebration with a dedicated website and several new exhibits. The museum is located inside the Supreme Court building in Nashville. It was opened last year as the building celebrated its 75th year. The current exhibit called "Tales of the Tennessee Judiciary" features eight historic Tennessee cases ranging from an 1846 decision on the rights of slaves to the reapportionment of voting districts in 1955. The museum is a project of the Tennessee Supreme Court Historical Society. It is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to noon. Admission is free. The Tennessee Judiciary Museum's website can be found at: <http://www.tennesseejudiciarymuseum.org>.

**State plan developed to grow agriculture/forestry**  
Tennessee's top agricultural leaders have developed a strategic plan to grow agriculture and forestry over the next decade. The plan was developed following a challenge by Gov. Haslam a year ago to make Tennessee the No. 1 state in the Southeast in those areas. It highlights 27 action steps that focus on building production capacity and incentivizing the private sector through four major recommendations. They include expanding marketing opportunities for Tennessee producers and encouraging new production systems and agribusinesses, as well as increasing the scope and depth of a skilled and educated workforce through career, technical and higher education. The plan also endorses an initiative by the governor that calls for more than half the state's population to earn a postsecondary degree or certificate by 2025.

## TVA payments fall to states, localities; power drop hurts tax equivalent payments

The Tennessee Valley Authority provided \$547 million in tax equivalent payments in fiscal year 2013 to states and local governments where it sells electricity or has power properties.

TVA pays tax equivalent payments annually in the eight states where it sells electricity or owns generating plants, transmission lines, substations and other assets, and directly to 146 local governments where TVA owns power facilities.

The TVA board of directors at its Nov. 14 meeting in Oxford, Miss., approved the final tax equivalent payment for fiscal year 2013. This year's payments were \$32 million less than the record \$579 million distributed in 2012.

Tennessee received \$337,696,930 in fiscal year 2013.

The TVA board approved estimated tax equivalent payments of \$522,411,306 for fiscal year 2014, which began Oct. 1. The lower estimate reflects a continuing trend of lower sales and lower revenues due to a slow economy and other factors.

TVA returns 5 percent of power

## Four Select Tennessee industrial sites certified

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development announced the next four Select Tennessee Certified Sites.

The Select Tennessee program helps Tennessee communities prepare available sites for investment and expansion. The program sets a consistent and rigorous standard upon which companies can rely in making critical location decisions.

To date, 26 greenfield sites have been certified and new facilities are being located at Select Tennessee Certified Sites in Benton, Dyer and Montgomery Counties.

The four newest sites are:

- American Way Site: Lauderdale Co. (American Way, Ripley)
- City of Milan Industrial Park Site: Gibson Co. (Denton Fly Road, Milan)
- Clinton/I-75 Industrial Park Site 2R: Anderson Co. (Frank Diggs Drive, Clinton)
- Rialto Industrial Site: Tipton Co. (US Highway 51N, Covington)

"With 26 certified sites to choose from, Tennessee offers companies a wide range of developable properties across our state that have been vetted and certified to international

standards by world-class site selection firms Austin Consulting and The Foote Consulting Group," ECD Commissioner Bill Hagerty said. "With new facilities being located at Select Tennessee sites in Benton, Dyer and Montgomery counties, the investment made by state and local governments in these sites is already producing results. These Select Tennessee Certified Sites assure top decision makers their site will be operational in the shortest possible timeframe."

The program acknowledges that companies looking to expand or relocate their operations often eliminate less-prepared sites and addresses this issue by ensuring sites meet a specific standard. Among the qualifications needed to become certified, a site must have at least 20 developable acres, proper zoning in place to allow for ease of development, all utilities at the site or a formal plan to extend to the site, and truck-quality road access.

A hallmark of the program is ensuring that Tennessee sites are ready for development, whether through marketing those ready for a prospect or providing guidance for uncertified sites to achieve a higher level of preparedness.

## TN Wars Commission announces new Civil War/Railroad grant program

The Tennessee Wars Commission and the Tennessee Historical Commission announced that applications for a new grant program that will provide funding to protect Civil War and Underground Railroad sites in Tennessee became available Dec. 1. Funding for the grants is made possible by the Tennessee Civil War Sites Preservation Act of 2013, which was passed this year by the Tennessee General Assembly and signed into law by Gov. Haslam.

The new program will help fund the acquisition of the properties or of protective interests in properties such as conservation easements for land associated with the 38 most significant Civil War sites in Tennessee. In addition, the grants will assist in funding Underground Railroad sites eligible for the National

Register of Historic Places or for being designated a National Historic Landmark. The amount of funds available for grants in Tennessee is expected to be approximately \$483,000. After review, applications will be rated and ranked. The grants will pay a 50 percent match. The grant recipient must provide the remaining 50 percent of the costs as matching funds. Completed applications must be submitted by Feb. 1.

Applications for grants are available from Fred Prouty at the Tennessee Wars Commission, 2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, 37243. He may also be reached by email at [fred.prouty@tn.gov](mailto:fred.prouty@tn.gov).

For more information about the Tennessee Wars Commission, visit <http://www.tn.gov/environment/history/> or call 615-532-1550.

## TN Career Centers receive high marks

In a recent study by the Sparks Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Memphis, both job seekers and employers gave high approval ratings for the job services provided at Tennessee Career Centers administered by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Together with their 13 Workforce Investment Act partners, Labor operates 75 sites across the state that assist the unemployed with job placement and training and provide free job screening services to employers.

During the last fiscal year, 214,880 job seekers statewide entered employment as a direct result of Career Center assistance. Of the job seekers who responded in the survey, 700 received job referrals, 302 received resume assistance, 70 received assistance in learning a trade, 198 received training information, and 910 received other ser-

vices such as unemployment assistance, tuition aid, vocational counseling, and computer support. Job seekers who participated in the survey were asked a variety of questions related to general satisfaction, treatment by center staff, and outcome of their experience. Employers can receive job candidates by working directly with their local Tennessee Career Center, or they can post jobs directly to the state's job clearinghouse at [www.jobs4tn.gov](http://www.jobs4tn.gov).

Employers can use space at the Center to interview candidates or they can request use of the mobile Career Coach, which has computer workstations and broadband Internet access. The complete results of the customer satisfaction survey can be found at the following: [www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/forms/WIA\\_Employer\\_PY2013Q1.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/forms/WIA_Employer_PY2013Q1.pdf) or [www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/forms/WIA\\_Exitors\\_3rd2013.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/forms/WIA_Exitors_3rd2013.pdf)

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### BUYER

**COLLIERVILLE.** The town is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Buyer for the town's General Services Department. This position performs skilled technical work in the purchasing and procurement of a variety of materials, equipment, and supplies in accordance with prescribed regulations and procedures for the town. Qualifications: Requires an associates degree with major coursework in Business Administration, Public Administration or a closely related field; supplemented by two (2) years of job related experience; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this position. Certified Professional Public Buyer (CPPB) preferred but not required. Valid Motor Vehicle Operator's License at the time of hire. Candidate must be able to pass a work related physical and drug test. Salary range is \$28,568.00 - \$48,013.00 (DOQ) annually with excellent benefits package. Position is open to the general public. Position open until filled. Selection process may include: examinations, interviews, assessment centers, practical skills, etc. Drug testing may be required. Applications available at [Collierville.com](http://Collierville.com). Apply at Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN. 38017. Job Number: JN13-70GS, Class Code: 0255. We regret we are unable to answer all inquiries. We will only notify candidates selected for testing or interview. Please submit a new application each time you apply for a Town job. Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. The Town of Collierville is EOE and does not discriminate in hiring. Minorities, women, and disabled are encouraged to apply. If you have a disability and require special accommodations during the selection process, please notify the Human Resources Office at 901-457-2290. The Town of Collierville is a drug free workplace.

### CERTIFIED BUILDING & CODES INSPECTOR

**PLEASANT VIEW.** The town is seeking qualified applicants to fill the full-time position of a Certified Building and Codes Inspector. The position carries out guidelines of the planning commission and is responsible for technical work in the enforcement of building and zoning codes, city ordinances, inspection and maintenance of municipal playground equipment, ADA inspections, and other duties as assigned. Qualifications include a valid Tennessee driver's license, high school graduation or equivalent, and current certification as Building Inspector by the State of Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance State Fire Marshal's Office. Playground Maintenance and Safety Inspector certificates must be obtained within 12 months of hire date. Applications and job description may be obtained at City Hall, 1008 Civic Court, Pleasant View, TN 37146, phone 615-746-0600. Job open until filled. EOE. The town of Pleasant View does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability or veteran status in employment opportunities and benefits.

### CITY MANAGER

**BRISTOL.** The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of city

manager. The city manager is required to possess a bachelor's degree in Public/Business Administration or a related field (a related master's degree preferred), with six to nine years of public or related private sector management experience. Progressive experience, preferably within a local government (or related) setting; or any combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this position is qualifying. The city manager is selected by and reports to the Bristol City Council and he/she serves at their pleasure. The position is responsible for the administration of all departments of the city government. Bristol is located in Sullivan County, and is part of the Tri-Cities metropolitan area consisting of Bristol TN, and Bristol, VA., Johnson City, and Kingsport. The governing bodies for Bristol, TN, and Bristol, VA. are independent. Each has a council-manager form of government. Both cities have planning commissions, zoning ordinances and industrial development authorities. The starting salary will be market competitive, depending on the experience and qualifications of the selected candidate. In addition, the city expects to provide an excellent fringe benefit package to the successful candidate. Reasonable relocation expenses will also be provided. Cover letters, resumes and salary history should be sent to James L. Mercer, President/CEO, The Mercer Group, Inc., 5579B Chamblee Dunwoody Road #511, Atlanta, GA 30338. Voice: 770-551-0403; Fax: 770-399-9749; or E-Mail: [jmercer@mercergroupinc.com](mailto:jmercer@mercergroupinc.com). Website [www.mercergroupinc.com](http://www.mercergroupinc.com). First review of candidates occurred Nov. 29, 2013. Following a process, resumes screened by The Mercer Group and interviews with candidates of interest expected to be held in Bristol in early Dec. EOE.

### CITY RECORDER

**MASON.** The town is accepting applications for a qualified, innovative and committed professional with proven leadership merits and strong analytical skills to serve as the city's recorder. Major duties for the position include: assist the mayor and other department heads with the development and implementation of financial policies, procedures and controls; prepare and submit financial statements and related reports of the city's bookkeeping, supervise disbursements of city funds; coordinate development of the annual budget with the mayor and department heads, city council and outside agencies; update statistical tables and schedules; manage preparation of city council meetings; coordinate city code updates; maintain official city files, records, minutes, leases, deeds, contracts and other financial records; assist the public with requests for information and attest official records; supervise staff and participate in various personnel responsibilities including hiring, training employees, planning, assigning, delegating work, addressing complaints, resolving issues, completing annual budgets, payroll processing, and debt/grant management. Qualifications include: certification as a CMFO or extensive knowledge of governmental accounting and preferably at least five years previous experience in financial management with ability to supervise others. Starting salary and benefits to be negotiated. Applicants should submit a letter of interest along with resume by mail to the city attorney: James S. Haywood, Jr., PO Box 438, Brownsville, TN 38012. DOE

### CONTRACT SPECIALIST

**COLLIERVILLE.** The town is seek-

ing qualified applicants for the position of Contract Specialist for the Dept. of General Services. This position coordinates documentation covering contractual obligations between the Town and various vendors, contractors, and service providers. Actions covered include, but are not limited to: payments, delivery schedules and milestones, renewals, discontinuations or closeouts, construction agreements, professional services agreements and development agreements. Requires an associates degree with major coursework in Business Administration, Public Administration or a closely related field; supplemented by two years of job related experience; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this job. Requires working knowledge of terms and conditions relative to legal documents as applied to construction, services, materials and development agreements. Salary range is \$31,389.00 - \$52,753.00 (DOQ) annually with excellent benefits package. Valid Motor Vehicle Operator's License at the time of hire. Candidate must be able to pass a work related physical and drug test. Selection process may include: examinations, interviews, assessment centers, practical skills, etc. Drug testing may be required. Job opened until filled. Apply at Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN. 38017. Job number: JN13-72GS - Class code: 0255. Please submit a new application each time you apply for a town job. Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. We regret we are unable to answer all inquiries. Only candidate selected for testing or interviews will be notified. The town of Collierville is EOE. and does not discriminate in hiring. Minorities, women and disabled are encouraged to apply. If you have a disability and require special accommodations during the selection process, please notify the Human Resources Office at 901-457-2290. The town of Collierville is a drug free work place.

### DIRECTOR OF FINANCE/ CITY CLERK

**CLEVELAND.** The city is accepting applications from qualified individuals for the position of Director of Finance/City Clerk. Qualified applicants will possess a bachelor of Science degree in Accounting, and will be a Certified Public Accountant with more than 10 years related experience, preferably in the field of governmental accounting. Major duties include: assist the city manager and other department heads with the development and implementation of financial policies, procedures and controls; supervise the preparation of financial statements and related reports; supervise disbursement of city funds; coordinate development of the annual budget with the city manager, assistant city manager, department heads, city council and outside agencies; update statistical tables and schedules and complete an application and grading sheet for a government sponsored budget recognition program; manage preparation of city council agendas and review minutes of council meetings; coordinate city code updates; maintain official city files, records, minutes, leases, deeds, contracts and other financial records; assist the public with requests for information and attest official records; supervise staff and participate in various personnel functions including hiring, training employees, planning, assigning and directing work, appraising performance, rewarding and disciplining employees, addressing complaints and resolving problems; other duties as assigned by the city manager. Salary range entry level is \$76,664. Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest and resume by mail to the city of Cleveland, P.O. Box 1519, Cleveland, TN 37364-1519, ATTN: Human Resources Department, or by email to [jdavis@clevelandtn.gov](mailto:jdavis@clevelandtn.gov). EOE.

### FIRE CHIEF

**LA VERGNE.** The city is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Fire Chief. This position is under general supervision of the city administrator and mayor, and is responsible for complex professional and administrative work performed in planning, organizing and directing all activities of the Fire Department. The fire chief is the chief executive officer of the Fire Department; and will serve as incident commander at major fires and in a unified command role for other operations, emergencies and natural disasters. This position is responsible for the protection of lives and property of the city and for the Fire Department organization and direction of all fire service functions. Work involves planning, directing, fire prevention, fire suppression op-

erations and emergency medical services. Work also extends to supervision and providing for the training, assignment and discipline of all department members. This position functions independently of direct supervision with respect to technical fire procedures and practices. Work performance is reviewed through observation, analysis and overall city fire protection. Performs other duties as required. Detailed job description along with benefits information can be found by applying online at the city website: [www.lavergnetn.gov](http://www.lavergnetn.gov).

### FIRE CHIEF

**SPRING HILL.** The city is accepting applications/resumes for Fire Chief. A successful candidate will be responsible for the administration, coordination, and supervision of administrative and support functions of the department. He or she will also implement long-range departmental/budgetary planning, goals, objectives and strategies. Must also serve as a liaison between city departments, citizens, and other local/state/federal agencies and organizations, etc. Bachelor's degree in Fire Science or related field. 7+ years supervisory experience in fire services-related work, or any combination of education, training, and experience providing the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential job functions. Must meet/maintain qualifications/training standards as established by the department and the state of TN. Submit applications and resumes online at [www.springhilltn.org](http://www.springhilltn.org). Include references, salary history and salary expectations. The city offers an extensive and generous employee benefit package, which includes 100 percent employer paid medical coverage for the entire family, optional vision insurance, employer paid dental insurance for the employee with the option to purchase family coverage, Employer paid Life, AD&D and LTD Insurance, as well as voluntary life and STD. Flexible Spending Accounts also available. Applications will be considered on basis of qualifications, experience, and suitability for position without regards to race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Questions may be directed to [staylor@springhilltn.org](mailto:staylor@springhilltn.org) EEO/AA/Title VI Employer.

### GIS MANAGER

**MORRISTOWN.** The city is now accepting applications for the position of GIS Manager. The position will develop and maintain a regional GIS system under the regular supervision of the City Administrator. Essential duties and responsibilities to include the following: conducts research and oversees implementation of the GIS system used by the city and related governmental entities related to 911 addressing, using GIS elements that include hardware, software, database format and other related peripherals; coordinates GIS applications and projects with other departments, offices, users, utilities; maintains computer generated maps, reports, and data in a well organized format and assists others with the use of the information; collects and field verifies data; coordinates database and application development functions related to enterprise data base management and billing. Candidates will perform difficult technical work performing a variety of engineering assistance tasks; does related work as required. A full job description can be obtained from the City's website. This is a full-time position with benefits. Salary from \$50 - 75,000 DOQ. Applications may be obtained from the Human Resources Department on the second floor of City Center, or on the city's website at [www.mymorrisstown.com](http://www.mymorrisstown.com). Send completed applications to: City of Morristown, Attn: Human Resources - GIS Manager, P.O. Box 1499, Morristown, TN 37816-1499

### PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

**SOMERVILLE.** The town is seeking a Public Works Director. The position reports to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen through the city administrator. The position will have direct responsibility for 17 full-time employees and the water, sewer, natural gas, streets, and cemetery operations and oversight of the solid waste contractor. The full job description can be viewed on the city's web site: [www.somervilletn.org](http://www.somervilletn.org). Starting salary is \$60,000. Resumes may be sent to City Administrator, Austin Edmondson, via e-mail [cityadmsom@bellsouth.net](mailto:cityadmsom@bellsouth.net) or by mail to P.O. Box 909, Somerville TN, 38068. The Town of Somerville is an EOE employer. The position is open until filled and resumes will be reviewed as received.

### SENIOR PLANNER

**MORRISTOWN.** The city is accepting applications for the position of Senior Planner. Work is performed

under the regular supervision of the community development director. Requires a master's degree or equivalent; or four to five years related experience and/or training or equivalent combination of education and experience. Candidate to perform intermediate professional work in the handling of a variety of assignments in the Community Development Department. Duties and responsibilities include: reviews plans and requests and prepares reports and recommendations for the Planning Commission and City Council; provides technical service and advice on proposed development to engineers and surveyors; attends planning commission, zoning board of appeals and City Council meetings; provides technical advice, information and recommendations regarding planning and community development matters; verifies zoning and responds to annexation questions; performs or assists in the development of studies, analyses and recommendations in connection with the current and long-range physical, social and economic development of the city; does related work as required. This is a full time position with benefits. A full job description including salary range can be obtained from the city's website. Applications may be obtained from the Human Resources Department on the second floor of City Center, or on the city's website at [www.mymorrisstown.com](http://www.mymorrisstown.com). Send completed applications to: City of Morristown, Attn: Human Resources - Senior Planner, PO Box 1499, Morristown, TN 37816-1499. It is the policy of the city of Morristown not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability in its hiring and employment practices.

### WATER/SEWER MAINTENANCE WORKER

**PIPERTON.** The city is seeking qualified applicants for the full-time position of Water and Sewer Maintenance Worker. Position is responsible for water distribution, sewer collection, service line installation, and repair and other maintenance tasks; maintains and repairs water distribution and wastewater collection systems, including main breaks; locates water lines for outside entities; handles meter reading duties; coordinates water needs; maintains and repairs water mains, pump houses, valves, storage tanks and hydrants; coordinates new service taps in distribution system; maintains, cleans, and repairs sewer lines, lift stations, sewer laterals, and force mains, inspects and test sewers and manholes; assists in repairing asphalt, concrete, and landscape after repairs are completed; operates construction and maintenance equipment, in addition to coordinating with construction/contractors as needed; and coordinates sampling and flushing program within the distribution and collection system. Qualifications include: high school diploma or equivalent with additional training in Public Works Construction or related field; one year related work experience; possess or be able to obtain water and sewer license and CDL; have the ability to work long, irregular hours; able to lift 60lbs or more on a regular basis; kneel, crawl, and work in small confined spaces/ unfavorable environmental conditions; prolonged exposure to extreme heat and cold; able to operate light to heavy equipment, tools and communications equipment. Applicants e-mail [TPARKER@PIPERTONTN.COM](mailto:TPARKER@PIPERTONTN.COM). Only serious applicants need apply.

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(ISSN No. 0040-3415) Publication No. 539420  
— Official publication of the Tennessee Municipal League. Publisher: Margaret Mahery (mmahery@TML1.org); Editor: Carole Graves (cgraves@TML1.org); Phone: 615-255-6416. Advertising: Publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising deemed unacceptable. Fax classified ads to TT&C: Attention Mona Lawrence at 615-255-4752, or e-mail [mlawrence@TML1.org](mailto:mlawrence@TML1.org). Fax advertising copy to TT&C: Attention Debbie Kluth at 615-255-4752, or e-mail to [dkluth@TML1.org](mailto:dkluth@TML1.org). Opinions expressed by non League officials or staff do not necessarily reflect policies of TML. *Tennessee Town & City* is published, semi-monthly, 20 times per year at 226 Capitol Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville, TN 37219-1894. Periodicals postage paid at Nashville, TN. Subscription rates: \$6 per year to members, \$15 to nonmembers, \$1 a copy. Postmaster: Send changes of address to Tennessee Town & City, 226 Capitol Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville, TN 37219-1894.



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# New NLC report identifies 10 critical imperatives facing cities nationwide

The National League of Cities (NLC) released a new report that identifies "The 10 Critical Imperatives Facing America's Cities" and proposes innovative strategies to address these challenges and improve the nation's communities.

NLC leveraged guidance from city leaders across the nation to identify the 10 imperatives. They include taking action to address challenges, such as the shrinking middle class, climate change, a deteriorating transportation infrastructure and a lack of trust in government.

"When our cities are strong, our nation's families prosper, our economy thrives and our environment grows healthier," said NLC President Chris Coleman, mayor, St. Paul, Minn. "But we still face some monumental challenges that will require us to take decisive action now and work together to make cities strong, vibrant and sustainable."

The report identifies these 10 critical imperatives facing cities:

- **Fragile Fiscal Health:** Cities report their fiscal health is improving, but they continue to confront the prolonged effects of the recession and remain vulnerable to federal spending cuts. Among the solutions: Cities require new tools in their revenue-generating toolboxes, such as laws allowing them to collect taxes already owed to them from remote online purchases.

- **A Deteriorating Transportation Infrastructure:** Traffic congestion continues to worsen, choking the air with pollution and costing commuters millions of dollars in wasted gas and thousands of hours of lost time every year. Among the solutions: Cities must have new ways to pay for roads and explore new modes of transportation such as water ferries, light rail, bus rapid transit and bicycle pathways.

- **A Shrinking Middle Class:** Over the past decade, middle-class families saw their median incomes decline by nearly 30 percent. Among the solutions: Cities should develop strategies to connect eligible residents with state and federal work support and public benefits, expand opportunities to save and build financial assets and help hard-to-employ resident overcome barriers to work.

- **Inadequate Access to Higher Education:** Higher education

brings better-paying jobs, growing tax revenues, enhanced public safety and a better quality of life. Yet only 40 percent of American adults currently hold postsecondary degrees, and this rate is significantly lower for underserved minorities. Among the solutions: Cities can partner with K-12 schools and other community stakeholders to ensure more students graduate and go on to obtain higher college degrees.

- **The Need for Affordable Housing:** Foreclosures and vacant houses have destabilized neighborhoods across the country, resulting in increased crime, blight, shrinking local tax bases and more demand for social services. Among the solutions: To stabilize neighborhoods, cities can help to provide mediation between lenders and borrowers, prevent vacant property deterioration and rehabilitate properties for resale or rental.

- **A Less-Than-Welcoming Return for Veterans:** Service members coming home from combat zones face a higher risk for unemployment, homelessness and family problems. Among the solutions: Local governments should work with nonprofit and veterans groups to determine what service members need, create affordable housing for them and partner with businesses to provide jobs.

- **Gang Violence:** Gangs bring crime, injuries and death that threaten the social fabric of city neighborhoods and trigger social, economic and physical decay in affected neighborhoods. Among the solutions: Cities need to create opportunities for young people, support families and build communities that do not produce gangs in the first place. This can include partnering with school, neighborhood and church leaders, offering drug-prevention programs and supporting efforts to help young people finish school and stay away from gang activity.

- **A Broken Immigration System:** Millions of immigrants continue to arrive each year, generating substantial economic growth, revitalizing communities and stabilizing neighborhoods. Yet Congress remains unable to fix the nation's broken immigration system. Among the solutions: Cities need a federal solution that secures our nation's borders



while providing a path to citizenship for the millions of immigrants contributing to our nation's vitality.

- **Climate Change and Extreme Weather:** Catastrophic storms, droughts, heat waves and rising sea levels will increasingly impact cities, harming citizens, destroying property, disrupting local economies and wiping out infrastructure. Among the solutions: Communities must take a number of important steps now, including upgrading facilities and infrastructure to weather storms and partnering with the private sector to help finance improvements.

- **A Lack of Public Trust in Government:** City leaders need citizens' input and cooperation more than ever before, yet recent surveys show public trust in government is falling. Among the solutions: City leaders must reach out -- including using new social media and engagement tools -- to involve citizens in important decision-making.

Salt Lake City Mayor Ralph Becker, NLC's first vice president, said these problems aren't ones confined to just small cities or large metropolises.

"These are problems that all cities are facing -- big and small, from coast to coast," Mayor Becker said. "All of these imperatives require innovative and comprehensive solutions. We need the help of citizens, businesses, nonprofit groups, schools and state and federal leaders. I'm confident that by working together we can take on these challenges and improve communities across the country."

Joplin, Missouri Mayor Melodee Colbert Kean, NLC's second vice president said there's good reason to be optimistic, however.

"Cities are truly the heart of America: They are where citizens live, work and play. They are where government is closest to the people and where real change can happen," Mayor Kean said. "Working together, we can tackle these challenges, alleviate these threats and improve the lives of all those living and working in our nation's cities."

**Dec. 20-21: Collierville**  
*Glassblowing and metal forging demonstrations.* Outside the Depot on N. Rowlett St. from 9 am -5 pm. Free to the public. For more information, visit [www.collierville.com](http://www.collierville.com)

**Dec. 21: Dandridge**  
*Christmas Parade.* Historic Downtown at 1:30 pm. For more information, call 865-397-7420 ext. 17 or visit [www.MainStreetDandridge.com](http://www.MainStreetDandridge.com)

**Dec. 31: Chattanooga**  
*Chattanooga Choo Choo's New Year's Rockin' Eve Party* 1400 Market St. Dance the night away! Doors open at 7:30 pm. The Beaters play at 8 pm. Cash bars, snacks, prizes, & more; overnight packages available. Book early, reservations required. Call 1-800-TRACK29 or 872-2529 .

**Dec. 31: Gatlinburg**  
*New Year's Eve Fireworks Show & Ball Drop.* For the 26th straight year, the Space Needle area at traffic light No. 8 comes alive at the stroke of midnight with a fabulous fireworks show. Features free party favors and live entertainment. Deemed the "Best New Year's Eve Show in the South."

**Dec. 31: Memphis**  
*New Year's Eve on Beale* Countdown on Beale is an annual New Year's Eve celebration held in downtown Memphis. Perhaps the most popular New Year's Eve event in town, the event is always packed with tens of thousands of revelers. Live music, 10-foot guitar wrapped in the 60 years of Rock 'n' Roll art drops 100 feet at midnight.

**Dec. 31: Nashville**  
*Music City New Year's Eve Bash on Broadway.* Ring in the new year and rock out the old with Music City and thousands of your closest friends at a New Year's Eve party on Lower Broadway. Bring your party hats. Make some noise. Count down to the drop of the music note and fireworks at midnight.

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# Technology becoming a new norm for Tennessee cities

BY VICTORIA SOUTH  
TML Communications Coordinator

Instead of horseplay on the school bus, students get a head start on learning with their laptops. Developers check out parcels of land, mapping all zoning and utilities at a glance; and police cameras pan the downtown hotspots offering pedestrians and shop owners greater security. It's all part of a cultural change sweeping the nation, as more cities elect to incorporate technology into their daily processes. Fostering greater connectivity between local governments and the citizens they serve, technological advances touch every aspect of life and service delivery from utilities to libraries to healthcare.

In the article "Using Technology to Improve Society," *The Guardian* reports that "cities are edging closer to a more socially inclusive 'e-topia,' as they realize the benefits of using technology to improve a diverse range of situations.

"When we talk about so-called e-topias," they are very much linked to the idea of governing in a good way — making cities more socially inclusive and with better access to services," says Professor Mark Deakin of the EU's Smart Cities project at Edinburgh Napier University.

In the U.S. alone, state and local governments will spend in the neighborhood of \$58 billion on information technology in 2013, according to market analysis reports. And while local news articles project that tech-

dination, and hospitals are looking at us and how we move data."

## Cookeville

The city of Cookeville is already living the connective dream through the Cookeville — Putnam County GIS Council. Comprised of the city, E-911 and Putnam County, the group recently received The Special Achievement in GIS Award at the ESRI International GIS User Conference in San Diego. The council was chosen from more than 100,000 other applicants worldwide for their GIS data sharing program.

The initiative has fostered better communication between departments and virtually revolutionized the way the city conducts municipal planning, utility maintenance and the threat of emergency. Each department paid a portion of a \$40,000 start up fee to access the unlimited data.

"We understand how important GIS data is for governments and we use it on a day-to-day basis, from locating 911 calls to keeping up with water meters and lines, electrical lines, and planning," said Randy Porter, Putnam County 911/EMS director. Backup servers were created at the city and the 911 Center to allow each member to access the data in real-time, while applications and web maps were allow the general public to access the work of the council.

"The authority that creates the data is the only individual that can

ability to click on any parcel on the GIS map and find out the land owner's contact information," said Porter. "The city knows where every gas and water line is."

Information sharing will spread between cities one day, Porter said. "There's a push on the 911 side of sharing GIS data for 911 districts statewide. They figure if we can make this happen between three different governments, we can make it happen all over the state."

## Evaluating 311 systems

Narrowing the myriad of municipal numbers citizens can call for non-emergency questions to just one — 311 — has helped local governments across the state and the nation communicate more effectively with residents and facilitate service requests.

As more communities across the state and the nation implement 311 technology, an important phase for local governments is the most effective means of evaluating 311's performance overall.

Local government cannot ensure citizen satisfaction based on 311 data," writes David Eichenthal, former president and chief executive officer of the Ochs Center for Metropolitan Studies in a 2008 article in the *Government Finance Review*. "Responding to service requests and achieving customer satisfaction is only part of the picture," he said.

The article, which presents a case study about the 311 system in Chattanooga, offers information on how 311 implementation can drive a performance measurement program and achieve budgetary savings. The report on Chattanooga RESULTS can be found at <http://www.ochscenter.org/documents/using311data.pdf>.

The Alliance for Innovation (ICMA) offers more information, including a sample 311 evaluation survey and other documents on its Knowledge Network. To create a profile on the Knowledge Network and join groups related to 311 technology, visit [http://icma.org/en/knowledge\\_network/groups#GroupTabs=MostActive](http://icma.org/en/knowledge_network/groups#GroupTabs=MostActive).

## Nashville

"If there's one city agency taking advantage of big data and analytics, it's the police department," Bill Schrier, deputy director for the Center for Digital Government states in the article "Cities Ramp Up Data Projects," in *Governing Magazine*. He cites that officers approaching a suspect's premises, often already know whether there are any outstanding warrants, or if someone in the home has a gun permit.

In Nashville, police are utilizing technology as a preventative measure against crime. New surveillance cameras help officers monitor downtown events, offer added security for businesses and provide criminal evidence to solve crimes. The devices are decked out in flashing blue lights and installed in places such as the popular East Nashville district on Shelby Ave., Downtown on Lafayette and Gallatin Pike as well as various points along the Cumberland River. While the precincts have been utilizing cameras since 2005, the new cameras' pan-tilt-zoom feature offers better leverage, with spin and zoom functions for better angles, higher quality images and easier to access footage.

"You might want the camera pointed to the sidewalk during the busy afternoon hours, but want to spin it around to a parking lot after dark to address burglaries going on in the area," said John Singleton of the Metro Nashville Police Department's Information and Technology Department. "Depending on the time of day or what day it is, the event going on in the area—officers can use the cameras accordingly."

In the past, someone would literally have to climb the pole to remove the camera's hard drive to gather case evidence. Today, the newer system's recordings are streamed across a high-speed wireless backbone to police headquarters, and recorded on servers.

"To maintain the 28 cameras we have in the field, before the upgrade project, we had to be in close proximity of each camera," said "The new cameras give the precincts full control from the station 24/7."

Thirty-six new cameras have been installed at precincts across the city.

The Cumberland River cameras, purchased with a Port Security Grant, scan the river and areas underneath the bridges and shorelines. "They are basically looking for crime and river traffic; riverboats and vessels around the bridge abutments and docks in the downtown area," said Singleton. Camera locations are decided by the precinct commanders. "All the pre-



Cookeville Water Department GIS/Steve Smith checks water meters using an I-Pad and GIS mapping device.



Nashville has upgraded and installed new surveillance cameras Downtown and along the Cumberland River to help with events such as New Years Eve and Tennessee Titans games along with added security for businesses.



Kingsport is investing \$900,000 to upgrade wi-fi and place new Dell laptop computers in all of its city schools. The school system is also piloting a study with the Kingsport Fleet Services Department to install wi-fi on school buses.

nology spending in Tennessee varies from city to city, depending upon factors such as demographics and public expectations, some city officials believe it all comes down to technology's benefits winning over the public.

## Morristown

"It's been growing, not at the pace I would expect, but it's picking up," said Tony Cox, Morristown city manager. The city shares the distinction with Sullivan County of becoming the first two Certified Connected communities in the state, part of 17 communities nationwide, within the Connected Tennessee initiative.

A public-private partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce NTIA State Broadband Initiative Program, Connected Tennessee joins with technology-minded businesses, government entities, universities and non-profit organizations to improve economic development and enhance quality of life by accelerating Tennessee's technology landscape.

The program helps build technology-ready communities by helping officials create comprehensive action plans. Local governments review the technology landscape in the area, then develop regional partnerships, establish local teams, and conduct thorough community assessments. Establishing the Connected Certification affords a community an avenue to discuss its success and pursue opportunities as a technically advanced community.

In Morristown, the governing board of city, county, utilities and 911 partners plan to share data, personnel and hardware by hosting a Geographical Information System (GIS). GIS technology is on the rise worldwide, where geographical relationships, patterns, or trend information is placed onto maps in a way that can be easily seen and understood by the user.

The city budgeted \$135,000 for this regional effort and is currently advertising for a GIS Program Manager. "We've been working a year to get to this point," Cox said. "Our utility board has fiber to the home throughout the community. And we're looking at traffic control coord-

edit the data," said Katherine Phipps, the city's GIS/Systems specialist. "While it gets replicated to everybody else, no one can change it."

The city has used the live data for public hearings, annexation studies, and most recently for the package store referendum, establishing radiuses and locations of every store in the community based on the city's regulations. When the city was in the process of developing a new parks trail, residents were able to look up the trail's access points.

"If we're looking for flooding information, we can pool all of the structures that fall within the FEMA floodplain boundaries and see if the properties are residential, commercial or industrial and are able to make decisions on policies in planning according to that information," said Phipps.

The city's Utilities Department also keeps up with all lines and meters while the Gas Department can locate services in the event of an emergency.

The system has worked so well that contractors conducting a smoke screen test on the city's water meters decided to forego their own way of compiling the results, a large three-ring binder, and utilize the city's paperless process instead. "We use I-pads and GIS servers and GIS online," explains Steve Smith, Water Department GIS/Systems manager. "They could take pictures with their I-pads and post the data to our GIS server where it could be seen immediately. We were looking for any repairs that needed to be done by the customer. It's hard to write someone a letter about a violation that happened six months ago."

With the GSI and I-Pad system in place, the city was able to send the notification letters out within two to three days and the repairs were done much quicker, Smith said. The system also offers more peace of mind to residents in the event of emergency.

"Having the tax parcel database updated on a daily basis, if we have a major accident where there's leakage of diesel fuel running into a creek, for example, we have the

precincts want them, and if we ever get more funding, we'll buy more," he said.

Nationally, critics have worried that surveillance is a sign of invasive law enforcement. As for the area businesses, comments have been favorable.

Singleton points out the blue lights. "It is our desire to be very visible so the public knows we're there. Businesses around Nashville have more cameras than the police have, both in and around their buildings."

## Gatlinburg

The tourist capitol of Gatlinburg in East Tennessee, is putting a smile on the faces of its visitors in a whole new way—the ease of a technically advanced transit system. The city's trolley system is the fifth largest mass transit system in the state growing to 20 plus trolleys servicing approximately 50 miles of routes.

Today, you can find Gatlinburg Trolley locations in real time from a website. Funded by a grant, the trolleys are color coded by route and are monitored by a global positioning system. The information is translated in living color by the Intelligence Transportation System into estimated arrival times at eight popular trolley shelters.

## Kingsport

In Kingsport, taking a test, reading a text book, or completing homework assignments will soon be as simple as clicking a mouse for the city's school children. The city is budgeting \$900,000 to update wi-fi networks and provide laptops and tablets to the city schools.

The Kingsport Board of Mayor and Aldermen are currently looking at the most efficient way to carry out the initiative, all in time for the new PARCC Assessment tests to kick in next Spring. PARCC is the national test that will replace TCAP. The test will be administered to grades 3-12, but the extra wireless equipment will be installed in all the schools.

Wireless networks were installed last year, according to Andy True, chief information officer in Kingsport City Schools.

"Last year, the really big push was to go fully wireless in all of our schools, so that we could initiate a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program, he said.

"We've issued just over 1,000 devices, with a replacement schedule, so that all of our kids have access to devices and teachers can utilize those in the classroom in all of their lesson planning," True said.

The school system is planning to install additional wireless access points to reach a 15 computer to one access point ratio, to ensure students have enough bandwidth to take the test, according to John Payne, director of technology for Kingsport schools. The city is looking at the Dell Latitude 3330 model, which features a steel case, heavy hinges and solid state hard drive. "The schools need approximately 1,700 computers," Payne said. "Next year, we'll need to order at least 700 more."

The computers will be distributed to schools according to average daily attendance. "This first round won't be going into the hands of students to take home," said Payne. "That probably won't happen for three-four years until we get enough devices in place."

The process is also leading to the day when carrying textbooks to and from school is a distant memory. "A lot of the text books aren't quite up to par, they're mainly PDFs or scanned copies of the actual text," said Payne. "But as they become more interactive, we will head toward electronic books."

The school system is also piloting a program to put wi-fi on some of the longer bus routes, one of the first school systems in Tennessee to do so. Students will have access to filtered wireless during the long ride home. "We have it on five buses for a pilot with Kingsport fleet maintenance," said Payne. "We've been working on this since July."

The idea is to improve academic performance, according to True, with Kingsport taking the cue from the Huntsville, AL, school system.

"We visited with them last year, and they had wireless on every bus in the district," Payne said. "One of the added perks was a dramatic drop in behavioral problems on school buses. Using the technology was considered a privilege."