

## TN Comptroller report shows how Great Recession affects local property tax revenues

BY CAROLE GRAVES  
TML Communications Director

A report recently released by the state's Comptroller's office provides information on how the Great Recession affected local property values. Although Tennessee did not experience the foreclosure rates and significant losses in property values seen in some states, the report indicates that the state did not go unharmed.

"The results of the most recent county reappraisals are the clearest evidence of how the bursting of the real estate bubble and recent mortgage crisis affected property values across the state," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson stated in his *Quarterly Fiscal Affairs Report*, released in October.

In 2013, 26 counties conducted reappraisals. Results from the assessments indicate that very little appreciation occurred during that 4- to 6-year time period.

Most local governments rely on property tax revenue and the natural growth that comes through the property reappraisal cycle to fund vital services for its citizenry. Without the growth in the tax base, many local governments are faced with some difficult decisions.

"Local governments in Tennessee have historically relied heavily on property tax revenue as a steady stream of income that increased annually through appreciation and growth. Such growth allowed many local governments to avoid significant tax increases for several years," said Wilson. "The lean economic times of recent years coupled with declining property values have forced many jurisdictions to face the difficult choice of whether to raise property tax rates, or reduce spending and the level of services that can be provided to citizens."

Wilson explains that in a pre-2008 market, the 26 counties that conducted reappraisals would most

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likely have seen double digit appreciation of property values over the last four or five years. Instead, property values in these counties changed very little from their previous appraisal. Approximately half of the counties had minor decreases in the value of their countywide assessment, while the remainder showed a very modest increase.

He said other factors behind the weak growth in property values include sluggish new housing and new business construction, decreased sales of existing housing stock, and a tightening of mortgage lending practices.

Reappraisal of property for tax purposes is required on a periodic basis to update appraisals to reflect current market value and to ensure equity of appraisals throughout a given jurisdiction. Pursuant to T.C.A. § 67-5-1601, every county in Tennessee is on a four, five, or six year reappraisal cycle.

The state's Division of Property Assessments directs, monitors, and recommends the new values to the State Board of Equalization, which conducts the final review and grants final approval. Davidson, Hamilton, Knox, and Shelby counties were among the 26 counties that completed reappraisals in 2013. The inclusion of the state's four largest cities meant that approximately half of the more than three million parcels of real property in the state were reappraised in a single year.

For a complete copy of the report, go to [www.comptroller.tn.gov](http://www.comptroller.tn.gov)

## NLC says city finances remain tenuous; outside shocks could propel backward slide

City officials are beginning to see improvement in city finances, but they remain in the midst of a tenuous recovery from the recession, according to a new report from the National League of Cities (NLC). The 28th annual City Fiscal Conditions report shows this improved outlook comes from increased sales and income tax revenue, and improved local economic health.

"City officials are still making difficult and critical decisions regarding the types of community investments they need to make on behalf of the families they serve," said Marie Lopez Rogers, NLC president and mayor of Avondale, AZ. "Local officials must be vigilant as the economy continues its painfully slow recovery."

The report indicates there are pockets of concern that could pose problems. While conditions are improving, city budget capacity remains limited with revenue and expenditure projections pointing to a continued slow recovery. Property tax revenues are registering a decline for the third year in a row. Nearly one in two finance officers also express concern over the uncertainty in federal and state budgets and cuts in aid and transfers.

"This recovery could be overwhelmed by the inability of the federal government to put its house in order," said Clarence Anthony, NLC's Executive Director. "Cities will feel the impact of the current government shutdown and will certainly feel the consequences of the nation not raising the debt ceiling on time."

Cities are making needed

changes to ensure healthy balance sheets. For much of the past two decades, the most common action taken to boost city revenues has been to increase the amount of fees charged for services.

This year, two in five (39 percent) city finance officers report that their city has raised fee levels. Additionally, around one in four cities increased the number of fees that are applied to city services (22 percent), and one in five (19 percent) cities increased the local property tax in 2013. Increases in sales, income or other taxes are even less common than property tax increases, and this continued to be the case in 2013. Reducing the size of the municipal workforce is the most common action cities have taken to decrease their costs.

"Because cities operate under an annual balance-budget requirement, they are constantly making adjustments and trade-offs as they adapt their budgets to changing economic conditions," said Michael Pagano, dean of the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago and co-author of the report.

There are a number of factors playing into balancing budgets and decision-making in the coming months: "Infrastructure demands, employee-related costs, and cuts in federal and state aid continue to weigh heavily on local budgets and will for the foreseeable future," said Christiana McFarland, Interim Director for City Solutions and Applied Research at NLC and co-author of the report. "External shocks and economic uncertainty could undermine optimism and progress at the local level."

## Union City living Discovery Park dream



Photo by Victoria South

City leaders cut the ribbon for the Discovery Park of America in Union City. The 50-acre education/entertainment complex is a \$100 million project that's been in the works since 2007. Pictured left to right: Obion County Chamber of Commerce President Todd Petty, founders and benefactors, Jenny and Robert Kirkland, Martha Rippey and Discovery Park CEO Jim Rippey, and Union City Mayor Terry Hailey.

See story on Page 8

## Supreme Court considers government prayer

By Jake Grovum  
Stateline.Org

The U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments last week to explore whether a town board in upstate New York violated the separation of church and state when it authorized the delivery of a prayer prior to board meetings.

The case – *Town of Greece v. Galloway* – began as a challenge against the practices of Greece, N.Y., a small town outside Rochester, where official city government meetings included a prayer. For a time, that prayer was exclusively Christian, a specific practice that the town's opponents said violated the constitutional ban on government-sanctioned prayer. A lower federal court agreed.

But in reaching the Supreme Court, the case has since turned into a potential opening for a broader ruling on government-backed prayer.

While government meetings and practices of all kinds – including sessions in state legislatures, the U.S. Congress and indeed the Supreme Court itself – often include prayers or invocations of God of some kind, the limits for what could and could not pass constitutional muster have been vague for years.

"It's one of those things that there are endless variations of what can happen on the ground," said Jessie Hill, a law professor at Case Western Reserve University, who wrote a preview of the court's arguments on the influential website SCOTUSblog. "The court has really struggled with what to do with government speech that is religious in nature."

"Anyone will tell you that the law in this area is just a mess," she added.

The U.S. Constitution bans the establishment of an official state religion. Yet over the years, some kinds of religious speech and symbolism have been allowed to permeate certain practices – from the use of "God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and U.S. currency to opening prayers before government meetings.

There are limits – but the problem is in defining what those are. In most cases, lower courts have found the Supreme Court's 1983 ruling in *Marsh v. Chambers* to generally allow prayer before government hearings. In that ruling, the court cited the historical prayer practice of legislative bodies as trumping the Constitution's ban on government-sanctioned religion, allowing the practice to continue.

But there was no test or limit laid out, and since then, countless government bodies have used the ruling



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to employ nondenominational, multi-faith and even sectarian prayers, mostly without running afoul of the courts. Courts have found some practices overly sectarian or said they aligned a government too closely with one religion, but the limits were never clearly defined.

Over the years, courts also adopted the "endorsement test" to

limit government prayer, a stronger approach which critics often called too restrictive. The test says government-sanctioned prayer violates the Constitution when it signals official sanction or disapproval of certain faiths, or even makes those not of a given faith feel like outsiders.

It was the endorsement test that the 2nd Circuit Federal Court cited in *See PRAYER on Page 3*

## Other U.S. Supreme Court cases of importance to cities

BY LISA SORONEN  
State and Local Legal Center

Every year before the Supreme Court's term officially begins on the first Monday in October, the Court holds its "long" conference, where it considers whether to hear about 2,000 cases. On Oct. 1, the Court accepted eight of those cases, two of which will have an impact on cities.

In *Marvin M. Brandt Revocable Trust v. United States*, the Court will decide who owns an abandoned railroad right-of-way: the United States government or a private land owner living next to the right-of-way. In 1875, Congress passed a law granting rights-of-way to railroads through public land. Over the course of the next century, as trucking became a more popular method of transport, numerous railroads abandoned these rights-of-way. The United States argues that a 1922 federal statute allows the U.S. to retain the railroad right-of-way if it is abandoned.

If the United States retains the

abandoned right-of-way and it is located in a city, the city automatically receives it from the federal government for free. If the abandoned right-of-way is located elsewhere, a state or local government receives it for free if it establishes a "public highway" on the right-of-way within one year. State and local governments typically convert abandoned railroad rights-of-way into "Rails-to-Trails."

The Supreme Court usually accepts cases where at least two federal circuit courts of appeals have ruled differently on the same issue. In *Marvin M. Brandt Revocable Trust v. United States* the Tenth Circuit ruled in favor of the United States. In a similar case, *Samuel C. Johnson 1988 Trust v. Bayfield County, Wisconsin*, the Seventh Circuit ruled against Bayfield County, who intended to build snowmobile trails on the abandoned railroad right-of-way.

The question the Court will decide in *Navarette v. California* is *See COURT on Page 3*





**BARTLETT**

The city has increased its transparency and accessibility to citizens. In July, the city began using MinuteTraq to create, distribute and publish its board agendas, packets and minutes digitally. Aldermen can now access their meeting packets from anywhere via the internet, and citizens can review all information to be discussed prior to the meeting. Additionally, videos of board meetings are time stamped so citizens can skip right to the discussion they're interested in. Agendas, packets and video are accessible via the city's website.

**CHATTANOOGA**

Little Free Libraries are sprouting up across the United States. North Chattanooga is following the example to strengthen the community through sharing literature and to create a unique sense of place in area neighborhoods. Four neighborhood libraries will be posted over the next two months. Two of them will be registered as Little Free Libraries with the International Little Free Library organization. The Home Depot in Hixson will be building, painting, and posting the libraries. The libraries can hold up to 40-50 books each. All of the books will be provided by neighbors and most of the books will have a sticker that reads "Always a gift. Never for Sale." Each library is located beneath a street light and will contain an emergency whistle.

**FRANKLIN**

TDOT Commissioner John Schroer, Tourism Commissioner Susan Whitaker and Franklin Mayor Dr. Ken Moore were on hand for the official dedication of the new access road to Carnton Plantation and Eastern Flank Battlefield. The project began in 2011, when Gov. Haslam and Commissioner Schroer joined state and local leaders to award a \$500,000 transportation enhancement grant to the city for the Eastern Flank Battlefield Access Improvement Project. The project also includes Carnton Plantation visitor center parking, interpretive trail network, landscaping, bike racks, signage, bio-retention area and other pedestrian amenities.

**FRANKLIN**

The City of Franklin Water Management Department recently received the Control Authority Pretreatment Excellence Award from the Kentucky/Tennessee sections of the American Water Works Association and Water Environment Federation. The Franklin facility was honored for collaborating with other city departments, for continuously monitoring the collection system, and educating food service establishments, industrial users, and commercial facilities on the importance of pollution prevention.

**GALLATIN**

One of the most popular winter fishing areas on Old Hickory Lake was closed and won't reopen until the spring of 2016. The Tennessee Valley Authority closed access to the discharge channel at the Gallatin

Fossil Plant while it conducts a \$1.1 billion construction project to upgrade the plant's pollution controls. The steam plant, which consumes about 12,350 tons of coal a day, was built in 1959. It has been a popular fishing destination ever since. The TVA said the closure is a safety precaution for the public and construction workers, who are building a permanent bridge across the channel and installing a desulfurization system, also known as scrubbers.

**GERMANTOWN**

The real estate blog *Movoto* has ranked Germantown No. 10 on its ranking of the best suburbs in the U.S. *Movoto* ranked the suburbs based upon amenities, cost of living, crime, education and employment. Germantown was tied with the home of Apple Inc., Cupertino, CA, as the safest of all suburbs with a crime rate 59 percent lower than the national average. *Movoto* also ranked Germantown's cost of living as 8.7 percent higher than the national average with median household ranking 169 percent higher than the state average.

**GOODLETTSVILLE**

The city's Help Center Retail Thrift Store, Treasure Hunters, has expanded by 500 percent. The retail sales division of the Help Center paves the way to help the needy. A Grand Opening was held to celebrate the expansion Nov. 9.

**JACKSON**

Champion Power Equipment announced that it has chosen Jackson for its newest distribution facility. Champion will hire up to 50 employees during the first 15 months of operation and invest more than \$3 million into its 80,000 square-foot facility.

**KINGSPORT**

The final phase of a federal and state project years in the making was kicked off with a groundbreaking. "The Welcome Center, funded by the federal Appalachian Regional Commission and TDOT, is unique in several ways," said City Manager John Campbell. "First, it is the northern most Welcome Center in the I-26 system. Second, many people do not realize I-26 is part of the Appalachian Corridor B highway system running from North Carolina to Kingsport. From Kingsport, Corridor B continues through Eastern Kentucky to Columbus, Ohio, along US 23." The completion of the Welcome Center project will actually mark the completion of Corridor B in Tennessee, which runs 57.4 miles from the North Carolina state line at Sam's Gap to the Virginia state line in Kingsport. Another distinctive feature of the Welcome Center is the fact that it can be accessed from both eastbound and westbound traffic. Many Welcome Centers feature access from only a single direction.

**KINGSPORT**

Eastman Chemical Co. will be transformed into a 21st century company with construction of a new corporate headquarters. The company broke ground on the 300,000-square-foot

facility and plans to invest \$1.6 billion in a larger, multi-year expansion. The corporate headquarters will be in the Eastman baseball field, which is across the street from the current corporate headquarters. The buildings will be connected with a walkway over Wilcox Drive.

**KNOXVILLE**

Leisure Pools announced they will be opening a new \$6.2 million manufacturing facility that will function as the company's corporate headquarters. The investment will create 240 new jobs. The facility will be the first for Leisure Pools in Tennessee and will service increased demand along the east coast. Leisure Pools is purchasing the former Sea Ray Island Plant at Forks of the River Industrial Park. Knoxville Chamber CEO Mike Edwards said Sea Ray's facilities had components to produce fiberglass material, similar to what Leisure Pools was looking for.

**NEW TAZEWELL**

Furniture Company, England Inc., a subsidiary of La-Z-Boy furniture, announced it will expand its presence with a \$17.5 million investment that will create 300 new jobs over the next five years. The furniture maker is already one of the largest employers in Claiborne County.

**ROSSVILLE**

The town was awarded a \$200,000 state recreational trail development grant, with a town match of \$40,000. The \$240,000 project will help the community connect Lafayette Station Park in downtown to an unnamed 12-acre park and a spring-fed lake in the largely undeveloped Huntington Pointe subdivision. The town plans on building a pedestrian bridge over Morrison Creek that separates the two parks. A partial 10-foot-wide paved walking trail will be expanded and a parking lot added as well. Town officials hope the project can be finished in time for next year's fishing rodeo in June.

**SPRING HILL**

The master plan is complete for what will be the city's largest city park; now officials must decide what to build first. After a series of input meetings with the public and city officials on what Port Royal Park should look like, those elements have been rolled into a master plan. The plan includes multi-use football and soccer fields, a splash pad, greenway path, sidewalks, playground, pavilions, basketball and tennis courts, a building for concessions and restrooms, trees, landscaping, gated access and parking. The park also will be the site of the new Fire Station No. 2 and a veterans' plaza, a memorial for fallen military. The park will be built on almost 31 acres in the rural southeast part of the city, adjacent to Deerfield subdivision. The city has set aside \$2 million for construction — \$1 million in the current budget and \$1 million in next year's budget. The park is estimated to cost about \$4.5 million, if all elements shown in the master plan drawings are built at once, or it could be built in phases.

**TRENTON**

A grand opening ceremony was held at MacLean Power Systems. In Oct. 2012, the company announced it would invest \$12 million to locate a manufacturing plant in Gibson County and create 250 jobs. The facility, located at Industrial Park

**Franklin receives outstanding award for Integrated Growth Plan**



Franklin 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. The award was given during the organization's annual fall conference held in Kingsport. Initiated in the summer of 2012, the Integrated Growth Plan provides direction for developers, utilities, and staff rights-of-way along Carothers and East McEwen which will be required in the future. This will allow developers to understand the limits of where they can develop. The original idea for the plan came from a joint effort of Franklin's 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.

Dr., will produce hardware and connector products. The company is a leading manufacturer of products used globally by electric utilities for building transmission and distribution lines and substations. MacLean Power Systems product families include hardware, connectors, insulators, anchoring systems and a variety of protection devices.

**UNION CITY**

9to5 Seating announced they will relocate their manufacturing operations to Union City. The announcement represents an investment of \$39.5 million and will create 510

new jobs over the next five years. The company will move its China-based manufacturing facility to the U.S. and plans to occupy the Union City IDB Speculative Building in the Northwest Regional Industrial Center. Production is scheduled to begin in early 2014, at which time the company will introduce a newly developed product line designed for the retail market under the brand name of Made in America (MIA) Seating. Founded in 1982, 9to5 Seating is a vertically integrated manufacturer, specializing in the design and production of ergonomic office seating.

**Brownsville, McKenzie among Delta communities to receive nearly \$2M in new investments**

A new investment of resources aimed at Delta small-business owners, entrepreneurs and communities is designed to strengthen the region's economy and create jobs for Delta residents, the Delta Regional Authority and Gov. Bill Haslam announced recently.

Five new investments are coming directly to West Tennessee — from extending sewer systems and improving rail lines to supporting programs that train workers in software programming — leverage \$831,713 in federal resources into nearly \$2 million in total public and private investment for the Delta region. Brownsville and McKenzie are included in the list of communities.

In Brownsville, the Delta Regional Authority is contributing \$162,598 for the Rail Line Rehabilitation Project. The funds will be used to improve and rehabilitate rail lines for the Industrial Lead Track. The improvement of the rail will ensure the continued operation of the plants

in the industrial park. The total project cost is \$180,665.

In McKenzie, the Delta Regional Authority is contributing \$200,000 to renovate an existing building in downtown for the implementation of an economic development/job training facility. The total project cost is \$331,210. The awards are provided through the DRA States' Economic Development Assistance Program.

These are in addition to \$162,500 for the expansion of a workforce development program through this year's first round of SEDAP funding in March. DRA coordinates directly with Tennessee's three local development districts in the region for program funding implementation.

The Delta Regional Authority is a federal-state partnership that is congressionally mandated to identify and provide investment to grow the small-business and entrepreneurial community in the 252 counties and parishes of the Delta.

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## High Court considers prayer at local council meetings

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in ruling against the New York town in the case now before the justices, rather than a narrow ruling citing the Marsh precedent.

That means that, in a sense, the test itself is at issue before the court. And in choosing to review that ruling, the Supreme Court has given an opening to those who have argued for a more permissive approach, one that would allow prayer as long as it's not "coercive" or proselytizing, for example, rather than sectarian. That's the argument adopted by the Obama administration, which weighed in with a brief of its own in the case.

Thanks to the lower court's use of the endorsement test, the Supreme Court justices now have an opportunity to revisit – and potentially end – the endorsement test's limit on prayer once and for all. While it might seem like a slight change in the legal landscape, Hill said such a ruling would be a "bombshell."

"A lot of folks have thought for a long time there are five votes to replace that," she said, referring to the conservative justices on the court. "People have been expecting that for seven years since [Justice Sandra Day] O'Connor left the court."

Whether the court will go that far is unclear. There are many other options, Hill and others say, includ-

ing some that would rule against the town and still save the endorsement test. The justices could order the lower court to take another look at the case under the Marsh precedent, for example.

The facts of the case also leave some room for a narrow ruling. The fact that the town featured exclusively Christian prayer could bolster the argument that the town went too far, even by more permissive standards, and therefore isn't a case that should involve the broader issue of government prayer.

Others have said because it's a municipal government – where citizens could be required to appear for permitting or other issues, unlike a legislative floor session – the case is a special test of prayer allowance.

The fact that the U.S. Supreme Court took the case at all has left some to predict an interest among some justices for a more sweeping ruling, one that would clear up ambiguities in the law and, potentially, open the door for more prayer in government.

But how far to open that door could be a difficult question.

"This case is just another example of the difficulty we get into when the court starts sanctioning government religious speech," Hill said. "[This case is] clearly that problem coming home to roost."

## Other U.S. Supreme Court cases of importance to cities

COURT from Page 1

whether the Fourth Amendment requires a police officer who receives an anonymous tip regarding drunken or reckless driving to corroborate dangerous driving before stopping the vehicle. This case stems from an incident in which Mendocino County, California's 911 call center received a tip that a vehicle had driven the caller off the road. The caller gave a description of the make, model, and license plate number of the vehicle along with the road and mile marker the vehicle was on and the direction it was headed. Two state police officers quickly located the vehicle based on the description, pulled the driver over, and searched the car after smelling marijuana. The officers discovered four large bags of mari-

juana.

In this case, the police officers did not actually observe any erratic driving before pulling the vehicle over. The California Court of Appeals held that officers do not need to wait to pull someone over when an anonymous tip is about erratic driving and the officer is able to corroborate other details, as in this case.

Before the long conference the Court already agreed to hear a number of cases during its Term October 2013 that will impact local governments. The Court is still likely to pick about 30 more cases to decide during its Term October 2013. It is likely that some of these cases will impact cities.

**Editor's Note:** Lisa Soronen is the executive director of the State and Local Legal Center.



Environmental Science students from Tennessee Wesleyan College partnered with the city of Athens to perform an environmental assessment and mitigate environmental threats on city property that will be used to develop a new hiking trail.

## TWC Environmental Science students form trail partnership with city of Athens

Tennessee Wesleyan College Environmental Science students have embarked on a partnership with the city of Athens in a service-learning project that benefits the students and the community. Two classes of TWC environmental science students partnered with the city to perform an environmental assessment and mitigate environmental threats on city property that will be used to develop Eagle Trail, a new hiking trail.

The students not only learned about environmental concepts and issues through their project work, but they were also able to make a positive environmental impact on their community by helping city planners determine the impact of building a hiking trail in an area next to an industrial site.

The students worked in small groups to perform the initial assessment of the property, with each

group taking a different section of the proposed trail. Each group made detailed field observations including presence of man-made structures and environmental problems, took photo samples of dominant plant and insect life, noted the presence of bird and animal life, and also noted the type of soil.

Using a follow-up lab to identify their samples and photos, they researched detailed questions on impacts of the trail construction. After compiling their data into environmental impact statements for their section of the trail, the statements were given to Shawn Lindsey, Athens public works director, to provide information for the city on each different section of the trail.

Some of the major environmental issues students noted on the property included dumped garbage, erosion, presence of invasive species,

and areas with unsightly views in need of buffer plantings. The students worked to clean up garbage from all sections of the trail and also removed large items such as old tires.

In early November the students will return to the property to plant trees that will serve as a buffer for areas of the trail with unsightly views.

"The work the students did on our Eagle Trail site is a perfect example of how service-learning can improve a community and at the same time make the education experience more meaningful, by putting knowledge into practice," said Lindsey. "The result will be a lasting improvement to our community that will allow more people the chance to enjoy nature and realize better health from regular hiking. It will also make our industrial property more attractive for recruiting industries."

## TREEDC hosts energy forums in Philippines

To sustain the momentum for its International Exchange Program launched in the Philippines in March 2013, the Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC) returned to the Philippines to conduct a series of Renewable Energy Forums in partnership with the Renewable En-



Ducktown Mayor/TREEDC President James Talley, (left) and MTAS Consultant/TREEDC Director Warren Nevad, join local students and officials in a tour of an organic agriculture farm utilizing solar-powered streetlights at Central Bicol State University in the Philippines.

ergy Association of the Philippines (REAP) and some Philippine State Universities. TREEDC and REAP conducted three educational forums about renewable energy at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) in Manila, the Central Bicol State University (CBSUA) in Naga City, Camarines Sur and the Technological University of the Philippines in Manila.

More than 600 Philippine students, faculty, business/community leaders, and local government officials actively participated in dynamic presentations and discussions on renewable energy concepts and applications, challenges and opportunities, financing, and incentives. They were also introduced to Tennessee renewable energy-related research, best practices and businesses, along with experiences learned from the implementation of Philippine renewable energy projects throughout the country.

A live press conference was conducted by Global News Network (GNN Naga TV) with representatives from TREEDC and REAP to discuss how renewable energy can help address energy concerns in the region, particularly the high cost and quality of electrical power, and other forum proceedings.

Highlights include:

- Tennessee Technological University and Mississippi State University formalized sister-university partnerships with PUP and CBSUA respectively. Similarly, the mayors of Sorsogon City, Sorsogon; Naga City, Camarines Sur and Daet, Camarines Norte signed their respective Memorandum of Agree-

ments to join TREEDC as members.

- Initial plans were developed to create a renewable energy task force in Bicol, comprised of area mayors, university presidents, and chambers of commerce to identify energy-related issues such as energy efficiency, energy audit and community-based renewable energy systems.

- Possible technical assistance was proposed to an approved 18 MW waste to energy conversion plant which will use municipal solid waste from communities within the Bicol region as feedstock.

- TREEDC and REAP met with the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Energy to assess the potential of waste to energy projects in the Philippines.

In addition, TREEDC and REAP participated in the Philippine PowerTrends 2013 International Exhibition & Conference in Manila, where large companies (Philippine, German, Japanese, Chinese, British, etc.) involved in electrical power and renewable energy systems and technologies participated. TREEDC had an exhibit booth in the REAP pavilion featuring community-based renewables to promote its International Exchange Program and Tennessee technology and system providers.

According to MTAS Consultant and TREEDC Director Warren Nevad, the city of Mabalacat is sending two separate delegations to Tennessee in December to visit some of the state's renewable energy manufacturing facilities. Both delegations plan to stay in Ducktown and take a tour of Nashville.

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## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



State Rep. **Antonio Parkinson** is the newest member of The Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR). House Speaker Beth Harwell appointed Rep. Parkinson to serve on the Commission from Aug. 20, 2013, to Nov. 4, 2014. He replaces Rep. Lois DeBerry, who passed away in July.



Parkinson

State Rep. **Mike Turner** said he plans to step down in January as chairman of the House Democratic Caucus. He has served five years in that role.



Turner

Knoxville Mayor **Madeline Rogero** is one of the members serving on President Obama's Task Force on Climate Preparedness and Resilience. The Task Force includes state and local leaders from across the country, who will use first-hand experiences in building climate preparedness and resilience in their communities to bring recommendations to the administration on how the federal government can respond to communities nationwide dealing with the impacts of climate change. The country's state and local leaders are already contending with more frequent or severe heat waves, droughts, wildfires, storms and floods, and other impacts of climate change.



Rogero

**Andrew Kean** is leaving his post, after six months as Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke's head of day-to-day operations, to return to the private sector. Kean said he is taking a "leadership role" in an emerging company.



Keen

**Kristen Robinson** is the town of Unicoi's new parks and recreation director. Robinson, a native of central Florida, brings a diverse background to the post that includes working with afterschool and outdoor education programs, halfway houses, teaching in Uganda, and years as a venture guide in Tennessee, North Carolina and West Virginia.



Robinson

Former Fairview City Commissioner **Wayne Hall** will serve as interim city manager, replacing Andrew Hyatt who resigned Oct. 3. Hall, who has also served on the Fairview Planning Commission, is expected to serve six months, or until the position is filled.

**Gary M. Faulcon**, an area law enforcement veteran, has been appointed to the Tennessee Board of Parole. Faulcon spent 25 years with the Metro Nashville Police Department, most recently as commander of the Bomb Squad. During more than two decades with Nashville's police department, he has been assigned to various positions in the Background and Recruitment and Criminal Investigations divisions, as well as the Vice and the Special Weapons and Tactics Team.

**Phillip Potter** of Huntersville, N.C., has been named the new Alcoa police chief replacing former Chief Ken Burge who passed away in July. Potter began his career with the Piqua, Ohio Police Department as a patrol officer in 1974 and made his way through the ranks, eventually becoming chief in 1992. He served in that capacity for 11 years. He accepted the position of chief of police in Huntersville in 2004, holding that position until his retirement in August. He assumes his new position in December.



Potter

Former Columbia City Planner **Paul Keltner** has been hired as Spring Hill's first city planner to work between developers and the planning commission as the community continues to grow. The city planner will be the initial contact for builders and developers, who want to plan projects in the city. Keltner has served in a variety of roles since 1997, including as an engineering assistant, senior planning associate, and a city planner.



Keltner

**Allison Chancey**, an Oak Grove Elementary teacher in Lewisburg, is the only teacher to serve on the Tennessee State Board of Education. She attend state board meetings four times a year. Chancey has worked in education for 32 years. Her career started in Special Education.



Chancey

## Ashland City receives TDEC Clean Energy grant



TDOT Commissioner Bob Martineau presents a \$47,835 Clean Tennessee Energy Grant (CTEG) to Ashland City.

Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Robert "Bob" Martineau presented a Clean Tennessee Energy Grant (CTEG) to Ashland City. The grant will allow the city to increase energy efficiency and energy savings while providing multiple benefits to the city, community and the citizens.

Ashland City was awarded the \$47,835 CTEG grant to upgrade and expand their water and wastewater plants by replacing the HVAC with a SEER rating above 16, installing low-wattage LED lighting and deploying varying frequency drives on water treatment pumps to use only energy necessary to meet demand. The plant will save 13,594 kWh monthly, along with a monetary savings of \$1,600 monthly and \$19,200 annually.

The city's lab building and water and sewer treatment plant office were destroyed in the flood of 2010. Since the flood, employees have been performing important testing

and lab work in a small office trailer. The Clean Tennessee Energy Grant will assist them in returning the water and sewer treatment plants to a safe and healthy environment for the employees, as well as the citizens and businesses that reside nearby.

The Clean Tennessee Energy Grants are awarded for projects designed to reduce air emissions, improve energy efficiency and create cost savings.

Funding for the project comes from an April 2011 Clean Air Act settlement with the Tennessee Valley Authority. Under the Consent Decree, Tennessee will receive \$26.4 million over five years to fund clean air programs in the state (at approximately \$5.25 million per year).

As part of the grant program's initial offering, a total of \$5.3 million in grants was awarded in 2012 to a variety of projects within state government, municipalities, utilities, state colleges and universities and communities throughout the state.

## NATIONAL BRIEFS



State tourism campaigns are being launched with the help of a federal initiative to attract foreign visitors. Called Brand USA, it's a nonprofit, public-private partnership created by legislation President Barack Obama signed in 2010 "to promote the United States to world travelers." The program is funded by the private sector, mostly the tourism-related industry, with matching federal funds of up to \$100 million a year from a \$10 fee that international

travelers pay when they visit the U.S.

As part of its national travel and tourism strategy, the Obama administration hopes to attract 100 million international visitors to the U.S. by 2021, compared with 67 million in 2012. A 1 percent increase in tourists from Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom would add more than \$500 million annually to the U.S. economy, according to Brand USA. Last year, the first full year of opera-

tion, Brand USA received \$60 million in private-sector funding. That more than doubled to \$130 million this year. The program, according to *Stateline.org*, promotes all 50 states on their various websites and in promotional material. States can supplement that support by sending in additional funding from state tourism organizations and local chambers of commerce to pay for targeted programs arranged by Brand USA.

## Farragut, Morristown, Memphis receive Green Development Grants

The Tennessee Environment and Conservation, in partnership with the Tennessee Stormwater Association, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Tennessee Department of Transportation awarded \$85,000 to local governments to fund green infrastructure and low-impact development projects beginning January 2014. The Green Development Grant Program provides funding through a competitive process for projects such as rain gardens, green roofs, pervious concrete applications, trees and tree boxes, in addition to outreach and education efforts designed to promote green development in Tennessee communities.

This year's grant cycle represents the third time the Green Development grants have been offered to local governments. The 2013 recipients include:

- **Farragut:** \$19,300 –above-ground artistic rainwater harvesting component (Cistern) which is a component of Farragut's larger Outdoor Classroom and Water Quality Demonstration Site. This project combines a variety of demonstration elements as well as community space for civic engagement and citizen interaction with the many resources that nature provides. Green Development Funds will be used for the installation of the system, interpretive signage and a mural.
- **Morristown:** \$21,900 – The city, along with multiple committed pri-

private partners, is redeveloping the downtown farmer's market including removing 5,000 square feet of existing impervious parking lot and replacing it with a community green space. This space will include expansive lawns, a wide landscape buffer and construction of a new 400-foot long porous walkway. The city is committed to a long term environmentally conscious revitalization project that includes a detailed and ongoing publicity campaign via print and electronic media as well as signage and tours to promote green development.

- **Memphis** and Shelby County Sustainability Office: \$21,900 – This sustainability office, along with a multitude of committed public and private partners, is developing a Low Impact Development (LID)/Green Infrastructure workshop and design competition. LID/Green Infrastructure techniques treat stormwater on site using bioswales, greenroofs, cisterns, bioretention facilities and porous pavement.

A Green Development Grant workshop will be offered in the spring of 2014 in conjunction with TDEC's workshop on the new Green Infrastructure permit requirements.

To learn more about the Green Development Grants visit TDEC's website at [www.tn.gov/environment](http://www.tn.gov/environment) or the Tennessee Stormwater Association's website at [www.tnstormwater.org/](http://www.tnstormwater.org/).

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# STATE BRIEFS



## Multimodal Access Fund to support various transit usage

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) announced the creation of the Multimodal Access Fund, a new program to support the transportation needs of transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists through infrastructure projects that address existing gaps along the state highway network. Examples of projects eligible under the program include sidewalks and pedestrian crossing improvements, bus shelters, park and ride facilities, and bicycle lanes. Multimodal Access projects will be funded 95 percent by TDOT with five percent funded with local matching funds. Total project costs are not to exceed \$1 million. Project requests for funding must be submitted to TDOT through Rural and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (RPOs/MPOs). Applications for the first round of funding must be received by TDOT no later than Dec. 20, 2013. For more information about Multimodal Access Fund project guidelines, and applications, visit [www.tdot.state.tn.us/publictrans/fund.htm](http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/publictrans/fund.htm).

## TN education improvement fastest

Tennessee is the fastest-improving state in the nation in education, according to the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress report. Fourth-grade students in the state went from 46th in the nation to 37th in math and from 41st to 31st in reading. Tennessee also saw very strong growth for African-American students. The results also show Tennessee had the largest growth of any state in a single testing cycle since the national assessment started 10 years ago. The NAEP assesses fourth and eighth graders in reading and math. All states have taken NAEP since 2003.

## TN schools bullying report reveals thousands of confirmed cases

A first-of-its-kind state report finds 5,478 confirmed cases of bullying in Tennessee schools last year. The Department of Education's Bullying and Harassment Compliant Report, required under a 2012 law, says 7,555 cases were reported statewide during the 2012-13 school year with 72.51 percent of the bullying and harassment confirmed. Tennessee's

public schools have more than 935,000 students.

**Family Justice Center celebrated** Agencies from across the Upper Cumberland gathered to celebrate the future Family Justice Center which will serve as a co-location for victim resources. It is a model designed to bring help for victims of domestic violence to one location. The center, which will be funded by a grant from the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security, will be based in Cookeville and will serve the entire 13th judicial district, including Cumberland, White, Putnam, Clay, DeKalb, Pickett and Overton counties.

## ROTC programs slash delayed

ROTC programs that had been set to close at three Tennessee colleges are getting some time to improve, in hopes of better meeting the Army's needs. East Tennessee State, Tennessee Tech and UT Martin were all set to close their military officer training units. Now, U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander says the Army will wait two years while it reviews its plans. Tennessee would have been the hardest hit state in the wave of closures, with three of the 13 such programs set to be shuttered.

# Tenn Historical Commission accepting grant applications now through Jan. 2014

The Tennessee Historical Commission began accepting grant applications for historic preservation projects for the 2013-2014 fiscal year Nov. 1.

The amount of funds available for grants is expected to be approximately \$200,000. After review, applications will be rated and ranked. Funding decisions will be made when the exact amount of the federal allocation is known. This normally occurs by December, but could be as late as Aug. 2014.

The selection process will emphasize projects such as architectural and archaeological surveys, design guidelines for historic districts and the rehabilitation of historic buildings that are listed in the National Register and have a public use. Priorities for grants include areas experiencing rapid growth and development, other threats to cultural resources, areas where there are gaps in knowledge regarding cultural resources and communities that participate in the Certified Local Government program. Surveys should identify and record historic districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant to Tennessee's history and built before 1965. Surveys may be for a specific

geographic area or for sites associated with themes or events significant in the state's history, such as the development of railroads in the 19th century or the development of motor tourism in the 20th century.

Assistance is also available for other types of historic preservation projects. These may include preservation planning studies for towns, neighborhoods and historic districts; the preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places; the rehabilitation of buildings and predevelopment work necessary to undertake rehabilitation. Rehabilitation and restoration of historic buildings must follow the

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The grants will pay up to 60 percent of the costs of approved project work. The grant recipient must provide the remaining 40 percent of the costs as matching funds. Completed applications must be submitted by Jan. 31, 2014.

Applications for grants are available from the Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, TN 37243. Applications may also be downloaded from the Historical Commission's website at [www.tn.gov/environment/history/history\\_preservation\\_grants.shtml](http://www.tn.gov/environment/history/history_preservation_grants.shtml).

## Commission accepting award nominations

The Tennessee Historical Commission is now accepting nominations for its Certificate of Merit Awards to honor individuals or groups that have worked to preserve Tennessee's cultural heritage during 2013. The deadline for submissions is Dec. 31.

The awards program recognizes individuals or groups throughout the state who have worked to conserve or highlight Tennessee's cultural heritage during the past year. The

awards recognize historic preservation projects as well as work in the field of history. Award recipients will be honored in 2014.

To make a nomination for a Certificate of Merit Award, contact the Tennessee Historical Commission and request an application or visit [www.tn.gov/environment/history](http://www.tn.gov/environment/history). The Commission can be reached by calling 615-532-1550, or by contacting Angela Miller at [Angela.Staggs@tn.gov](mailto:Angela.Staggs@tn.gov).

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# CDBG Grants awarded

Gov. Bill Haslam and Economic and Community Development Commissioner Bill Hagerty recently approved more than \$27 million in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to assist Tennessee communities with infrastructure, health and safety projects, and downtown improvements.

Allocation of CDBG funds is based on priorities set at local levels where community needs are best known. The CDBG program is administered in Tennessee by the De-

partment of Economic and Community Development.

Below is a list of municipalities who were awarded grants. In addition to those listed below, Gov. Haslam previously announced the following CDBG recipients and were featured in the Oct. 7 issue of *Tennessee Town & City*. They are: Athens, Dover, Dyer, Etowah, Hartsville-Trousdale County, Humboldt, Milan and Trenton. ECD will accept applications for the 2014 CDBG program in Feb.

Community	Project	CDBG Amount	Local Funds	Total
Alamo	Sewer System Improvements	389,500	20,500	410,000
Bean Station	Rescue and Fire Protection	190,605	5,895	196,500
Bell Buckle	Sewer System Rehabilitation	180,000	20,000	200,000
Big Sandy	Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	247,350	7,650	255,000
Brownsville	Sewer System Improvements	500,000	70,000	570,000
Carthage	Sewer System Rehabilitation	500,000	82,000	582,000
Celina	Water System Rehabilitation	500,000	67,000	567,000
Church Hill	Sewer System Improvements	500,000	160,000	660,000
Clarksburg	Sewer Line Extension	142,462	10,723	153,185
Covington	Community Facility Project	300,000	567,320	867,320
Cowan	Water System Rehabilitation	350,000	22,341	372,341
Crossville	Water System Improvements	500,000	176,000	676,000
Dandridge	Wastewater System Improvements	347,500	142,500	490,000
Dayton	Water Tank Project	500,000	200,000	700,000
Decatur	Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion	300,000	1,485,000	1,785,000
Friendship	Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	500,000	20,300	520,300
Galloway	Sewer System Improvements	147,361	20,095	167,456
Graysville	Fire Hall	250,000	147,000	397,000
Harriman	Water System Improvements	500,000	61,800	561,800
Henning	Water System Improvements	410,502	2,236	412,738
Jacksboro	Fire Protection Project	200,000	53,165	253,165
Jellico	Water System Improvements	500,000	10,300	510,300
Lawrenceburg	Sewer System Rehabilitation	500,000	125,000	625,000
Lexington	Sewer System Improvements	500,000	323,300	823,300
Loretto	Early Warning Sirens	133,455	10,045	143,500
Luttrell	Sewer System Improvements	500,000	26,500	526,500
Martin	Sewer System Improvements	500,000	38,800	538,800
Maynardville	Water Line Extension	500,000	43,500	543,500
Middleton	Water Meter Replacement	101,120	26,880	128,000
Minor Hill	Water Source Development	214,000	324,000	538,000
Newport	Sewer System Improvements	500,000	1,161,000	1,661,000
Paris	Housing Program	500,000	0	500,000
Parrottsville	Fire Protection Project	200,000	10,526	210,526
Rives	Housing Rehabilitation	500,000	0	500,000
Somerville	Sewer System Improvements	391,600	53,400	445,000
South Fulton	Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	500,000	122,000	622,000
Spencer	Water System Rehabilitation	500,000	43,500	543,000
Wartrace	Water System Rehabilitation	500,000	49,450	549,450

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: TT&C Classified Ads, Mona Lawrence, 226 Capitol Blvd. Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219; e-mail: [mlawrence@TML1.org](mailto:mlawrence@TML1.org); or fax: 615-255 4752.

### 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, Virginia, Johnson City, and Kingsport. The governing bodies for the cities of Bristol, TN, and Bristol, Virginia, 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. E-Mail: [jmercer@mercergroupinc.com](mailto:jmercer@mercergroupinc.com). Website: [www.mercergroupinc.com](http://www.mercergroupinc.com) First review of candidates will occur on Nov. 29, 2013. Following a process, resumes will be screened by The Mercer Group and interviews with candidates of interest are expected to be held in Bristol in early December, 2013. 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 prefer-

ably 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

### 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

**EAST RIDGE.** The city is accepting qualified applicants for the position of Fire Chief. Qualified applicants will have a minimum of 15 years of combined experience in fire services. Graduate of on-campus course work at the National Fire Academy. Candidates must have a proven track record of strong moral character and of impeccable integrity, demonstrated by a proven record of fairness in the application of policies and discipline. A thorough background investigation will be conducted to validate the candidate's qualifications and suitability for the position. It is preferred that the candidate resides within the corporate limits of the City of East Ridge. The candidate must possess excellent communication skills and the ability to represent the department and the City to the community, staff, media, and City management effectively. Competitive salary and excellent benefits package. For a complete listing of qualifications and requirements, please visit our website at [www.eastridgetn.org](http://www.eastridgetn.org). Application and resume can be submitted electronically to [tperry@eastridgetn.gov](mailto:tperry@eastridgetn.gov) or by mail to: Ms. Trish Perry, HR Manager at City of East Ridge, 1517 Tombras Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412 or. Closing date is Nov. 22, 2013. The City of East Ridge is EOE, and TN Drug Free Workplace.

### 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). The City of Spring Hill is an EEO/AA/Title VI Employer.

### POLICE CHIEF

**EAST RIDGE.** The city is accepting qualified applicants for the position of Police Chief. Qualified applicants will have a bachelor's degree in Criminal Science with a minimum of 15 years of combined experience in law enforcement or any equivalent combination of specialized training, education and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this position, along with POST certification. Candidates must have a proven record of strong moral character and of impeccable integrity, demonstrated by a proven record of fairness in the application of policies and discipline. A thorough background investigation will be conducted to validate the candidate's qualifications and suitability for this position. It is preferred that the candidate resides within the corporate limits of the City of East Ridge. The candidate must possess excellent communication skills and the ability to represent the department and the City to the community, staff, media, and the City management effectively. Competitive salary and excellent benefits package. For a complete listing of qualifications and requirements, please visit our website at [www.eastridgetn.org](http://www.eastridgetn.org). Application and resume can be submitted electronically along with a resume to [tperry@eastridgetn.gov](mailto:tperry@eastridgetn.gov) or by mail to Ms. Trish Perry, Human Resource Manager at City of East Ridge, 1517 Tombras Avenue, East Ridge, TN 37412 Closing date is Nov. 22, 2013. The City of East Ridge is EOE and TN Drug Free Workplace.

### SENIOR CIVIL ENGINEER

**COLLIERVILLE.** The city is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Senior Civil Engineer. This position performs professional engineering work in complex capital improvement projects, civil engineering projects and storm water issues. Qualifications include: a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering or closely related field; supplemented by four years progressively responsible engineering experience and/or training involving civil engineering, engineering design, engineering plan review, surveying, and personal computer operations; or any equivalent combination, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this job. Applicant must have the ability to exert light physical effort in sedentary to light work, but which may involve some lifting, carrying, pushing and/or pulling of objects and materials of light weight (5-10 lbs.). Tasks may involve extended periods of time at a keyboard or workstation. Candidate must be able to pass a work related physical and drug test. Registration as a Professional Engineer (P.E.) in the State of Tennessee is preferred but not required. Must have the ability to obtain TNEPSC Level 1 certification for Stormwater Management within the first year of employment. Valid Motor Vehicle Operator's License at the time of hire. Selection process may include: examinations, interviews, assessment centers, practical skills, etc. Drug testing may be required. We regret we are unable to answer all inquiries. We will only notify candidates selected for testing or interviews. Apply at Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN 38017. Please submit a new application each time you apply for a town job. Closing date is Nov. 15, 2013.

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 the 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.

### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

**THOMPSON'S STATION.** The town is seeking an experienced, energetic, team builder and leader to be their next town administrator. The town administrator is appointed by and reports to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen comprised of a mayor and four aldermen elected at-large to staggered, four year terms of office. Candidates should possess a bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or a field closely related to government management, with a master's Degree in a related field preferred; and a minimum of seven years of progressively increasing professional experience with a municipality or county in a high level management position. Salary range \$80K - \$100K DOQ. The town is seeking an administrator who is an effective collaborator and leader who can communicate clearly and directly while maintaining a personable manner. Candidates should have established success in managing in a high growth environment, expanding the tax base while maintaining and protecting the pastoral setting, natural resources, and beauty of this historic community. The administrator will have a proven record in effective service delivery and creative problem solving skills with a history of honesty, integrity, and transparency. The town administrator will roll-up his/her sleeves and lead by example to ensure an open and trusting relationship with the board, staff, and community. The town administrator will promote an atmosphere of quality customer service and citizen partnership. Position profile is available at [www.thompson-station.com](http://www.thompson-station.com). Send cover letter, resume, and detailed salary history by electronic mail to the University of Tennessee, Municipal Technical Advisory Service, attention Jeff Broughton, by Nov. 30, 2013. Please direct questions to Jeff Broughton at [jeff.broughton@tennessee.edu](mailto:jeff.broughton@tennessee.edu).

### UTILITIES DIRECTOR

**SMYRNA.** The city is seeking applicants for the position of Utilities Director. Under general supervision, this position reports to the town manager. The position is responsible for performing administrative, managerial, and supervisory duties, including those for natural gas, water and wastewater systems. Duties and responsibilities include: planning, organizing, and directing subordinate managers and supervisors in utilities operations; developing, revising, and maintaining standard and non-standard operating procedures; managing departmental budget. Maintains records in compliance to federal, state, and town regulations; ensures employees adhere to all internal and external company safety policies and OSHA regulations; oversees departmental capital projects; follows proper job bidding processes, meets project deadlines, stays within budgets and compliance with all finance and purchasing procedures; provides daily, weekly and monthly project reports to town manager, council or other departments; conducts oneself in a professional manner at all times; promotes a teamwork environment; assists co-workers when necessary; and other duties as assigned. Qualifications include: bachelor's degree in engineering, business administration, public administration or closely related field; 15 years experience in utilities operations with a minimum of seven years in management or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must have natural gas supply procurement experience and be able to successfully pass a background investigation and satisfactory credit history check. Must possess or be able to obtain a valid Tennessee driver's license within 30 days of beginning employment. Must reside within the town of Smyrna corporate limits or relocate to the corporate limits within 180 days from date of employment. Qualified applicants must provide proof of education along with an application and resume in order to be considered for the position. Applications are available at Smyrna City Hall, 315 S. Lowry St., Smyrna, TN 37167, or online at [www.townofsmyrna.org](http://www.townofsmyrna.org). Applications may be delivered or mailed to City Hall, or faxed to 615-355-5771, or emailed to [jayne.corbin@townofsmyrna.org](mailto:jayne.corbin@townofsmyrna.org) by Nov. 22, 2013. It is the policy of the Town of Smyrna, that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other lawfully protected classification. All job applicants will undergo substance abuse testing as a condition of employment.



### Nov. 9-Jan. 4: Pigeon Forge Dollywood Smoky Mountain Christmas

Four million holiday lights and spectacular holiday performances, including Dollywood's A Christmas Carol, an all-new adaptation of the Dickens classic. Visit <http://www.dollywood.com/>.

### Nov. 15-Jan. 4: Bristol Speedway in Lights

Tour this stunning display of more than one million lights and hundreds of displays by car on the Bristol Motor Speedway. Features a new Battle at Bristol fan zone to commemorate the upcoming Virginia Tech-University of Tennessee football game to be played at the track. Visitors can also make a reservation to bring groups through by bus. For more information, call 423-989-6900.

### Nov. 16-17: Elizabethton Harvest Celebration at Fort Watauga

Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, West Elk Ave. Re-enactors in period dress provide demonstrations of old-time skills and scenes from daily life in America's colonial past. Sat., 10 am - 4 pm; Sun., 10 am - 3pm. For more information, call 423-543-5808.

### Nov. 18-23: Chattanooga Walker Farm Pioneer Days

Audubon Acres, 900 North Sanctuary Rd. Journey back in time to the 1800's. Experience the sights, sounds, smells, and the work that made up people's everyday lives. Demonstrations on blacksmithing, wood cutting, Dutch-oven cooking and farming. Visit the Native American and long-hunters' camps. For more information, call 423-892-1499 or visit [www.chattanooga.audubon.org](http://www.chattanooga.audubon.org)

### Nov. 22-23: Athens Christmas Bazaar and Craft Show

Held at the McMinn Senior Activity Center, 205 McMinn Ave. from 9 am-5pm. Seasonal gifts, handmade home decor items, ornaments, baked goods, fresh pecans and much more just in time for the holiday season. Free admission and hourly door prizes.

### Nov. 22-Jan. 8: Memphis Christmas at Graceland

Interior and exterior of Graceland decked out for the holidays. See traditional lights and decorations originally displayed by Elvis, including hundreds of blue lights along the driveway, a life-size Nativity scene, Santa and his sleigh and more. Interior décor includes Presley family Christmas artifacts on display. For more information, visit [elvis.com/events](http://elvis.com/events).

### Nov. 26-30: Gatlinburg Festival of Trees

Hundreds of festive Christmas trees, gingerbread house contest, Gatlinburg-made holiday decorations and gifts. Admission: donation to Smoky Mountain Rescue Mission. For more information, visit [www.gatlinburgfestivaloftrees.com/](http://www.gatlinburgfestivaloftrees.com/)

### Nov. 29 & 30: Oak Ridge Thanksgiving Train Ride

Southern Appalachian Railway Museum is offering a Thanksgiving train ride departing at 11pm, 1pm, and 3pm. For more information, call 865-241-2140 or visit the website [www.southernappalachia.railway.museum](http://www.southernappalachia.railway.museum).

### Nov. 29: Livingston Christmas in the Country

100 E Court Square. Experience a true Country Christmas on the historic town square. Starts with the arrival of Santa, followed by a tree lighting ceremony. Merchants offer complimentary roasted peanuts, popcorn, hot cider and hot chocolate. Wagon and carriage rides, holiday music. For more information, call 931-823-2218.

### Nov. 29: Chattanooga Lighted Boat Parade

Enjoy the Lighted Boat Parade with more than 50 entries including Santa followed by the popular holiday Grand Illumination and closing with a fireworks show. Held at Ross's Landing, Chestnut St. and Riverfront Pkwy. For more information, call 423- 265-0771.

## TML Board of Directors to meet

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal League will meet in regular public session on Thursday, Nov. 21, 2013, at 1 p.m. in the TML Board Room on first floor of the 226 Capitol Boulevard Building, Nashville, Tenn., for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, Nov. 15, at the offices of the Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Capitol Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville. Additional information concerning the above may be obtained from Mona Lawrence at 615-255-6416.

## TMBF Board of Directors to meet

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund will meet in regular public session on Thursday, Nov. 21, 2013, at 9 a.m., local time, in the conference room of Suite 502 of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund, 226 Capitol Blvd., Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said Board. Some members of the TMBF Board of Directors may participate in such meeting by telephonic means, which will be audible to any member of the public attending such meeting. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, Nov. 15, in the offices of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund, 226 Capitol Boulevard, Suite 502, Nashville, Tennessee. Additional information concerning the above may be obtained from Mona Lawrence, telephone number 615-255-1561.

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# Informed public workers are great advocates

BY MARIA KATRIEN HESLIN  
*Governing Magazine*

On a bright day last spring, as I was heading into city hall in Bloomington, Ind., I overheard one person ask another, "Have you heard they plan to install parking meters downtown?"

Bloomington was indeed about to install meters, so the comment wasn't a surprising one, except for one thing: The two people discussing the meter plan were city parking-enforcement officers. The "they" being referred to was the municipal government for which these officers both worked.

As the city's deputy mayor, I was particularly interested in the remark because it illuminated the fact that as much as city governments try to communicate openly with staff and other critical audiences, there's definitely room for improvement. As with everything, some cities do it better than others, some would like to do it better but think they lack time or resources, and yet others see limited value in strengthening these kinds of internal communications. I believe that when public employees are kept in the loop, everybody wins.

We need individuals such as these parking-enforcement officers to be well informed of our plans and armed with facts and accurate understanding as to why major policy decisions have been made. Even if they disagree with a particular decision, they would understand its intent and potential implications. Without the facts, they are left to wonder, speculate, perhaps share their uncertain-

ties with friends, family and the many members of the public they encounter daily.

So how do we inform and engage our employees on key issues? There are a number of effective tactics we can employ, such as discussions at staff meetings, emails, newsletters and blog posts, but tactics like these can be hit or miss, and lack big-picture context.

Instead, what about a more thorough, strategic and systematic approach that not only would share important information with staff, but would enrich their work and allow them to contribute more directly to the community's vibrancy and livability?

Here are some ideas for what might be a three-pronged approach to mobilizing staff engagement:

1. Create an employee academy -- a "muniversity" -- to enhance staff knowledge about what all of the city's divisions do, how they do it and why. This would enable staff to contribute ideas and learn more about the city's mission and strategic initiatives, how their departments fit into these overarching goals, how departments might collaborate more effectively, and how the staffers' own roles directly contribute to making the community stronger.

Employees could play a significant role in shaping the structure and goals of the muniversity and in leading the learning experiences. Service delivery and morale likely would improve, knowledge would broaden, leadership and other skills would be honed, and employees would gain increased opportunities

When city staffers are kept in the loop about new initiatives and policies, they can be powerful allies and messengers.

for upward mobility.

2. Building on the muniversity idea, create an interactive, online "communitivity" system that succinctly conveys current information and positions on top projects and issues to enable staff to know about, understand, manage, contribute to and communicate about key city projects and initiatives.

3. A "communications exchange" could help city workers bolster and broaden citizen engagement in a variety of ways. City workers could develop relevant content for social media. They could staff a "govmobile" that would visit the near and far corners of the community to provide news about upcoming public meetings, board and commission opportunities, and major city projects and city services. And employees could hand out business cards that feature customer-service contact information and perhaps QR codes directing the public to services on the city's website.

The people who work for government can be some of its best advocates and spokespersons, which can help make any initiative more effective. But to tap into that potentially powerful resource, governments need to bring them into the loop and keep them there.

## COMING UP

**Nov. 19: The Farragut Community Development Department's on-site seminar of the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code.** Held in Sheffield Subdivision at 5:30 pm. The seminar will be led by Farragut codes officials John Householder, Steve Coker and Elliott Sievers and will focus on the New Building Envelope and HVAC Duct Leakage Testing. Scott Higgins with Prudent Energy Systems, LLC will perform a live test of a new home. After performing the testing, Higgins will answer questions regarding the demonstrated requirements. Any Farragut developer, designer, resident or contractor (plumbing, mechanical or electrical) interested in learning about the new energy code is welcome and encouraged to attend. Sheffield Subdivision is located in Farragut off Turkey Creek Road just before the Virtue Road intersection. For more information, contact the Community Development Department at 865-966-7057.

**Nov. 20-22: Tennessee Public Risk Management Association Annual Conference** at the Doubletree by Hilton in Downtown Nashville. Presentations will include a variety of topics addressing employee safety/benefits, liability issues and other critical risk areas. Great networking opportunity for public risk managers, human resource practitioners, employee benefits administrators, health and safety managers, risk financing and claims managers, pooling executives and more. For complete information, visit <http://www.tnprima.org/>

## UT MTAS Nov./Dec. MAP Classes

### Business Tax Administration Update

Business tax in Tennessee has been in place for more than 40 years. Changes in 2009 provided for the tax to be jointly administered by cities, counties, and the state. In 2013, Public Chapter 313, also known as the Uniformity and Small Business Relief Act of 2013, makes other significant changes that will affect taxpayers beginning in 2014.

This class will address the changes in the law and provide a thorough understanding of business tax responsibilities for local and state officials.

**Time:** All classes are from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm.

**Instructor:** Billy Trout, manager of communications, education, and taxpayer accounting for the Tennessee Department of Revenue.

**Who should attend:** Certified municipal finance officers, budget and finance officers, municipal clerks and recorders, and all municipal employees who handle fi-

nance and the implementation and collection of business tax.

**Cost:** Municipal Employees – \$50/person/class. All other participants – \$65/person/class.

**CEU/CPE:** 4 CPE- Will qualify for four hours of CMFO continuing education hours-Financial.

**Schedule of sessions**

- Nov.19-Knoxville
- Nov.20 - Jackson
- Nov.21-Franklin
- Dec. 3 - Bartlett

**Location**

- Bartlett,** Bartlett Station Municipal Center, 5868 Stage Road
- Franklin,** Williamson County Ag Expo Park, 4215 Long Lane
- Jackson,** University of Tenn.— West Tennessee Research & Education Center, 605 Airways Center
- Knoxville,** University of Tennessee Conference Center, 600 Henley St., 4th Floor



To register, go to the website, [www.mtas.tennessee.edu](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu) and click "register for a class." MTAS needs to receive payment in order to confirm your attendance for the class. MTAS will accept registration and payment by credit/debit card through your Solution Point account for these or any MTAS courses at [www.solutionpoint.tennessee.edu/TPOonline/TPOonline.dll/MTASHome](http://www.solutionpoint.tennessee.edu/TPOonline/TPOonline.dll/MTASHome)

For assistance with registration or payment, contact MTAS at 865-974-0411. For more information, contact Kurt Frederick at 615-253-6385 or e-mail [kurt.frederick@tennessee.edu](mailto:kurt.frederick@tennessee.edu)

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The city of Morristown closed a \$20 million loan for sewer system upgrades.



The city of Ripley closed a \$1 million loan for a new fire hall and equipment.



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# A world class "Discovery" awaits in Union City

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

TML Communications Coordinator

How much knowledge and inspiration can be gathered in a Northwest Tennessee cornfield? Quite a bit, if it happens to be in Union City, where the opening day celebration of The Discovery Park of America (DPA) brought forth a plethora of people willing to "see beyond." It's what founder Robert E. Kirkland, (of the Kirkland home decor chain) and his wife Jenny hoped for, when they invested \$80 million to pursue the dream.

However, a spaceship-type structure with wings and 120-foot glass-encased observation tower wasn't exactly what Kirkland had in mind, when he set out to lasso the imaginations of the people of Obion County. It's even better.

"It's grown much grander than the original concept from 10 years ago," Kirkland reflects, prior to the Nov. 1 ribbon cutting. A native son of Union City, he developed the project alongside his life-long friend and sounding board, Jim Rippy. Rippy, the area's former economic

There's exhibits on natural and regional history, life-size dinosaur replicas, Native American, energy, transportation, science, and military exhibits, including an impressive Civil War display, and an exhibit on space flight. W.C. Field's original V-16 Cadillac—in 1938, only 311 were built in the world—sits in a gallery filled with classic beauties, while a suspended Stearman P-17 biplane overlooks a helicopter and other military exhibits.

"They did a great job," enthuses 10-year-old Samuel Woodson, who with his six-year-old brother Finn, checks out a massive dinosaur head. Even babies are having a great time on their own in "Crawlers Cove" while toddlers and other youngsters dig in the silly sand or catch plastic fish in the "Fantasy Forrest."

There's an earthquake simulator, a 20,000-gallon aquarium and a 50-foot metal replica of the human body with a built-in 32-foot slide.

But, while the collections are great for individual interests, this perfect blend of past, present, and future also has the unique ability to draw people of all ages together. Entire families, from children to grandparents, were enraptured and visitors stopped and reminisced with people they didn't know. There's even a place where guests may record their memories and stories, which will be forwarded on to the Smithsonian in Washington for safe keeping.

Along the grounds, a one and a half mile sidewalk encircles the area where a 2,400 square-foot, 1800s-era village called Freedom Square awaits like a toy railroad model built to scale. The village contains 15 log structures, a 100-year-old chapel, a school house, a train depot, barn and other buildings nestled beside an impressive water feature. The garden areas rival installations found throughout the world.

Kirkland also pulled out all the stops when it comes to the venue's architect and designer. Lou Sirianni of Verner Johnson, Inc. out of Boston, MA, developed the building plans and Thinc Design, out of New York, designed the displays, built by Maltbie of N.J.

Interestingly, many of the Discovery Center's lush exhibits derive from the fertile imaginations of the numerous volunteer committees comprised of

the areas' citizens.

"I have to give thanks to the community," said Kirkland. "We asked for volunteers back in 2007 to help and more than 250 people showed up and divided themselves into committees and elected their own chairman."

Some of those original volunteers have become full-time employees at DPA, such as former high school teacher Polly Brasher, who has been on board with the project from its inception. She now serves as the Park's Education Director.

Part of Brasher's job is community outreach, traveling to schools within a three and a half hour radius to inform public, private, parochial and home-schoolers about the venue. That circle includes seven states, Middle and West Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Southern Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, North Mississippi and North Alabama.

For Brasher, no two days are the same. "I know what the plan is for the day, but don't know what the day will actually hold," she said. "I spent last week training Discovery guides and the entire staff on customer service and crisis management. And we are scheduling field trips and developing programs, classes and workshops we can offer to the public."

As with many new ventures, opinions among Union City's 11,000 residents range in the tentative category, given the fact that the area is lacking in restaurants and lodging facilities. In addition, the closing of an old Goodyear tire plant in July 2011,



Photos by Victoria South

Visitors gather eagerly around the new Discovery Park of America before the ribbon cutting. The venue is predicted to put Union City, in Obion Co., on the map as a tourist destination.



Life-size dinosaur replicas are just a short escalator/elevator ride away, as visitors enter the Discovery Park building.



The 50-foot man, a metal replica of the human body, is one of the first exhibits people see as they enter the Discovery Park of America building. The structure includes a 32-foot built-in slide.



Frances Hall and Charlotte Pierce of Mason Hall, work on an old-time quilt inside one of the log cabins in Freedom Square, along the Discovery Center grounds. The development also boasts an old train depot, a century-old church and flower gardens, and enough land for outdoor events and future expansion.

development chief, is now the CEO of the complex. "What we're trying to do is develop an educational vacation, a place for children and families," Rippy said.

"We didn't have much of a plan," Kirkland adds. "I don't want to say we made it up, but we just solved problems as we went along."

After a few steps and starts, the project took off at approximately 600,000 man hours," Rippy told reporters, "two-thirds which were construction."

The idea came about as an addendum to a community that already places a strong emphasis on educating young people through reading programs and scholarships, Kirkland explained.

"The one area we might have been lacking was something to entice the imagination of our young people and adults," he said. "That was the basis of doing something here that would help our children and adults grow."

And already, the 50-acre complex has been described as a mini-Smithsonian Institution, with its 10 galleries of exhibits that the Kirklands plan to replenish annually with a \$3 million investment.



A suspended Stearman P-17 biplane is part of the expansive military exhibit at Discovery Park.

deflated the hopes of many citizens, when 1,800 jobs disappeared and the local economy was injured.

But the Discovery Park of America just might be the economic shot in the arm the community needs, according to Tennessee Tourism officials, who predict the venture will put Union City on the map.

An impact study of the project performed five years ago by Younger and Associates predicts the DPA will receive more than 150,000 visitors a year. Tennessee Tourism Commissioner Susan Whitaker indicated the park will be on the agency's marketing list, thanks to \$8 million in additional funding Gov. Haslam gave the agency to market the state. And Union City Mayor Terry Hailey, a DPA board member since 2007, notes the region has plenty of room for businesses to build and expand.

"If projections are right, we certainly don't have enough lodging or restaurants to handle Discovery Park," he said. "But I understand that we have had several inquiries with the city from investment groups for hotels and restaurants."

To make the economic picture brighter, office chair maker 9to5 Seating recently announced it's moving its manufacturing operations from China to Union City, adding about 500 jobs.

"This magnificent park will combine entertainment with education to create a wonderful learning experience," Hailey said. "The economic effect will be tremendous, but beyond that, it's something that will make everyone feel very good."

Others hope it's another reason for the

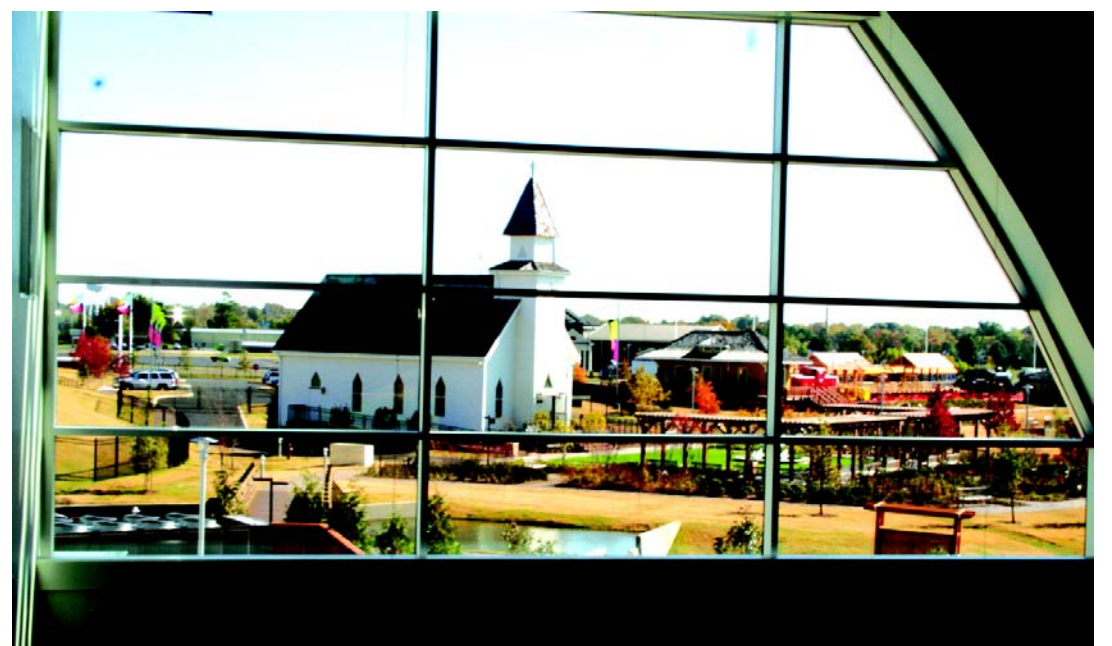


swift completion of I-69, passing through the western part of the state, serving Union City, Troy, Dyersburg, and Memphis. It's a project Hailey feels will be completed in the next eight to 10 years.

"Highway 51 is on one side and I-69 will be on the other," he said. "In front, we have put a four-lane access road with medians and have put our high-intensity white lighting down the Boulevard. It's beautiful at night."

"It is world class no doubt," said resident Jim White, visiting the center with his wife. "The secret is getting the word out about that. It's been even more fascinating watching it built from the ground up."

"The best place for charitable work is in your own back yard," Kirkland surmises. "I believe the greatest impact of our foundation will be here in Obion County, improving the quality of education for our citizens."



A view of Freedom Square from the museum's window.

## If You Go...

DISCOVERY PARK OF AMERICA: 830 Everett Blvd., Union City, Tenn., <http://www.discoveryparkofamerica.com/> or 877-885-5455. Adults, \$13.95 (two-day pass, \$19.95); children 4-12, \$10.95 (ages 3 and under free). From Memphis, about 115 miles; from Nashville, about 185 miles; from St. Louis, about 200 miles.