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# Be sure to check out special happenings in the Exhibit Hall

The vendors' program is an important component of the overall conference experience. The Exhibit Hall, located in Hall 2 & 3 of the Gatlinburg Convention Center, provides the perfect opportunity for local officials to learn about new products and services, while interacting one-on-one with companies that support municipalities.

A special City Hall Showcase celebrates city achievements, and highlights successful, creative programs implemented in municipalities across the state.

Featured city programs included:

- Brownsville's music heritage
- Gatlinburg's Rocky Top Sports World
- Germantown Fire Department's ambulance service
- Lebanon's gasification project
- Lawrenceburg's flood mitigation program
- Pittmann Center preservation efforts.

Three informative affiliate presentations will also take place in the Exhibit Hall. On Sunday, June 12, from 1 - 1:45 p.m., a workshop on *Municipal Solar Projects* will be presented by the Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC).

Also on Sunday, from 4 to 4:45 p.m., the Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association with present a workshop on the *Benefits of TFCA*, from firefighter safety to more efficient and professional operations.

On Monday, June 13, from 11:15 a.m. – 12 p.m., the Tennessee City Management Association will present a workshop on *Effective City Manager/Administrator Evaluations*.

As a special feature in the Exhibit Hall, Tennessee products will be available to sample. "Taste of Tennessee" will be held from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Be sure to stop in and sample some of Tennessee's finest products.

TML greatly appreciates all of the vendors who participate in the annual conference and encourage city officials attending the conference to take the time to visit the Hall. You just never know what new product or important business contact you'll find there!

More information about all of the conference happenings can be found in the conference program book.

Free Conference mobile app available

## Connects to all smartphone devices

A mobile app featuring the 2016 Annual Conference information is available for free and is accessible from any smart phone device.

The app was developed by the Tennessee Municipal League to help improve smartphone users conference experience with this easy to use digital guide. It contains detailed conference information on workshops, speakers, exhibitors and special events – and it's all at your fingertips.

To download the free app, it's as easy as searching for "2016 TMLAnnual Conference" in the Apple App Store or Google PLAY Marketplace. There is a web app available for Blackberry and Microsoft phones. **How to Use It** 

Once your app has successfully downloaded to your phone, the conference schedule, workshop information, vendor contact information, plus much more is accessible through easy, navigable functions.

Schedule. To access the conference schedule, tap on the schedule icon and scroll up and down, or flip left and right through the different days. You can also tap the arrows at the top corners to switch between dates. Touching an event will reveal a description, and if it's a workshop, speaker bios are also available. As an added feature, you can create your own personal schedule by touching the plus symbol next to events. You can also set reminders for yourself. Conference events are color-coded by each event type. By using the filter button at the top to apply a filter, you can quickly reference categories such as food, workshops, or special events.

**Speakers**. To learn about each of our conference speakers, scroll through the list and tap on the speaker's photo to reveal their bios.

**Exhibitors.** The exhibitors section includes contact information, booth numbers, and links to company websites. And once you've left the conference, you can always refer back to this app to find all the contact information you need to get in touch with a vendor.

**Convention Center Map.** A detailed map of the Exhibit Hall, home of the TML Marketplace vendors, are available in this section, as well as maps of the convention center where the workshops and general sessions are held. You can move maps around, or swipe left and right between maps, or zoom in or zoom out. The room



numbers on the schedule correspond to the rooms on these maps. The booth numbers attached to exhibitors in our exhibitors section correspond to numbered booths on the Exhibit Hall map.

If you need help while at the conference, find a TML staff member to assist you. After the conference, contact Mark Barrett at TML at 615-255-6416.

# Tullahoma broadband project selected for federal Cool & Connected program

### **BY KATE COIL** *TML Communications Specialist*

Tullahoma is one of five cities nationwide that was recently selected to participate in the federal Cool & Connected planning assistance program, an innovative initiative to help people use broadband service for downtown revitalization and economic development.

Tullahoma was selected – along with Georgetown, Del.; Leon, Iowa; Montrose, Colo.; and Toledo, Wash. - by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to participate in the program. Tullahoma will receive technical assistance to market its downtown as a free wi-fi zone and develop a physical work-share space to complement new infrastructure investments, and add to the growth of downtown businesses. Partner communities will receive direct technical assistance from a team of experts to develop strategies and an action plan for using planned or existing broadband service to create connected, economically vibrant main streets and small-town neighborhoods. By combining broadband service with other local assets, such as cultural and recreational amenities, this assistance can help communities attract and retain investment and people, revitalize downtowns, diversify local economies, and improve walkability. Tullahoma Mayor Lane Curlee said the city will be developing a strategic plan to complement an existing plan created by the Tullahoma Utilities Board. "Through this Cool and Connected process, we will not only explore assistance to market downtown as a wi-fi zone and work-share space, but we will also look to develop a plan for our other target sectors that in-



## **Bond Fund reaches \$4.1 Billion** *Savings to cities exceeds \$585 million*

The Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund (TMBF) reached a pair of milestones recently. Since inception, TMBF has loaned more than \$4.1 billion and has now closed over 1,300 loans.

"These milestones show TMBF's ongoing commitment to providing your community with the loans you need at the lowest cost so that you can create opportunities for your communities to grow,"



said Charles G. "Bones" Seivers, President and CEO of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund.

The TMBF was created by the TML Board of Directors in 1986 to provide municipalities in Tennessee with low-cost funds. It began full operations by offering a pooled variable rate loan program as well as an alternative loan program.

To date, the TMBF variable rate program has saved cities and counties more than \$585 million in interest costs alone. TMBF was created for the sole purpose of saving cities and towns money. "I feel we are accomplishing our mandate," added Seivers.

In recent years, the TMBF has made a few changes in an effort to better serve Tennessee communities. TMBF began offering a fixed rate loan option in addition to its variable rate option. Since adding the fixed rate option, TMBF has grown and the fixed rate loan option has become very popular.

"We could not have done this without all the hard work of our dedicated board members and our extraordinary staff," Seivers commented. "They work hard every day to make sure that we are providing you the best service and the loan op-

## Charles G. "Bones" Seivers

tions you want at the best price. We work with a number of banks in an effort to get our borrowers the lowest cost of funds that we can find."

TMBF feels that the valuable part of its job is maintaining a great relationship with all municipal officials. This is a practice we have strived to create over the past 30 years.

Seivers said, "When we look at the number of repeat borrowers, we get a renewed sense of dedication that makes us work harder every day to prove that the faith these communities have placed in us is not misplaced. I sincerely appreciate our partnership with the Tennessee Municipal League, and our relationship with all cities and towns in the state."

Seivers stated that he is excited about the future of TMBF.

"We offer many features and advantages that can save you money. All we ask is that you give us a chance to provide you with options. We were created by you, for you. Our board of directors is composed of municipal officials and we are always here for you."



The expense and difficulty of providing infrastructure sometimes prohibits major communications companies from installing faster fiber optic networks in rural areas. Communities like Tullahoma are combating that by providing high-speed internet locally, a move that recently earned the city federal recognition.

clude aerospace, medical, retail and technology," Curlee said. "We will be inviting the partners that represent these sectors to join in this process that is scheduled for late September."

Winston Brooks, director of community development for the city, said the city has been working broadband service into its renovation of its downtown. The city issued bonds in 2007 for fiber optic internet service and started offering the service in 2009.

"We were a leader in broadband about 10 years ago when our board of mayor and aldermen voted to put in a fiber network for every home and business in Tullahoma," he said. "We were one of the first and smallest cities in the country to have high-speed fiber. The mayor of board and aldermen felt this was something that would distinguish us from other communities, which was a very visionary thing at the time."

Brooks said developing a highspeed network in the city can help with branding and economic development.

"We hope to brand our community as a high-speed city," he said. "We are high speed in two ways. We are branding our community as one with fiber and has all the benefits of industry, commerce, and quality of life you find in larger cities. Specifically for the downtown area, we want to set up a network so all of our residents and visitors that come through Tullahoma can benefit."

Tullahoma's downtown suffered economically during the Great Recession, but Brooks said it is starting to rebound with new shops and residents. Technology is a big part of the city's vision for its economic future.

"We just underwent \$600,000 renovation with new sidewalks, lights and benches," Brooks said. "We want to create something that not only brings visitors and residents to the area, but helps us get the word out about Tullahoma and its capability. We also want to set up a code works space so we can attract that younger demographic, the tech-savvy entrepreneur. That leads back into the idea of the high-speed city. The Arnold Engineering Development Center who is the largest complex of flight testing and wind tunnels in the world - and the University of Tennessee Space Institute are both here, so we have tried to brand ourselves as an Aerospace Center of Excellence. We are also a medical hub. We want to attract those types of businesses to our cities."

Brooks said the city's next plan is to bring stakeholders together to develop a plan for downtown that will incorporate broadband, walkability needs, and economic development.

"We are pleased to tell our story on a national level and tell people about all the great things going on in Tullahoma," he said. "Often times, people who choose to move outside the city don't realize they can't get our internet outside of our footprint. One of the things we are hoping to bring attention to the way the law is now we can't serve our rural neighbors outside those boundaries. We have an industrial park about three miles outside our city limits that we can't bring fiber to, which has made it hard to recruit there. We hope with all of the talent we will have on this process we can come up with some creative solutions to that issue."

Cool & Connected is one of the Obama Administration's community-based initiatives that are helping rural communities develop competitive advantages. In these places, federal experts are working side by side with residents and local leaders to create customized solutions; bolstering coordination across agencies and improving how we interact with *See* **BROADBAND** *on Page 8* 

## **Tennessee scores highest AAA rating**

The state has been informed that it is now rated AAA by Standard & Poor's Ratings Services. S&P conducted a mid-year review and upgraded Tennessee's rating from AA+ to AAA. The other two rating agencies, Moody's Investors Services and Fitch Ratings, have provided Tennessee with their highest ratings of Aaa and AAA, respectively, since 2010.

S&P's report cited Tennessee's strengthening economy, growing reserves, positive year-to-date performance, and continuous sound management of its long-term liabil-ities.

Tennessee's preliminary unemployment rate for April 2016 was 4.3 percent, which is below the U.S. preliminary rate of 5 percent. Additionally, the Tennessee General Assembly recently appropriated an additional \$100 million to the state's rainy day fund, increasing the fiscal year 2017 balance to \$668 million.

These first-class ratings will translate into lower interest rates when the state borrows money, and may result in substantial savings for taxpayers.

"For the first time since 2000 and for only the second time in state history Tennessee has a triple triple-A rating from the credit ratings agencies, one of 11 states to receive this status," Gov. Bill Haslam said. "The state's Rainy Day Fund is more than double what it was in 2011, and we have the lowest debt per capita of any state, no transportation debt and recently recorded the lowest interest rate in state history. The balanced budget the General Assembly just passed takes on no new debt. This historical accomplishment is a result of the strengthening Tennessee economy and the conservative fiscal strategy implemented by the General Assembly, constitutional officers and this administration. This news will save Tennesseans' tax dollars and allow us to continue our efforts to provide the best possible service at the lowest possible cost."

"Tennessee has one of the lowest debt burdens in the country and our elected officials are committed to living within our means," Comptroller Justin P. Wilson said. "Our triple triple-A status is an extraordinary achievement that benefits all Tennesseans."



## CHATTANOOGA

The city of Chattanooga has received grant funds to jumpstart a \$600,000 restoration project for a spring-fed pond located in one of the city's oldest parks. The Lyndhurst Foundation awarded the city \$200,000 for the cleanup of East Lake Park, which has been negatively affected by excessive algae, lily pads and geese, who are often fed in the park by human visitors. The pond makes up about 1.75 acres of the park's 18.5 acres. The city council voted unanimously to hire engineering consultant CDM Smith to create a concept plan for the project. The plan will include includes a biological assessment, water-quality improvements and community-driven park layout changes for educational spaces and other improvements. The design phase is expected to cost \$100,000 and will be entirely funded through grant money.

## **ELIZABETHTON**

The Elizabethton City Council has unanimously agreed to purchase the city's historic Bonnie Kate Theater using funds provided by the East Tennessee Foundation. Members of the foundation's Elizabethton/ Carter County Community Foundation branch have raised more than \$100,000 for the purchase of the theater. The city will purchase the theater for a maximum price of \$111,700 along with \$25,800 for parking. The ECCCF cannot own property, but can apply for and facilitate grant funds and donations for the restoration project. The goal of the project is to restore the theater to its pre-1960 state with hopes of turning it back into a functioning theater for performances, events and showcases.

#### HENDERSONVILLE

The city of Hendersonville recently unveiled a new baseball field at Drakes Creek Park made possible through funds provided by Major League Baseball, the city and The Memorial Foundation. The Baseball Tomorrow Fund (BTF), is a joint initiative between the Major League baseball Players Association and Major League Baseball designed to promote youth baseball and softball. The program provided \$65,000 for the renovation of the field. The city contributed \$100,000 to the project and The Memorial Foundation provided \$65,000. Construction of the project was handled by Gallatin-based Sports Turf Solutions. The new field and turf will benefit hundreds of residents who utilize the only full-sized baseball field in the Hendersonville parks system, including the Hendersonville High School baseball and softball programs.



The company is committed to a patient-centric model of healthcare delivery in partnership with hospitals and physician groups.

## LA VERGNE

Empyrean Benefit Solutions, Inc., will locate a new customer service center in La Vergne, investing \$2.9 million and creating 120 jobs. Empyrean is a benefits engagement technology and service company based in Houston. The company created a client-adaptive technology platform to increase customer efficiency and reduce administrative costs. Empyrean is unique among leading benefit administration providers in assigning dedicated service teams to its clients, with all primary services staffed 100 percent in the United States. The dedicated service model, which provides continuity from day one of the client relationship throughout its lifetime, fosters a close and enduring partnership and builds deep understanding of each client's business objectives, plan design and operational processes. The La Vergne facility is Empyrean's secondary customer service center and will be used to serve new markets.

#### MARTIN

The Martin City Council voted unanimously to contribute \$25,000 for the restoration of a historic caboose to its original state. The Illinois Central Caboose was originally donated to the city in 1986 and is presently located at Virginia Weldon Park. Citizens have also been raising money for the project through crowd-funding website Go-FundMe.com. Goals for the caboose restoration include repainting the caboose to its original color, weatherproofing it, and interior repairs. Citizens have volunteered to do the necessary repair work.

#### MARYVILLE

The Maryville City Council has approved a \$414,040 contract to provide preliminary design and engineering for developing a new corridor between Maryville and Alcoa. The contract for the development of the Foothills Mall Drive Extension Project was awarded to Gresham Smith & Partners and 80 percent of the design and construction costs will be funded through federal money. The project will connect the end of Foothills Mall Drive U.S. 129 bypass and Foch Street with a threelane roadway with improvements to both intersections. Construction is projected to begin in 2018. The council also approved a first reading of a land use plan designed to guide the community for the next 20 years. The plan provides a basis for updating zoning regulations starting in July and creates six categories. Under the plan, 7 percent of the city would be commercial use, 15 percent industrial, 18 percent mixed sse, 55 percent residential, 3 percent natural resources and 2 percent parkland.

federal agencies for youth summer jobs, learning meals, and violence reduction programs. The city will also receive a federal ambassador, who will work with the city to expand programs, break down agency silos and form new local, regional and national partnerships with businesses and nonprofits. The program is part of the White House's Summer Opportunity Project.

#### NIOTA

Renovations to the Niota Depot are expected to begin this month after the grant the city was awarded for the project became effective May 9. City officials said construction is set to begin after they receive funds from a Transportation Enhancement Grant provided by the Tennessee Department of Transportation. The grant has helped finance the bulk of the \$182,000 raised for the project along with money from the McMinn County hotel/motel tax and at least \$25,000 from the Niota Depot Preservation Committee. The city of Niota has also pledged up to \$25,000 in case the project runs over budget. Construction is expected to take three months and will include new gutters, drainage, decking, handicap ramps, railings, remortaring and the addition of storm doors. City hall business will be conducted from the building during the construction. Work will be performed by Englewood-based East Tennessee Construction Services and Chattanooga-based ASA Engineering and Consulting.

#### **OAK RIDGE**

The Oak Ridge Fire Department has received the Organization of the Year Award by the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (ISFSI) at the 2016 Fire Department Instructors Conference in Indianapolis. The award was presented in honor of the significant contributions the Oak Ridge Fire Department made as a co-host of the 2015 International Conference last year, which brought more than 300 fire instructors from around the world to East Tennessee. The Oak Ridge Fire Department provided equipment, staff, and logistical coordination for the conference, which was the first time it has been held in the state of Tennessee.

## **SPRING HILL**

The Spring Hill Parks and Recreation Department is planning to launch a weekly "Food Truck Fridays" event this summer as a way to showcase cuisine from area restaurants and food trucks. The city also hopes it will bring in new dining options to citizens. Plans currently call for two or three food trucks at Port Royal Park, Harvey Park and Evans Park each Friday throughout June and July, and possibly part of August. Food trucks would rotate around the parks every Friday, allowing each area of the city to have access to a variety of new cuisine each week. The event is presently slated to take place from 4 to 6 p.m. each Friday.

## CAC Beardsley Community Farm brings urban agriculture to Knoxville



City officials, Knoxville Public Services crews, farm staff, University of Tennessee students and local companies all worked together to make the Beardsley Community Farm a reality.

Knoxville Mayor Madeline Rogero, city council and other officials opened the new CAC Beardsley Community Farm urban agriculture community education center, which includes 1,200 square feet of indoor education space and 1,800 square feet of covered outdoor education space.

The LEED certified building also includes offices for three CAC Urban Agriculture staff and two CAC AmeriCorps members, much needed accessible restrooms, fully accessible parking and a water catchment system for irrigation.

"This new facility will help the Beardsley Community Farm spread its roots in the community, with restrooms allowing for more field trips from school groups, churches, daycares, and more," Mayor Rogero said. "The project itself was a community effort with many partners and sponsors stepping up to provide a facility that promoted urban agriculture in Knoxville and is environmentally-friendly at the same time."

Beardsley Community Farm is operated by CAC Urban Agriculture and CAC AmeriCorps, and was one of the earliest urban farms in the region, servicing community members, especially children in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods and schools. The facility is open to the public for visitors to develop their urban agriculture skills at no cost.

The new urban agriculture facility was completed this month, less than a year after city council approved amendments to the city's zoning ordinances, which removed potential barriers to food production on private property.

The project was a collaboration between the city of Knoxville, CAC Beardsley Community Farm, UT's College of Architecture and Design, Elizabeth Eason Architecture, LLC, Merit Construction and the Public Building Authority. Additional funding and materials support was provided by the Siddigi Charitable Foundation; General Shale Brick;-Inc.; the Thompson Charitable Foundation; Victor Ashe, former mayor and ambassador to Poland; StonePeak Ceramics, Inc.; American Institute of Architects - East Tennessee, Paulk & Co.; Keene Building Products; Columbia Forest Products, Inc.; Baird & Wilson Sheet Metal; and many other local sponsors.

and is directly adjacent to the CAC Mobile Meals kitchen. City public service crews contributed a major construction effort along with student volunteers from UT's College of Architecture and Design on the concept of a design/build partnership.

The project is focused on providing students with "real world" experience. The students collaborated for one full semester with Elizabeth Eason Architecture to create the structure's design. Professors Bob French and Jennifer Akerman and more than 50 UT student volunteers worked over the past two years with project partners to see the facility through, even assisting with construction.

"I have been delighted and proud to see our students become real design leaders in this experience-learning project, identifying an opportunity for new architecture to actively engage the community and recognizing the richness of the farm's context in the Mechanicsville neighborhood," Akerman said. "Following a project through design and construction transforms how students approach detailing and problem solving, two important skills in design careers."

The architecture reinforces Beardsley Community Farm's mission of engaging the community by creating meaningful public space for the benefit of local residents, volunteers and the farm staff. The new building will serve as a home base for the farm, creating a new front door to their educational program. Staff at the farm worked with the designers and students so that the facility would enhance all aspects of operations.

"The Beardsley Education Center will build our capacity to continue to teach important lessons on sustainable gardening and nutrition," said

#### KNOXVILLE

TeamHealth will expand its current headquarters in Knoxville, investing \$6.7 million to construct additional space adjacent to its present location. The company is renovating a 62,000-square-foot facility located adjacent to its current Knoxville headquarters. Renovations are set to be finalized in the third quarter of 2016. The healthcare solutions company said the expansion comes as a result of anticipated growth over the next three to five years. TeamHealth is one of the largest physician services companies, providing staffing services for hospitals in the U.S. for multiple service lines, including anesthesia, emergency medicine and hospital medicine.

#### **TENNESSEE TOWN & CITY**

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#### **MEMPHIS**

Evergreen Packaging will locate its global headquarters in Memphis, investing \$915,000 and creating 70 new jobs in the area. Evergreen Packaging will combine with its sister companies Closure Systems International (CSI) and Graham Packaging Company (Graham) into one consolidated global headquarters in Memphis. Together, the three companies comprise 127 global manufacturing facilities in 36 countries, 14,000 employees and revenues of approximately \$5.5 billion annually. In order to accommodate the headquarters consolidation in Memphis, the company plans on adding additional square footage to its current facility. Evergreen is the leading manufacturer of fresh carton packaging for beverage products, primarily serving the juice and milk markets, and also provides a variety of paper-based products for commercial printing. Closure Systems International is the leading manufacturer of packaging closures and fitments. Graham Packaging is a global leader in plastic bottles and packaging solutions.

#### MEMPHIS

The White House has named the city of Memphis one of its 16 "Summer Impact Hubs," lining up the city to receive federal support to upgrade and expand its youth programs. The city will receive support from 16 The new city-owned facility is located in Malcolm-Martin Park

Khann Chov, Urban Agriculture Director at Beardsley Community Farm. "The classroom and extended outdoor classroom will shield all visitors from extreme weather conditions; we can now host field trips, workshops, and classes despite the weather and the season."

Beardsley Community Farm is open to the general public to garden and gain agriculture skills for free, though donations to the non-profit are welcomed.

All food grown at Beardsley Community farm is donated to groups such as Knox Area Rescue Ministries or is integrated into the CAC Mobile Meals program.

## Columbia logs on to social network for neighborhoods

The city of Columbia will be using Nextdoor, the private social network for neighborhoods, to foster neighbor-to-neighbor and citywide communication.

Residents can use Nextdoor to create private websites for their neighborhoods where they can get to know their neighbors, ask questions, and exchange local advice and recommendations. For example, neighbors use Nextdoor to share information about neighborhood watch and safety issues, local events, school activities, upcoming garage sales, lost pets, and much more.

Nextdoor is free for the residents and the city. Nextdoor was specifically designed to make neighbors feel comfortable sharing information with one another to help build stronger communities. All members must verify that they live within the neighborhood.

Information shared on Nextdoor is password-protected and cannot be accessed by those outside the neighborhood or found on Google or other search engines. In addition, Nextdoor never shares personal information with any third parties, including the city, which will have a distinct "page" or group from all other Columbia neighborhood groups. Unlike an email listserv or



other online groups, neighbor posts are organized and archived for future reference.

Neighborhoods establish and self-manage their own Nextdoor group site. Information shared on Nextdoor is only visible to verified members. The city of Columbia will be able to post important information, such as crime and safety updates or local events, to Nextdoor neighbor groups within the city. The city will not be able to access resident's neighborhood group sites, contact information, or any other content.

"We are excited to start using Nextdoor to help Columbia and Columbia citizens to get to know their neighbors better," said Mayor Dean Dickey. "In addition to the city's keeping with the continuing trends in new media and new forms of communication, I hope it will make us more connected and provide for even stronger neighborhoods in time."

Mayor Dickey states that "if used by folks across neighborhoods and the city, the Nextdoor program can help make Columbia an even stronger community, which has been the case in other cities and communities."

The city of Columbia has mapped 19 different neighborhoods. Those interested in joining their neighborhood's Nextdoor group can visit <u>www.nextdoor.com</u> and enter their address.

## TML congratulates 2016 Achievement Award winners Excellence in Community Planning & Development – Dunlap

To make their city more attractive to residents and businesses, officials with the city of Dunlap have undertaken major projects focused on improving streetscapes, increasing energy efficiency and promoting economic growth.

In the past year, the city has helped connect its greenway to its business district to provide both areas with more transportation options, has reinvested in the available housing stock and helped promote new and growing businesses within the community.

As a result, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Dunlap with the award for Excellence in Community Planning and Development.

Warren Nevad, an MTAS management consultant, said the city "has become a statewide leader in community planning and development due to the leadership of the Mayor and Board of Commissioners. This small city in the Sequatchie Valley region has become a giant in procuring federal and state funding to improve the well-being of its residents."

A streetscape project provided pedestrians and cyclists with an easier way to commute between the Coops Creek Greenway and the greater Dunlap Business District, Mayor Dwain Land said.

"I wanted to develop a walkway with something for people to do along the creek. We also wanted to tie it in with the local parks that would allow for children to walk to school," Land said. "We were able to tie it in with Safe Routes to Schools. When we tie the Coops Creek Greenway into the new downtown streetscape, it will provide about 10 miles of walking space. It will also connect to our bikeway trail that goes from our schools on Jones Drive all the way to Dry Creek. We just paid for the engineering costs of the bike route and the rest is coming from TDOT. The trail will go by the old coke oven and Coke Oven Museum, which is on the National Register of Historic Places."

Tying the greenway into downtown results in another project to help the city better manage its stormwater system. All municipal projects are now encouraged to contain stormwater management strategies along with design and construction.

The result has been a reduction in rates of stormwater flow and an increase in volume of stormwater in the project area. The city and its design team for the streetscape project also implemented native grasses and special soils to help reach stormwater goals for the area.

In 2009, the city also began reevaluating the housing stock around the business district, producing a list of strengths and weaknesses for the local housing market.

City administration began working to encourage the private sector to reinvest in the area and worked to find ways to meet the neighborhood's needs for additional recreation amenities.

The resulting plan for Harris Park has already resulted in new pedestrian areas, green spaces, a large pavilion and stage area for group events, and slip resistant areas with formal tree groupings.

The park has since been home to family events, church outings and regional draws like John Anderson during the Dunlap Fourth of



Construction gets underway at Harris Park in Dunlap. After a tornado, the city was able to use insurance funds to double the park's size.

July Celebration. Today, the city is pursuing Phase II for funding with TDEC.

Land said Mother Nature offered a helping hand in expanding Harris Park.

"We wanted to redo the park, but we had a maintenance facility next to it," he said. "Sometimes, storms are blessings in disguise, and a tornado tore some of the building up. We took the insurance money from that, added a little to acquire the old Tecumseh Carburetor Plant, which is about a 30,000-square-foot plant on seven acres off the beaten trail at the end of our industrial park. We ended up putting less than \$100,000 into acquiring that land. We then tore down the old maintenance facility and doubled the size of Harris Park."

The city and county worked with the Industrial Development Board to purchase the old Tecumseh manufacturing plant and recently received \$500,000 from the state for renovations and training. The renovations were to make the old plant more appealing to new tenants. Grant money will be used to put in new heating and air conditioning units, upgrade lighting to LED, and other improvements. The plant closed in 2007 and was one of the largest employers in the area.

The city of Dunlap has also been involved in a rural community energy efficiency project which will be a showcase model for rural communities across the state through the leadership of Mayor Dwain Land, who also serves as president of the Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council.

## **Excellence in Economic Development - Alcoa**

A former company town, the city of Alcoa has reinvented itself and its local economy by partnering with other government entities and local institutions to create one of the most unique research and development parks as part of efforts to recruit, create and encourage business growth.

In recognition of its innovative and visionary efforts to create new and increased opportunities for businesses to succeed, the Tennessee Municipal League awards the city with an Excellence in Economic Development Award.

In 2015, Alcoa was ranked as the number one city in the state to start a new business by consumer finance



# Excellence in Energy Efficiency and Conservation – Brentwood



The situ of Dreative ad here were deal to real and light first reas with rear

website Nerd Wallet. The Aluminum Company of America, now called Alcoa Inc., is still located and expanding business in the city, but city leaders have diversified its local economy through local partnerships.

Mark Johnson, Alcoa city manager, said working as a region is more important than ever.

"Even though the siting of a particular business or industry may be physically located inside the boundaries of the city of Alcoa, it is often the result of many different players in the region working together to bring a project to fruition," Johnson said. "Several years ago, the city of Alcoa along with the city of Maryville and Blount County formed a joint Economic Development Board (EDB) to represent the community in recruiting large industrial projects.

"The EDB is part of the Blount Partnership which also includes the Chamber of Commerce and the Smoky Mountain Tourism Development Authority," Johnson continued. "It is not uncommon for the EDB to partner with the state of Tennessee, the city of Knoxville, Knox County, TVA, the Metropolitan Knoxville Airport Authority, Oak Ridge National Labs and others to assist in recruiting and bringing a new prospect to the area."

The city is part of the Blount Partnership, a chamber of commerce for businesses in Blount County, and works with other local resources such as the Small Business Development Center at Pellissippi State Community College in Knoxville, the Knoxville Entrepreneur Center, a regional business accelerator and the East Tennessee Economic Development Agency, who promotes regional marketing.

In the last four years, the partnership has created more than 4,000 new jobs and made more than \$1.5 billion in new capital investment in the area.

"We are really blessed to exist in this type of working environment," Alcoa Mayor Don Mull said. "In my more than 35 years as the mayor,

Pellissippi Place is a mixed-use community in Alcoa designed for technology businesses and research companies. The development park is jointly owned by Alcoa, Maryville, Blount and Knox counties, and features room for hotels, conference centers, residential space and retailers. One of its current occupants is worldwide cancer treatment research company Pronova.

I've never seen this type of positive, collaborative, solution-oriented relationship between all the various partners."

One of Alcoa's most visionary projects is Pellissippi Place, a mixed-use community designed for technology businesses and research companies jointly owned by Alcoa, Maryville, Blount and Knox counties. The research and development park also features hotels, conference centers, residential space, and retailers to cater to the needs of the businesses located there. Pronova, a worldwide cancer treatment research company, located their corporate headquarters in Pellissippi Place.

Johnson said the city expects Pellissippi Place to see major growth during the next 25 to 30 years with the industrial park becoming a show piece for the city as the result of high design guidelines, LEED certified buildings, greenway extension and other aesthetics. Development opportunities near the park are already on the upswing.

"Currently, the first 100 acres of Pellissippi Place are open and available for development," Johnson said. "Over the lifetime of its build out, Pellissippi Place will offer more than one million square feet of retail area, offices, a conferencing facility, festive retail and various housing options. The existing I-140, better known locally as the Pellissippi Parkway, will eventually be extended into and through the site ultimately connecting to Highway 321 near Walland."

To ensure the future of Alcoa, Johnson said the city is working to anticipate the needs of the businesses it hopes to attract new businesses.

"You cannot invite a business into your community if you do not have the backbone infrastructure already in place to support such activity," he said. "In an effort to stay prepared, the city of Alcoa has been diligent in making sure we have available land for development, more than adequate sewer and water capacity, redundant electric transmission support, a modern landfill to handle a variety of industrial wastes and a highly functioning local transportation system.

Investing in the community's future also means investing in local students, he said.

"We work closely with our local schools, the state and the community colleges to develop a highly trained workforce," Johnson said. "In the near future, the battle over where to attract highly skilled, trained workers will dictate where some companies will move or expand." The city of Brentwood has worked to replace light fixtures with more energy efficient bulbs in various city buildings, including the local library.

By creating more energy efficient public spaces and encouraging local businesses and residents to use cleaner technologies, the city of Brentwood has become a leader in establishing energy efficient practices.

In recognition of city officials' efforts to foster and promote environmentally sustainable practices throughout Brentwood and the leadership the city has shown through its environmental initiatives, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Brentwood with an award for Excellence in Energy Efficiency.

City Manager Kirk Bednar said the city's efforts began around 2009 when they used funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), more commonly known as stimulus money.

"We received an energy efficiency block grant, and did a complete energy audit of all of our facilities with that money," Bednar said. "We identified some low-hanging fruit, easy things we could accomplish and have a great impact. The first thing we did was change out all of our lighting."

The city also replaced all T-12 fluorescent light fixtures in city buildings with more efficient T-8 fixtures and will be converting lighting in all city-owned parking lots to LED lights. Bednar said the city has also changed out most of its traffic lights to LED lights and is working with local electric utilities to upgrading streetlights to LED lights.

The city then used some stimulus money and a Clean Tennessee Energy Grant to replace the boilers at the local library with more energy efficient units that save fuel and produce less emissions. Bednar said city also used these funds to replace HVAC systems at the library and city hall. The two largest city government facilities are now connected to building management systems that allow the HVAC systems to be controlled remotely and shutdown when not needed thereby saving energy.

"It used to be what the thermostat was set at it stayed at," Bednar said. "Some people were turning it way down and the air conditioner would run all weekend, whether it needed to or not. Putting it on the building management system has really helped us control our energy efficiency. We have seen a significant decrease in our energy usage and energy bills."

While it took investment up front, Bednar said the savings speak for themselves. "It's good for the city in general to do things like this to show we are good stewards of the taxpayer's money, and we are looking for ways to save those dollars," he said.

The city also maintains more than 960 acres of parkland, giving it one of the highest levels of park land and green space per capita in the state. Brentwood has also been recognized as a Tree City USA for 28 years.

"Parks and green spaces have always been a large part of our city. Green space and its preservation is an important priority for our community," Bednar said. "We even have a Citizens for Brentwood Green Space nonprofit that works to raise money, do things in our parks and even acquire some land we can use. I think that adds for our overall energy awareness in the community. Being in Middle Tennessee with the growth we have and issues we have with traffic, I think people see the value of having green spaces."

The city has also been a long-time member of the Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC) an organization that works with the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) and cities across the state to encourage the use of cleaner technology for electric generation.

Closer to home, the city's Environmental Advisory Board has initiated a new Environmental Stewardship Award to be presented to those in the community taking efforts to conserve the environment. Awards are presented to businesses, schools and other organizations within the city limits at the city's Arbor Day celebrations.

## **TML congratulates 2016 Achievement Award winners**

**Excellence in Fire Services - Athens** 



The Athens Fire Department has been working to improve its ISO rating through new bookkeeping measures, technology and training.

During the course of the year, the Athens Fire Department managed to increase its ISO rating despite a decrease in staff and took community outreach to new heights both in-person and through multiple online platforms.

For its dedication to community outreach, efforts to improve its ISO rating, and statistically validated inspection program, the Tennessee Municipal League presents Athens with the Excellence in Fire Services award.

The Athens Fire Department has long prided itself on community outreach and prevention efforts, working with Athens City Schools, local daycares, colleges, festivals and senior centers. In 2015, the AFD logged 6,550 contact hours in the community, an average of more than 300 hours per employee. In addition to contacting the community in-person, the department utilized email, YouTube and social media to reach out to residents in a meaningful way.

"Like every fire department, we are in every school in our area," Athens Fire Chief Jim Dyer said. "However, we do things a little differently. We let the kids make their own decisions. They have to crawl through the smoke, test the doorknobs and then decide what the right thing to do is."

Dyer said the department has also reached out to local businesses to help improve fire safety.

'We have an inspection program we started about seven years ago where we try not to write citations but instead work with business owners to correct issues," he said. "We have seen our dollar losses drop astronomically, and our fires have gone from about 55 a year to around 20. We reach out to our local industries to do fire training for them. We offer that training on their schedule, so if they need it at eleven o'clock at night, we go out at 11 o'clock at night and teach fire extinguishing.'

The city also earned a new ISO rating of 2 in 2015, an improvement from the ISO rating of 4 it received in 2008. While increases in personnel and adding new stations can improve ISO levels, Athens director of purchasing and risk manager Matthew Marshall said the AFD managed to improve its ISO without doing either

commercial, residential, and industrial properties in Athens."

Dyer said other city departments have worked to help the department achieve this new rating.

"The residential inspector in our city building codes department checks all the smoke detectors before he will let the power be turned on," Dyer said. "We got credit for having a residential smoke detector program. The police department carries the ball for car seat installs, so we got credit for that. We also have a very strong sprinkler ordinance, which requires sprinklers in any building more than 1,000 square feet. We try to work with all the sprinkler contractors. When you submit sprinkler plans to us for your building, we try to turn those plans around as quickly as we can."

The AFD also has the statistics to back up the improvements it has made in fire services. Using Pearson's R and Z scores, AFD has been able to show the value of its twice a year inspection program for all commercial and industrial customers.

Inspectors are using integrated software and tablet programs to photograph fire code violations and track compliance. Dyer said a grant paid for the software and iPads the department uses.

"We use iPads in our inspections and all of our inspections are done electronically," he said. "We email the results back to our customers. The proper tools can really speed up the process. We have done anything we can do to speed up the paperwork process. When we first did our ISO, we barely missed a 2 by barely a point, so we looked at what we could do to achieve that 2. Part of it was bookkeeping on our part."

New technology also helps local emergency dispatch route fire calls."We bought auto-vehicle locators, which are tied into our dispatch center," Dyer said. "Dispatch can tell us where our engines are. They can make sure they are sending the closest engine. We have installed those on our entire fleet."

The result is a statistically significant drop in mmercial and industrial fire losse

## **Excellence in Fire Services - Clinton**



Adding a new fire station, increasing staff and creating department policies to improve emergency responses are just some of the things the Clinton Fire Department has done recently to ensure it is providing the best services possible to the city of Clinton.

In recognition of this hard work and dedication, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Clinton with an award for Excellence in Fire Safety.

Chief Archie Brummitt said the department's success would not be possible with the support of the city manager and city council.

'We told them improving our ISO rates might be a year-long project, but they were really generous with us knowing it would take time and some extra funding," he said. "We have upped our training and upgraded some of our equipment. The city manager, mayor and council have been great. Without them, we can only do so much. We have shown them how if you spend this money here, the savings will come. They have been really appreciative. They work with us really well, and we couldn't ask for a better city manager or council than we have now."

Dennis Wolf, fire management consultant with MTAS, said the city requested a fire station location study and review of fire protection services from MTAS in 2012. The study reviewed the city's ISO rating and offered several recommendations to improve the ISO rating as well as help identify longrange plans for continued improvements of the fire protection services. The city used these recommendations and improved their ISO rating from a 4 to a 2, which Wolf said has saved money for local residents.

"Based upon MTAS's experience, residential property owners may see a savings of between four and 10 percent, depending upon the individual insurance company, with eight percent being most probable since the rating improved by two grades," Wolf said.

"MTAS estimates an annual collective savings on property insurance premiums for one and two-family homes at \$92,941. This community-wide savings does not reflect the savings on commercial industrial or institutional property, as these property owners will

A group of Clinton firefighters before a training exercise, which simulated a burning hotel building. The city has been working with MTAS to upgrade its services and hopes to expand its staff as well as the number of fire stations within the city limits in the coming months and years, according to Clinton Fire Chief Archie Brummitt.

enjoy similar savings."

Since the MTAS study, Clinton had gone from two fire stations to three with the reopening of the Headquarters Fire Station in 2014. The city also recently secured property for a fourth fire station on Frank L. Diggs Drive in the Clinton/I-75 Industrial Park with funds for the new station coming from local industry.

We have some funds allocated to us from some of the business and industries located out there to help us get that up and running within a couple of years," Brummitt said. "They are really excited to see us move out there." The department is looking to grow its number of employees as well.

"Right now we have 21 full-time firefighters, an assistant chief and myself," Brummitt said. "Hopefully, within the next couple of months we will get to add two or possibly three more. Right now we are running three crews with seven, and we are hoping to get three crews with eight. When I came to work here in 1978, we were a nine-member department. We have grown a lot over the years, and all of our guys have really stepped up as far as training, teaching fire safety and community outreach."

The department has added three more firefighters to its staff through a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant, and has budgeted for two additional company level personnel. Outreach into the community has also increased with more volunteer firefighters working with the city.

The department has also made other improvements like tracking response times to help improve time standards. Wolf said the city has shown a deep commitment to providing citizens with the best fire services possible.

"This commitment starts at the top with the support of the mayor and council, down through the city staff and Fire Chief Archie Brummitt, and through the very dedicated and professional firefighters," Wolfe said. "NFPA Standard 1710 recommends a minimum effective firefighting force of 16 firefighters on the scene of a low-hazard structure fire. Clinton established a policy of a 'departmental/all-page,' where additional firefighters are summoned on all reported structure fires."

"This was done through grit and determination," Marshall said. "In short, AFD went back to school and by the end of 2015 AFD had 10 certified fire inspectors. This along with updated training logs and recordkeeping propelled the city to its best ISO rating in its history, leading to a significant decrease in fire insurance for

"When we see inspections go up, total losses go down," Marshall said. "Using statistical modeling we've been able to estimate a reduction in total losses of \$1,367 for every inspection we do. AFD's embrace of prevention and outreach have reduced their structure fires to only 19 in 2015."



The city of Rocky Top recently decided to change its form of government from a commission style of a city manager style.

## Progressive Leadership Award – Rocky Top

Several changes have come to the city of Rock Top in recent years, from a new name to a new form of government to economic development in the form of new businesses and tourism opportunities.

As a result of the dedication of city leaders to become more proactive and their willingness to try new and innovative approaches to improve both city government and the local economy, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Rocky Top with the Progressive Leadership Award.

Originally known as Coal Creek, the city officially became Lake City in 1936. Margaret Norris, a management consultant with MTAS, said the city's new name change to Rocky Top in 2014 was the first in many changes.

"In 2014, the city decided that a name change could mean greater economic impact, and that was the first of many changes for this small community of 1,781," she said. "Over the last few years the city experienced some turnover in key positions, but it still moves ahead, with the future always on the minds of the elected officials."

Beginning in January 2015, the city's board of commissioners dedicated 100 hours to

review their form of government and decide if adopting another form might be more beneficial to the city. Under a commission form of government, each elected official oversees a city department such as parks or public safety.

After much deliberation, the city chose a council-manager form of city government and began rewriting its city charter. This new type of government will allow the council to have a point person for duties such as supervision of day-to-day operations of all city departments and staff through department heads; technical advisement on government operations, and help with preparation, monitoring and execution of the city budget

"The city's elected officials believe that the city can operate more efficiently and effectively under professional and full time management," Norris said. "This form of government will enable them to look at the city as a whole and they are looking forward to great things ahead once they are able to ratify the new charter."

Gov. Bill Haslam has officially signed off on the change of government and city leaders are waiting for the document to be sent back to Rocky Top. Mayor Michael Lovely said the See ROCKY TOP on Page 7

## Excellence in Parks and Recreation – Bartlett

In 2015, the city of Bartlett's Parks and Recreation Department managed more than 960 acres of parkland, hosted hundreds of events, provided recreation activities for thousands of residents and made a commitment to improve one of its oldest parks through a renovation project designed to maximize use of the park's potential.

For these reasons, the Tennessee Municipal League honors the city of Bartlett with the Excellence in Parks and Recreation award.

David Thompson, director of parks and recreation for Bartlett, said the city has looked to increase its park space to meet the needs of its growing population.

"The city of Bartlett has grown nearly 10 percent since the 2010 Census Survey to a population of almost 60,000 making it the 10th largest city in Tennessee," he said. "Bartlett, which adjoins Memphis, has been ranked by Money Magazine as one of the 'Top 100 Places to Live' due to its economic opportunities, good schools, safe streets, things to do and a real sense of community. Bartlett was also selected as the No. 1 Sports Town for the state of Tennessee."

With a staff of 41, the city provides more than 960 acres of land dedicated to parks and recreational uses including lakes, athletic fields, and picnic areas in 27 parks across the city, ranging in size from half an acre to 333 acres. Residents can enjoy 18 ballfields, seven soccer fields, multipurpose athletic fields, a cricket pitch, numerous walking trails and playgrounds.

Last year alone, the parks department offered more than 300 classes in the community center, hosted 10 city-wide events and provided recreation opportunities for more 3,200 youth and 2,000 adults. MTAS Management Consultant Ronnie Neill said the city staff goes above and beyond the call of duty.

"The city of Bartlett, under the leadership of Mayor Keith McDonald and the Board of Aldermen, has created a Parks and Recreation Department that excels in the services provided to the citizens in Bartlett," Neill said. "The amenities provided by the city for leisure and recreational activities encompass a wide-range of activities."

A splash park was added at the creation center and the city has begun planning for W.J. Freeman Park, an 88-acre park that both citizens and city



A gazebo at W.J. Freeman Park in Bartlett. The park will soon be undergoing major changes as part of a new master plan.

officials felt was underused.

In the fall of 2014, through much citizen input, the mayor and board approved putting together a Master Plan for W.J. Freeman Park. Citizens wanted the remaining 56 acres of the park to be developed into more specific areas for recreation instead of just open areas. Monies were allocated to address these issues and Dalhoff/Thomas Design Studio was awarded the contract to design a Master Plan.

"W. J. Freeman Park Master Plan Phase I will address ingress-egress and parking problems that currently exist. A second entrance/exit will be installed and additional parking spaces will be added to accommodate 260 more vehicles," Thompson said. "This project will allow Bartlett to properly develop 30 acres that are presently just a wide open field with one cricket pitch. W. J. Freeman Park will not only be used by residents but also the surrounding communities and schools."

The park faces several challenges, such as being located in a 100-year-old floodplain, and nearly a third of the park is undeveloped. Following input from city officials, the parks and recreation advisory committee, contractors and more than 100 residents, new plans for the park See **BARTLETT** on Page 6

## **TML congratulates 2016 Achievement Award winners**



Members of the Maryville Police Department meet with community members during a local event.

## Excellence in Police Services – Maryville

Adapting new technology, reaching out to the community and focusing on professional training are just some of the reasons the Maryville Police Department has proved invaluable for the city of Maryville.

In recognition of the police department's dedication, efforts to utilize new technology and provide officers with advanced training, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Maryville with the award for Excellence in Police Services.

Over the years, the department has been recognized by several organizations for its outstanding achievements. In 1990, the Maryville Police Department became the first municipal police department in East Tennessee to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).

Several of the department's criminal investigators have completed the University of Tennessee's National Forensics Academy, and many members of the command staff have competed the FBI National Academy or the University of Tennessee Southeastern Leadership Academy. Most recently, the Maryville Police Department Traffic Unit has recently been recognized by the Governor's Highway Safety Office as having the top traffic program in the state for agencies of its size.

Chief Tony Crisp said one of the community outreach programs the department started is "Coffee with Cops" where officers spend time with residents to hear their concerns.

"We have gone to various places

spoke into was new, the technology we were using was the same as it was back in the 1970s," he said. "We were in desperate need of a new system, and the federal government has new narrow banding requirements."

Barton said the department has fewer than 50 full-time police officers but has prioritized professional training and development for all of its officers.

"The department has partnered with Blount Memorial Hospital and provided each patrol officer with training in how to administer Naloxone in hopes of reducing opiate related overdoses in their community," Barton said.

"Last summer, Maryville and Blount County experienced a hazardous materials incident involving a derailed train and subsequent fire. Area residents and industries, inside and outside the city limits, had to be evacuated. More than 5,000 people were displaced by the evacuation, and major industries were evacuated and idled. A large number of residents were transported to area hospitals and some were admitted. Several emergency response personnel were also treated. The training, equipment and professionalism of the Maryville Police Department came into play as the department successfully evacuated impacted areas, and contained the scene for the duration of disaster, preventing the incident from becoming far worse," Barton said.

## **Excellence in Public Works - Pigeon Forge**

When it was time for a new wastewater treatment plant, officials with the city of Pigeon Forge looked into new, innovative and environmentally-friendly ways to manage water and wastewater for the city's often fluctuating population.

For their innovative approach to creating a new facility and adopting methods and facilities new to the region and the state, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Pigeon Forge with an award for Excellence in Public Works.

While the city only has around 6,000 permanent residents, tourism can swell the city's population to more than 60,000. Public Works Director Mark Miller said the city also provides water to these residents, hotels, tourist destinations like Dollywood and Dollywood Splash Company as well as the city of Gatlinburg and Sevier County,

"Our infrastructure is a roller coaster," Miller said. "We have to be able to handle everyone that comes in. When everyone comes in, we are a big city but when the tourists leave we're a small town. . We sell 1 million gallons of water a day to Gatlinburg and the water we sell to the county is used in cabins for tourists. Our water is not just for Pigeon Forge; it's regional.

Since so many of the area's waters flow in and out of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Miller said the city has to hold its water to a high standard.

"Our area has a lot of recreational use of the river such as trout fishing and tubing, so we are held to a higher standard to keep our rivers pristine," he said. "We have phosphorous limits, nitrogen limits and other standards a lot of cities don't have. We take a lot of pride in our water. We pipe it in about 15 or 16 miles, treat it and then discharge it back into the rivers. Right where we discharge there are campgrounds and kids playing in the river. Our water might be cleaner when we discharge it than when we bring it in."

To provide needed utility services to both residents and visitors, the city worked with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to replace its treatment facility, which was constructed in



Pigeon Forge's new water treatment plant also came with new equipment for water quality testing and other procedures.

1979. The original plant had a capacity of 4 million gallons per day and much of its existing equipment was in need of replacement.

The city constructed a new plant west of the existing plant with a capacity for 6 million gallons per day and a hydraulic capacity of 15 million gallons per day. The land for the new facility was already owned by the city and minimal work was needed on collection system improvements to bring wastewater to the new site. The new site is on a former park, and activities once held at the park were then moved to a larger state-of-the-art community park.

"Our new facility has room for us to double the size of our plant in the future," Miller said. "We can increase the size of the plant instead of changing locations. It was about a \$32 million project, and we have a new administration building, new lab and the plant is now more energy efficient. Most of our equipment in the old plant was 35 years old as well. Now we have all new equipment."

The city also worked to incorporate a wide variety of sustainable and innovative features into the new treatment plant to help increase the facility's environmental impact. The plant is the first in the state to use a drone for aerial inspection of treatment processes and real-time inspection of personnel safety. Rainwater is collected on the roof of the administration facility for irrigating the landscaping. The plant's pre-thickened aerobic digestion biosolids system is the first of its kind in Tennessee, and by using a sustainable reuse system, the plant has decreased potable water consumption for plant process by 96 percent.

This municipal reuse system is the first in East Tennessee and is utilized by several local facilities including six baseball and softball fields at Wear's Park, the Pigeon Forge High School Football field, LeConte Community Center and Library complex landscaping, and landscaping indoor aquarium feature for the Cal Ripken Baseball Experience. The city also uses the water for greenways, walkways and a water feature at the plant with local aquatic life inside. Miller said many local hotels use this water for their greenspaces instead of water set aside for drinking.

Miller said the new plant is also a great way to educate school tours so the area's children can learn early on how to be good stewards of Pigeon Forge's natural beauty.

"We have a waterfall and pond with local fish in it," he said. "We show the kids where the water comes in, how it gets to the sink or toilet, and then what it has to go through so it can be discharged again. Water is serious business, and a lot of people take it for granted. We are beginning to see that water is a crucial thing."

## Excellence in Green Leadership – Gatlinburg

like Starbucks, Hardee's and Vienna Coffeehouse to meet with different groups of people. We want to bring our officers to places where people are gathering to find out what is going on in the community and their concerns for the area," Crisp said.

The department is also working to reach out to local youth.

"We've had a citizens' police academy for a number of years," he said. "We also have started a youth citizens' police academy, which especially targets teens and minorities. We work with our local church coalitions to bring together the first ever youth academy, and we've begun a dialogue with these church coalitions as well."

A driving program the department has implemented has attracted youth and senior drivers as well.

"We also have a driving program that we offer to youth and senior citizens," Crisp said. "We offer that a couple of times throughout the year. It's an eight-hour driver awareness class, and we talk about bad driving habits. With teens, we do a special two-day program on setting good driving habits. We understand insurance companies have given discounts to both of those groups for participating in these programs."

Rex Barton, a police consultant with MTAS, said the department has also made strides with new policing technology.

"The department has transitioned from laptops in the police cars to tablets and software made specifically for law enforcement," he said. "The police department has also added body cameras for each patrol officer, and the latest lethal weapons to enhance the protection they provide to their citizens and maintain the highest level of safety for the police officers."

Crisp said the department has also recently implemented new radio technology, which brought Blount County, Maryville and Alcoa together on one radio system. Crisp said surrounding agencies including fire and EMS all use the new system.

"While the box we had that you

A gateway to Tennessee's only national park, the officials with the city of Gatlinburg have made it their mission to preserve the natural beauty of their surroundings for future generations as well as implementing new and innovative environmentally-friendly technology into the city's every day duties.

In honor of the city's dedication to provide environmentally-friendly services and setting green goals for the future, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Gatlinburg with the award for Excellence in Green Leadership.

Pat Hardy, a municipal management consultant with MTAS, praised the city and its staff for the work they have put into green initiatives.

"Gatlinburg is one of the best governed and best managed cities in East Tennessee. Interactions between the city council and staff are a perfect blend of the policy and administrative dimensions," Hardy said. "Led by an excellent city council and City Manager Cindy Ogle, the components of Gatlinburg's governance have developed a strategic approach to green initiatives, and the city staff have done a superb job of implementing these initiatives. This being the case, community involvement has also been exceptional."

In the past year alone, the city's convention center was awarded the Gatlinburg Goes Green Newcomer Award by the Gatlinburg Chamber of Commerce while the city itself was awarded a TDEC grant to retrofit lights at the community center and post office with more energy efficient bulbs. Larry Henderson, Gatlinburg public service manager, said the city first saw the potential merely changing light bulbs could bring when they switched their annual Winterfest light display from iradescent to LED lights in 2006.

"It significantly reduced our electric bill, so we decided to seek funding for other projects," he said. "We received a \$75,000 Energy Efficiency Block grant with stimulus money and replaced more than 4,000



Gatlinburg promotes mass transit for tourists through it trolleys and uses a GPS system to monitor city vehicles so they are more efficient. When the city saw how much they were saving by using this GPS system on their trolleys, they began outfitting other city vehicles with the technology. The result has been a decrease in energy savings as well as in employee overtime.

bulbs and ballasts. We then replaced 211 incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs and replaced all of our exit signs with LED lights. We also replaced all of our 309 traffic signals with LED bulbs, and replaced lights in our city hall complex, which houses police, fire, the administrative center, welcome centers, and various other offices."

Henderson said the city received a TDEC Green Energy Grant in 2013 to replace the lights in our convention center and a second TDEC Green Energy Grant in 2015 to replace the lights in its community center as well. Next, the city replaced lights in its post office, a city-owned facility leased to the federal government.

"Believe it or not, changing out light bulbs is some of the lower hanging, sweeter fruit you can pick," Henderson said. "It's about a four-year payback, which is significant. Other projects, like installing solar panels, have a longer payback, especially if you don't have partnerships to finance them on the front end. Now, we have to go higher in the tree and are exploring other options."

Gatlinburg also has a GPS system for fleet management designed to reduce carbon emissions for its downtown trolley system, sanitation department and utilities department. Henderson said the process of fitting their vehicles began with the city's tourist trolleys a decade ago.

"We wanted to monitor idling, make more efficient use of routes and reduce overtime," Henderson said. "In 2014-15, we tried it out with our sanitation department, and it really proved to be a success. After that, we installed 18 units in the utilities department fleet. It has made everyone more responsible for the use of their vehicle."

In the past, the city has partnered with Goodwill Industries to establish a comprehensive recycling collection center, established a free parkway trolley to promote public transportation downtown, and has outfitted its convention center with energy-saving equipment including new light fixtures, electric hand dryers, efficient water fountains and water bottle refill stations.

"Gatlinburg has long been considered the Gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," Henderson said. "We have this resource that we have an obligation to protect. We do that on a year-round basis. This is the reason people come to visit Gatlinburg."

Hardy said continued innovation and pushing to do better with sustainability have become a hallmark of how the city conducts business.

"Projects like these cannot be accomplished without a high-quality governance team of both elected officials and appointed staff, who are able to work together to conceive of, design, and implement exciting and new approaches to sustainable, 'green' delivery of services and to encouragement of the same in the private sector," Hardy said.

## **TML congratulates 2016 Achievement Award winners** Small City Progress – Fayetteville

When the headquarters of the Fayetteville Police Department outgrew its location, city officials worked together to find a new home for the department in the downtown area.

In recognition of city officials' efforts to provide a state-of-the-art police headquarters while simultaneously bringing new life into their downtown, the Tennessee Municipal League presents the city of Fayetteville for an award in Small City Progress.

The Fayetteville Police Headquarters was previously housed in former public school building dating back to 1940 with approximately 5,000-square-feet of usable space. Jeffrey J. Broughton, a municipal management consultant with MTAS, said it became apparent the space available was too small to suit the needs of the growing department.

"The lack of usable space, coupled with the growing need for office space and storage, resulted in police command staff and investigators sharing offices with up to three persons housed in a single office," Broughton said. "Furthermore, the building's available storage space was not sufficient for the current or future needs of the department. The armory and records storage areas were at maximum capacity and the evidence storage area was nearing



Fayetteville's new police station was once the site of a former gas station considered a blight on the city's downtown.

maximum capacity. The building was in disrepair with a remodel not feasible due to the presence of asbestos. It is not well insulated and does not retain heat or air conditioning to a level that is efficient and the flat roof leaks.'

The city wanted to provide the department with a safe, and functional building but be fiscally responsible in doing so. It was more cost effective to build a new structure than to renovate the old one, so city officials

worked with architects, engineers, and officials with the police department to devise a new headquarters.

City Administrator Scott Collins said the city has grown since the department headquarters was moved to its old location, and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen felt the police department needed a new headquarters that reflected both the city's growth and the growth of the department. The city purchased an unoccupied lot with a former gas station on it, which had been an eyesore for the city. The structure was then demolished and a new police headquarters was built in its place, keeping in with the historical structures also located in the downtown area.

"This new facility will meet our police department's needs for 50 years to come," Collins said. "It is just phenomenal."

The new 12,000-square-foot building hosts an armory, evidence storage area, locker rooms with showers, and a secure parking garage on the lower level while the main level features the courtroom, lobby area with historical displays, administrative offices, as well as a kitchen/break room for the officers and staff. The upper level hosts the detective offices, meeting rooms, interview rooms, and a lab for forensic services.

"The police department is ecstatic about this," Collins said. "In the past, we had three detectives all working in a small cramped office where their desks were just about touching. Now they have more appropriate offices. We have a lab where they can do their forensics and lab work. Chief Richard Howell and all the officers have been so excited and are so appreciative. They know they now have a safe and efficient building to operate out of."

The new building was also able to keep the police presence downtown

and even move the department closer to city hall."I think I've worn out two pairs of shoes walking to the new location," Collins said. "They are right down from city hall. In the past, if I wanted to meet with the chief, I would have to drive there or he would have to drive here. Now we just walk out the back door, take a few steps and right there they are."

While the building's exterior fits in with the historical character of downtown, new technology was incorporated into the construction. All of the building's doors and elevators are secured with key cards with security cameras installed to monitor the interior and exterior, which were funded with the assistance of a TML Risk Management Pool grant. The building also features secure hotspot Wi-Fi computer technology that allows officers computer access from anywhere in the building or from the patrol vehicles in the lower level parking garage.

"Our IT director Jerry Taylor was part of our earliest planning station," Collins said. "He ran all the fiber optics and made sure this was the most up-to-date building possible. He has been hands-on from day one to make that possible."

"This proud achievement was the result of exceptional teamwork by the board and staff, and without an additional tax burden to taxpayers," Broughton said. "A site that was once blight to the community is now a source of civic pride. Moreover, the Favetteville Police Department now has a facility that is safe, secure, and efficient with an eye to the future."

## **Excellence** in Parks – Bartlett

**BARTLETT** from Page 4

include additional walking trails, picnic shelters, a multipurpose building, disc golf course, improvements to the cricket pitch, an improved access road, playground and dog park.

In addition to improving recreational opportunities for residents, Thompson said the improvements will have a long-term economic impact on the city.

"Recreational amenities of a city play such an important role in attracting families to live there and businesses to want to come as findings in the TRAP survey of 2009 reported," he said. "Our recreation department will receive direct revenue from the use of these fields for games and rentals where currently only Cricket is being received. We will also be proposing to hold some bigger soccer tournaments with our other soccer complex being so close, and hopefully cricket tournaments."

## Small Town Progress – Thompson's Station

During the past year, the town of Thompson's Station has adopted a new land development ordinance, its first capital improvement plan and developed plans for the growth of transportation and public improvements as it prepares to grow.

To create these policies, the town relied on extensive public participation from its 2,681 residents to establish a community-backed vision for development. In recognition of these efforts, the Tennessee Municipal League gives the town of Thompson's Station the Small Town Progress Award.

With significant growth projected for Thompson's Station and the surrounding area, town leaders looked to create new zoning regulations to help promote the type of development both officials and citizens desired. Town Administrator Joe Cosentini said the land use ordinance started as a conversation between local leaders on how to plan for Thompson's Sta-



Town officials and residents came together through a series of meetings to develop the town's new land

tion's future.

"We needed a better understanding of how we wanted the town to grow," he said. "We began to realize the code we had in place wouldn't accomplish all of those goals. We sought out a couple of different firms to help us revise our codes, and once we did that, we tried to figure out what the best process was for making sure we balanced where we wanted to go from a political and staff perspective to what the citizens wanted."

Jeff Broughton, a municipal management consultant with MTAS, said officials, consultants and residents worked to evaluate existing zoning and subdivision regulations as well as create new goals in line with the town's vision for the future.

"A four-day planning charrette was conducted during a single week to seek public interest accompanied

use ordinance, which outlines the future vision for Thompson's Station. by an intensive marketing campaign dubbed 'Next Stop: Thompson's Station,' playing off its namesake heritage as a railroad depot," Broughton said. "The charrette was a resounding success with significant public participation. Over the course of the week, a consensus grew for prioritizing clustering strategies at different scales. That would assure the preservation of landscapes while at the same time providing property owners and developers opportunities for a revenue-producing mix of residential and commercial development."

Being located in rapidly growing Williamson County, Cosentini said the town had to balance the potential for development with the desires of local residents to maintain a more rural atmosphere in their community.

The town sought input from local citizens, the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Nashville MPO, Williamson County Chamber of Commerce, regional business leaders, and many others.

'We have a very passionate citizenry, and at some of these meetings, especially the ones in the evening, we had more than 100 people show up," he said. "They wanted their voices heard, and wanted to make sure we weren't just putting something on paper people didn't agree with. We are very appreciative of everyone who came out."

The resulting Land Development Ordinance was released for public comment in July 2015 and passed by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen two months later. Shortly after the ordinance was adopted, the town was approached by a land development company interested in constructing a housing development with commercial plots.

Hand-in-hand with its new land development ordinance, town officials also passed their first Capital Improvements Plan.

'In the same vein, the town updated and improved its comprehensive traffic analysis forecast to better account for future regional growth and its impact on Thompson's Station," Broughton said. "Additionally, the town formally established a policy for the dedication of public improvements so it can smartly and effectively handle the transfer of infrastructure from private developers to the town."

Thompson said the city is also undertaking improvements at other local parks.

"We are in the process of awarding a contract to construct a 1.4 mile walking and bike trail in our Fletcher Creek Greenbelt area," he said. "We also have an undeveloped 15 acres of land in the northern part of the city that will be our next project. Bartlett has an excellent Recreation Program but it will be increasingly challenging to keep up with the demand for services without future development. With the high cost of acquiring more land for parks, it makes more sense to develop areas the city already owns as park land."





**Buddy Billings** has been selected as the new fire chief for the town of Collierville after serving more than 37 years with the department. Billings was selected as



**Buddy Billings** 

the interim chief of the department in February after previous chief, Jerry Crawford, retired, and his promotion to chief was approved unanimously by the Collierville Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Billings began working with the department as a 16-yearold volunteer. He moved through the ranks, and worked for more than 22 years as the chief of fire prevention, overseeing the day-to-day operations of the fire marshal's office. His duties there included overseeing the fire department's code inspection, investigation and public education divisions. Billings is a Collierville native and graduated from both Collierville High School and Shelby State Community College.

Clay Byrd has been named the executive director of the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission as retail stores across the state prepare to sell wine in July.



Byrd previously served as assistant general counsel for the Tennessee Comptroller of the Secretary. Before that, he worked as an attorney for the legislature, where he helped develop alcohol regulations. Byrd will be taking over for Ginna Winfree, who took the position on an interim basis after the departure of former executive director Keith Bell. Byrd was one of more than 20 applicants for the executive director position.

Greg Edrington has been selected as the new city engineer for the city of Goodlettsville. Before coming to the city, Edrington was previous-

ly employed by



Greg Edrington

Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood, Inc., where he has served as a municipal project manager since 1999. Edrington has more than 35 years of professional engineering experience, and has both a bachelor's degree in civil engineering and a master's of engineering from the University of Louisville. As Goodlettsville's city engineer, he will oversee more than \$23 million in capital projects currently being designed or under construction, as well as the everyday operation of wastewater collection, stormwater, and road enhancements, this position will be integral in moving the city forward.



Alexis Pugh Services, Pugh

was employed as the executive director of the Humane Society of Memphis & Shelby County from 2011 until 2014. She has also been employed by WBOC-TV, Clear Channel Television, and Hearst-Argyle Television in various roles. Pugh graduated from the University of Maryland – College Park in 2000 with a bachelor's degree in journalism.

**PatrickSheehan** has been selected as the director of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), and will begin his role with the state on June 15.



Patrick Sheehan

Sheehan is presently the operations administrator for the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. He has led Ohio's Emergency Operations Center and the Radiological and Preparedness Branches since 2014. Sheehan joined the Ohio Emergency Management Agency in 2004 as part of the finance staff and has been consistently promoted to various leadership roles in the agency. He is a graduate of Kennesaw State University and completed additional studies in business and public administration at Ohio State University and Capital University. He also served in the U.S. Army Reserves as a chemical operational specialist. David Purkey, who had served as director of TEMA, will return to the singular position of homeland security advisor and assistant commissioner of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security after serving in dual roles for the past two years.

Derrick Schofield, Tennessee Department of Correction Commissioner, will be stepping down from the position at the end of

June to join Flor-Derrick Schofield

## **TDEC presents 2016 Sustainable Transportation** PEOPLE Awards to Athens, Nashville and Chattanooga

ga public bicycle transit system.

Three Tennessee cities are among the winners of grant funds provided by two state agencies to help promote more sustainable transportation.

Athens, Chattanooga and Nashville all received funds from the 2016 Sustainable Transportation Awards, presented by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Transportation

"Sustainable transportation is essential for public health and the environment, and we're encouraged by the efforts of communities and industry across the state to make it a priority in transportation planning," TDEC Commissioner Bob Martineau said. "By recognizing thought leaders in this field, we hope to inspire replication of innovative projects, activities, and initiatives across the state."

#### ATHENS

Athens was recognized for its Green Ways Initiative in 2013, which was developed to provide environmentally-friendly methods of advancing commuting infrastructure. Since the start of the program, Athens has increased the total city sidewalk and walkway length by two percent annually. Several of the walkways are surfaced with pervious pavers, beneath which there are detention ponds. In addition to walkway expansion, the city has added nine miles of new multi-use trail over the last three years, taking their total trail mileage to 14 miles.

Trails are open to walkers, horseback riders, and bikers. Athens is in the process of developing a mobile-friendly trail map program to increase trail system accessibility and provide mileage information. Additionally, Athens repairs their roads with a method that is more environmentally friendly than traditional methods - the Liquid Road paving method is calculated to save more than 97,000 pounds of carbon dioxide for every four-lane mile treated. The city treated eight miles of road last year.

## CHATTANOOGA

The Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority was recognized for its Bike Chattanoo-

The Bike Chattanooga 33-station, 300-bicycle transit system enables users to conveniently access downtown Chattanooga and is the first large-scale bike-share program in a mid-sized city, enhancing mobility and accessibility for the community. The system footprint makes trips possible in the central business district, the North Shore and Southside neighborhoods, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and the Tennessee Riverpark.

Web and mobile applications provide real-time information and make it easy for users to determine the availability of nearby stations, bicycles, docking points, and local points of interest. The bike-share program contributes to reduced traffic congestion, reduced use of fossil fuels, and reduced pressure on downtown parking. In 2015, Bike Chattanooga members completed more than 163,000 trips traveling more than 500,000 miles and burning more than 20 million calories. In addition to the health and mobility benefits, the potential exists for a decrease in over 300,000 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions.

#### NASHVILLE

Nashville Metropolitan Transit Authority was recognized for two different projects, the first being the Music City Circuit's new electric buses. Nashville's MTA has a history of providing environmentally-friendly transit options. This past year, they expanded their fleet to include nine Proterra Inc. electric buses. These buses run virtually silent and emit zero tailpipe emissions. The buses are used for the cost-free Music City Circuit, which runs from the Nashville Farmers' Market through the busy business, tourism, and arts district of downtown, all the way into the Gulch area.

The buses are quick-charging at just 10 minutes for a full charge. Because they have 30 percent fewer parts than a diesel vehicle and require fewer repairs, lifetime maintenance costs are expected to decrease by about \$135,000. In 2015, the Music City Circuit's electric buses provided more than 300,000 rides for residents and visitors in downtown Nashville, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 56,000 pounds and resulting in a decreased diesel usage of 34,000 gallons.

The Nashville Department of Public Works and RPM Transportation consultants were also awarded for the 11th Avenue Complete Street Project. RPM Transportation Consultants and the Metropolitan Government of Nashville Department of Public Works' 11th Avenue complete street project took a 100-yearold industrial corridor and created a multi-use, attractive main street through the Gulch neighborhood.

The aging roadway had limited sidewalk availability, lacked bicycle infrastructure, and didn't adequately accommodate transit service. Project elements addressed deficiencies with the addition of a multi-use path with separate bike paths and wide sidewalks, 800 linear feet of greenway and urban mini-park, hundreds of new trees and shrubs, a signalized pedestrian crossing, roadside bioretention zones, and bike racks.

The new corridor blends aspects of the neighborhood's industrial uses and warehouses with the trendy, modern design of new developments in the neighborhood. To celebrate the completion of Nashville's newest complete street, former Mayor Karl Dean hosted the community's first Open Streets Festival in June 2015. More than 2,000 people participated in the festival and took advantage of all that the newly developed street has to offer.

Other awards were presented to the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System for a more sustainable school bus fleet, Great Smoky Mountains National Park for alternative fuel and electric vehicle infrastructure, Memphis-based JNJ Express Inc., Nashville-based Sharp Transport, Inc., Vanderbilt University's alternative transportation program, and the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Structures Division and Environmental and Planning Bureau for the Kyles Ford Bridge Replacement Project.

The Sustainable Transportation Awards recognize outstanding initiatives in Tennessee to reduce transportation-related energy and emissions, in line with an overarching effort to save natural resources, improve the health and well-being of Tennesseans, and create efficiencies in the delivery of goods and services.

**Progressive Leadership Award – Rocky Top** 

**ROCKY TOP** from Page 4

role and duties. Once the new charter is officially ratified, the city nopes to begin advertising for the position.

every man in the community along with many young boys.



Alexis Pugh has been named the new director of Memphis Animal Services. Pugh is current employed as the executive director of Mid-South Spay & Neuter and will start work with the city's animal services department in early June. Pugh, who owns three rescue dogs of her own, has a history of working with animals ida-based GEO

Group as executive vice president for continuum of care. Schofield has led the department since 2011, and has been an integral voice in shaping public safety agenda during the administration. He has served on the Governor's Public Safety Subcabinet since its inception. He most recently helped to shape the Public Safety Act of 2016, which makes smarter use of prison bed space, among other important safety objectives. Before becoming TDOC commissioner, Schofield was an assistant commissioner of Corrections in Georgia. A native Georgian, he spent eight years with the U.S. Army, reaching the rank of captain, and has a master's degree in public administration from Columbus State University.

city felt the council-manager form of government would help the city be more proactive.

"It is my goal as mayor to see the city grow and help bring in new development to the area. Our current form of government does not allow us to act on matters as quickly as we would like," he said. "The change will allow us to be proactive, which will benefit the city's future. I believe it will have a positive impact on the city and will help with the efficiency of day to day operations, which allows us to be more competitive with other cities. In the end, the change of government is going to save the tax payers money."

Meanwhile, the city continues to work on changing ordinances and updating personnel policy to match the new charter. The city is working with MTAS to update its personnel manual to include the city manager's

While the city is exploring new avenues for its future, City Recorder Michael Foster said Rocky Top is also working to preserve its past. In April, the city held a ribbon cutting for the Coal Creek Miners Museum downtown.

The Coal Creek Miners Museum tells the story of the miners that lived, worked and died in Coal Creek, Fraterville and Briceville Tennessee," he said. "It also tells about the historically significant events that changed the mining industry. The story starts in the late 1800s when the 'free' miners fought against the convict lease system, a struggle that ultimately ended the system in the southern states. The story goes on to depict how these communities not only survived one mining disaster but two disasters that killed almost

Attracting outdoor tourism is one of the city's major priorities. A new ordinance will permit ATVs and off-road vehicles to drive on certain roads in town, a move Lovely said the city hopes will promote tourism in the area.

"We want Rocky Top to be a place to live, visit and play," Lovely said. "Rocky Top has a bright future and a proud past and we want to share that with everyone that comes through."

The city borders Windrock Park, which is the largest privately-owned off-road recreation area in the country with more than 72,000 acres. The Windrock Park trail system includes more than 310 miles of maintained off-highway vehicle trails for riders of all skill levels and open to all types of vehicles and logs some 100,000 visitors that visit Windrock every year.





A recent economic report released by the Secretary of State's office shows Tennessee's economy continues to grow in 2016 with no signs of stopping any time soon. There were 9,546 new business filings during the first quarter of 2016, representing a 9.9 percent increase of the same time last year. New business filings have now grown for 18 consecutive quarters. The Tennessee Quarterly Business and Economic Indicators report is created to provide a periodic snapshot of the state's economy based on a variety of information. It's published through a partnership with Secretary of State Tre Hargett and the University of Tennessee Knoxville's Center for Business and Economic Research. Davidson County led the way with the most initial filings among the state's four largest counties with 2,265. Shelby County had 1,716. Knox and Hamilton Counties rounded out the top four with 756 and 595 respectively. Domestic limited liability corporations (LLCs) showed the largest year-over-years gains with a 16.1 percent increase, when tracking annual report submissions. Foreign entities followed (11.2 percent) along with domestic nonprofit corporations (8.3 percent). Tennessee's March unemployment rate of 4.5 percent fell 0.4 percentage points compared to February. This marks the first time the state's unemployment rate fell below the national rate since February 2014. It's the lowest unemployment rate that the state has recorded since June 2007.

Decatur and Dyer counties, Jackson-Madison County and the city of Germantown have been officially designated as Healthier Tennessee Communities for their work to improve the health of their citizens. To be designated, the communities established wellness councils and developed sustainable community-wide events and activ-

ities that support physical activity, healthy eating and tobacco abstinence. They then tracked and measured outputs and accomplishments of the programs. The designation is for two years. Communities will be responsible for maintaining or growing their efforts in order to renew the designation. The Foundation launched the Healthier Tennessee Communities initiative in March 2015 with nine pilot communities. including Decatur and Dyer counties and the City of Germantown. There are currently 45 cities and counties vying for the designation.

The state of Tennessee's annual sales tax holiday is held every year, beginning at 12:01 a.m. on the last Friday in July and ending at 11:59 p.m. the following Sunday night. During this weekend, certain goods may be purchased tax free. This year's tax-free holiday weekend begins at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, July 29, and ends Sunday, July 31, at 11:59 p.m. For a list of items that qualify for the exemption, go to www.tn.gov/revenue/article/sales-tax-holiday.

Six Tennessee cities have earned the Playful City USA recognition from a national nonprofit dedicated to promoting play and active lifestyles for children. Knoxville, Mt. Juliet, Nashville, Oak Ridge, Sweetwater and Tellico Plains were among the 257 cities nationwide to earn the designation from Ka-BOOM. Cities are recognized based in infrastructure investments, programs and policy changes dedicated to improve opportunities for children of all abilities and ages to play. KaBOOM is in its tenth year of recognizing cities with the Playful City USA designation. Mount Juliet has earned the designation seven times, Sweetwater six times, Oak Ridge five times, Nashville three times and Tellico Plains twice. This is the first year Knoxville has been recognized.

## April revenues \$185 M more than budgeted

Tennessee tax revenues exceeded budgeted estimates in April. Department of Finance and Administration Commissioner Larry Martin announced that overall April revenues were \$1.8 billion, which is \$185 million more than the state budgeted.

"Total reported revenues in April reflect significant improvement over this time last year in both sales and business taxes," Commissioner Martin said. "While franchise and excise taxes and income tax revenues are typically large in the month of April, much of the state's revenue growth is a result of strong sales taxes, reflecting consumer confidence in Tennessee."

General fund revenues were more than the budgeted estimates in the amount of \$165.9 million while the four other funds that share in state tax revenues were \$19.1 million more than the estimates.

Sales taxes were \$37.7 million more than the estimate for April and were 8.46 percent more than April 2015. April collections reflect retail business activity that occurred in March. For nine months revenues are \$311.5 million higher than estimated. The year-to-date growth rate for nine months was 7.96 percent.

Franchise and excise taxes combined were \$82.5 million higher than the budgeted estimate in April and the growth rate over April 2015 was 2.09 percent. For nine months revenues are \$293.6 million more than the estimate and the year-todate growth rate is 4.62 percent. However, adjusting a large one-time payment received last year, the underlying growth rate is positive 14.75 percent.

Gasoline and motor fuel revenues for April increased by 18.25 percent compared to April 2015 and were \$9.9 million more than the budgeted estimate of \$70.6 million. For nine months revenues have exceeded estimates by \$33.1 million.

Tobacco taxes were \$1.2 million less than the April budgeted estimate of \$21.8 million. For nine months they are \$10.8 million more than the budgeted estimate. Inheritance and estate taxes were \$6.7 million more than the April estimate. On a year-to-date basis revenues for nine months are \$15.1 million more than the budgeted estimate.

Hall income taxes for April were \$35.7 million more than the budgeted estimate. For nine months collections are \$44.6 million more than the budgeted estimate.

Privilege taxes were \$6.5 million more than the April estimate and on a year-to-date basis, August through April, revenues are \$23.3 million more than the estimate. Business taxes were \$4.2 million more than the April estimate. For nine months revenues are \$10.8 million more than the estimate.

All other taxes exceeded estimates by a net of \$3 million.

Year-to-date revenues for nine months were \$757.1 million more than the budgeted estimate. The general fund recorded \$698.4 million more than budgeted estimates and the four other funds were \$58.7 million more than the estimate.

## TN communities to receive \$5.7 million

Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Economic and Community Development Commissioner Randy Boyd announced that 15 communities will receive \$5.7 million in Site Development Grants to prepare economic development sites for market. The Site Development Grant program is part of the larger Rural Economic Development Fund announced by Haslam and Boyd last October.

The grants assist communities in finalizing infrastructure and engineering improvements for project ready certified sites. The grants are intended to help rural communities overcome barriers to site certification and prepare them to receive and economic development project.

The Site Development Grant program works in cooperation with the departments Select Tennessee Site Certification program, names the best site certification program in the U.S. by *Area Development* magazine.

An advisory committee made up of staff from the department, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the Tennessee Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture selected these 15 sites from a pool of 24 applications. The application process was competitive with grants awarded based on benefit to the community, economic impact and projected return on investment.

Projects that received grants are: • **Brownsville** I-40 Advantage \$500,000 - Extension of 1600 linear feet of water line and boring under the railroad tracks to close the loop in the system along the bypass

• **Centerville** Shipps Bend Industrial Site \$310,650 - Construction of access road and new wastewater line to the property

Coffee County IB Joint Industrial Park \$163,350 - Clearing of 16.5 acres of the 48.62 acre Select TN site
Dresden IDB Pad Ready Site \$290,700 - Paving of the access road to allow the property to be easily accessible and more appealing to industrial prospects

• **Gibson County** Industrial Site South \$495,000 - Relocation of 69kV transmission ILine which splits the property

• **Humboldt** Gibson County Industrial Site North \$356,400 - Extension of 3200 linear feet of 12 inch water main

• Lawrence County JECDB Team Lawrence Commerce Park East and West \$309,985 - Widen and develop County Farm Road to meet state industrial access requirements and create better access

• **Montgomery County** IDB County Corporate Business Park \$212,264 - Clearing of approximately 70 acres of trees that will allow for both better access to the central part of the site and increase interest through preliminary land work being completed

• **Pulaski** Industrial Park South Lot 5 \$357,300 - Extension of 2500 linear feet of sewer line

• **Ripley** Walker East Industrial Park \$485,459 - Construction of 1000 linear feet of frontage road and the widening of Highland Street to



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# WAUFORD

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Maryville 908 W Broadway Ave. Maryville, TN 37801 865/984-9638 include a third lane for turning onto the highway

• **Roane County** IDB Jones Road Site \$356,072 - Clearing and grading for a building pad to accommodate a minimum 100,000 sq. ft. building

• Shelbyville 23 North Business Park (Commerce Business Park) \$500,000 - Construction of paved two lane industrial access road with utilities and park sign

• **Tiptonville** Lake County Industrial Site at Cates Landing \$500,000 - Construction of wastewater lagoon improvements and the installation of approximately 18,000 linear feet of 12-inch force main

• Union City Northwest Tennessee Regional Industrial Center \$450,000 – Grading of approximately 15.5 acres to create a pad ready site for a 105,000 square foot building that is expandable to 200,000 sq. ft.

• Washington County Telford \$473,405 - Grading of the 21.7-acre site to accommodate a 150,000 sq. ft. facility

Each application was supported by the community's senator and representatives in the Legislature.

## Tullahoma broadband

**BROADBAND** *from Page 1* communities as a 'one government' partner.

USDA support is provided by the Rural Utilities Service, which provides critical infrastructure including electricity generation and transmission, water and wastewater facilities and telecommunications for rural America. Since 2009, USDA has awarded \$6.7 billion for almost 550 projects to improve telecommunications infrastructure in rural communities.

EPA support is provided through the Office of Sustainable Communities, which helps communities develop in ways that protect public health and the natural environment by creating walkable, livable, economically vibrant communities, and supporting reinvestment in existing neighborhoods.

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## Water and Wastewater Systems



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## ASSISTANT PUBLIC SERVICES DIRECTOR

WHITE HOUSE. The city of White House is currently accepting applications for the position of assistant public services director. Under administrative direction, directs, manages, supervises and coordinates assigned programs and activities within the public services department. Coordinates assigned activities with other divisions and outside agencies; and provides highly responsible and complex administrative support to the public services director. This is a broad classification with individual positions assigned to specific functional areas; duties and assignments may overlap depending on the operational needs of the department and staffing levels. A bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering or related field required. Must have five years of increasingly responsible public works related engineering experience in design or project management. Visit www.cityofwhitehouse.com for full job description and application. Applications and resumes should be returned to the HR office located at 105 College Street or emailed to abrewton@cityofwhitehouse.com.Salary Range: \$56,695.93 - \$69,078.48 annually Application Deadline: June 23, 2016. EOE

#### ASST TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

COLLIERVILLE. This position performs highly responsible, complex professional and difficult work assisting the city administrator with the management of all city programs and activities. Requires a bachelor's degree in public administration, or closely related field; and five years' experience at a responsible level in local government; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Will require attendance at meetings outside regular business hours. Must possess and maintain a valid driver's license. Salary is \$72,976.00 to \$125,100 (DOQ) annually plus full benefits package. Applications may be obtained at the Human Resources Department, 400 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN., 38017, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Applicants must fill out the official Town of Collierville application to be considered for this position. Pursuant to Tennessee open records law, applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. This position will remain open until filled. EOE

#### ASSOCIATE PLANNER

BRISTOL. The city of Bristol, TN, is accepting applications for the following position of associate planner. Salary Range: \$38,850 - \$61,925. The purpose of the position is to administer, interpret and implement land use regulations, codes and ordinances for the planning and development of the city. Position is responsible for conducting studies and collecting and analyzing data for application to the city's comprehensive plan. Objective is to preserve and enhance the city's natural structural aesthetic land use and development through practical application of the city's land development code and all established zoning and code regulations. This candidate must have a bachelor degree in urban planning or related field; supplemented by one to two years experience in planning or zoning administrative work with an emphasis on land use planning and planning review; or an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience. To be considered, candidates must fill out an application and upload a resume at http://bristoltn.org/jobs.aspx . EOE. Contact: Pam Stewart, Administrative Specialist, City of Bristol Tennessee, P. O. Box 1189, Bristol, Tennessee 37621-1189 (423) 989-5526

the city. The service territory includes a 6.3 square mile service area with approximately 3,000 meters. The electric utility director is appointed by and works under the general supervision of the city manager. Responsibilities include: plans, organizes, coordinates, supervises and evaluates programs, plans, services, staffing, and equipment related to the construction, maintenance and operation of the electric distribution system. Education equivalent to a bachelor's degree in business or public administration, or a related field required. Ten years related experience in electric or utilities/business management, or equivalent combination of education and experience. Valid driver's license required. Open until filled. A completed application may be accompanied with a resume. A job description and additional application information is available by contacting the city of Sparta, P.O. Box 30, Sparta, TN 38583; by phone-931.836.3248; or by email- spartacity03@ frontier.com. EOE.

#### **EVENTS COORDINATOR**

COLLIERVILLE. The purpose of this position is to perform professional, administrative work in planning, implementing, organizing, supervising and administering a variety of programs and events, as well as promoting the town of Collierville as a destination for cultural activities, shopping and outdoor activities. Requires a bachelor's degree with major course work in recreation administration, marketing, or a closely related field; supplemented by three years of administrative experience in recreational programming, event and program planning, supervising, and desktop publishing, at least one of which must have been in a public relations capacity; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this job. First aid and C.P.R. certification required within six months of date of employment. Incumbent may work late hours, weekends and holidays, as necessary. Requires a valid driver's license. Salary is \$37,043.00 - \$63,502.00 annually (DOQ) with full benefits package. Applications and complete job descriptions are available at the Human Resources Office, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, Tennessee, 38017, M-F. 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. The official application of the Town of Collierville must be filled out and may be accompanied by a resume. Applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. Position open until filled. EOE

#### FINANCE DIRECTOR

BRENTWOOD. The city is currently seeking an experienced professional to serve as finance director. This position, which reports directly to the city manager, oversees a small and talented staff in the finance department and directs all accounting and financial operations of the city. The finance director oversees purchasing, accounts payable, utility billing, accounting, auditing, and revenue collection services and activities. In addition the finance director performs a variety of professional level financial management responsibilities including analysis, preparation, and maintenance of the annual budget, financial records, statements, and reports with significant responsibility and interaction regarding the annual financial audit. The ideal candidate will have a broad based knowledge of governmental accounting and methods of financial control and reporting as well as outstanding organizational skills and a focus on timely delivery of reports and projects. The position requires a bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, or closely related area (CPA or advanced degree preferred with consideration given for TN CMFO designation), with eight years of progressively responsible experience in governmental accounting, auditing, or related areas and experience in a supervisory capacity of accounting functions and personnel; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Previous experience as a local government finance director or assistant finance director or equivalent is preferred. Salary Range: \$76,000-\$114,500 (starting salary is DOQ). Interested parties can apply by visiting the city website at www.Brentwood-TN.org/employment. Questions should be directed to Mike Worsham, Human Resources Director, at 615-371-0060.

#### MANAGER, TOURISM

COLLIERVILLE. The purpose of this position is to perform professional, administrative work in the developing and implementation of plans and programs to attract and sustain cultural tourism and business in the Town of Collierville. Requires a bachelor's degree with major course work in Business Administration, Marketing, Tourism, Communications or a closely related field; supplemented by 4 years' experience in developing and implementing strategic initiatives, one of which must have been in a public relations capacity; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. First aid and C.P.R. certification required within six months of date of employment. Incumbent may work late hours, weekends and holidays, as necessary. Requires a valid driver's license. Salary is \$39,977.00 - \$69,203.00 annually (DOQ) with full benefits package. Applications and complete job descriptions are available at the Human Resources Office. 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, Tennessee, 38017, M-F, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. The official application of the Town of Collierville must be filled out and may be accompanied by a resume. Applications and resumes are subject to disclosure. Position open until filled. EOE

#### POLICE CHIEF

SAVANNAH. Savannah is seeking an experienced law enforcement professional to serve as chief of police for the city's police department. Savannah is a progressive and growing city and an excellent community in which to live and become a visible and actively involved community leader with a strong commitment to community policing. The successful candidate should possess a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, or a closely related field; be a POST Certified Officer, or capable of being POST certified; and have a minimum of seven years of law enforcement experience with proven command and supervisory experience, or any combination of education, training and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job. A high level of communications skills, both written and verbal, will be essential

qualifications. The successful candidate should convey a sense of stability; inspire confidence, respect, trust, and a sense of mission; maintain a good working relationship with other area law enforcement agencies; and show leadership consistent with the elected city commission's shared vision, values, and leadership philosophy while managing and directing all departmental operations. The chief of police position is an exempt, at-will employee working under the general direction of the city manager. The chief oversees the protection of life and property in the city while being a strong administrator in a constrained fiscal environment. The chief advises the city manager of critical issues, decisions, and actions. The chief assists in development and oversees the department's budget and controls and monitors expenses within budget parameters. The police department currently is staffed with 19 total full-time POST Certified positions, including the Chief, and two support staff positions. The salary will range from \$52,500 to \$65,000 DOQ; plus a comprehensive benefits package. The city of Savannah is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Resumes will be accepted until June 17, 2016, at 5:00 P.M., C.D.T. All interested applicants must submit a resume and cover letter along with three personal and five professional references to: Attn: Garry Welch, City Manager, City of Savannah, 140 Main Street, Savannah, Tennessee 38372.

#### POLICE OFFICER

DRESDEN. The City of Dresden is seeking applications for the position of police officer. This full-time position will be eligible for full benefits. This position requires the applicant to be P.O.S.T. certified in the State of Tennessee, pass an extensive background check, physical and drug screen. Applications may be submitted to: Police Chief Randal Walker, 117 West Main Street, Dresden, TN 38225. Questions may be directed to Police Chief Randal Walker at (731) 364-2270.

#### **POLICE OFFICERS**

FAIRVIEW. The city of Fairview is accepting applications for Police Officers with the Fairview Police Department. Applicants must be P.O.S.T. Certified to be considered for this position. A pre-employment physical and drug screen, as well as a psychological exam will be required. Application may be obtained online at <u>www.fairview-tn.</u> <u>org</u> or at Fairview City Hall during normal business hours and are in two parts. It will include a background investigation waiver, as well as an application. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. Submit applications in person or mail to the attention of: City Recorder, 7100 City Center Way, Fairview, TN 37062. The city of Fairview is an equal opportunity employer.

#### POLICE OFFICER

MCMINNVILLE. The city of McMinnville is accepting applications for a Police Officer with the McMinnville Police Department. Minimum qualifications include; high school graduate or equivalent; at least 21 years of age; ability to qualify with approved firearms; valid Tennessee driver's license; availability to work different schedules with varying times. Post drug screen, physical and psychological testing is required. Prefer certified police officers or graduates of a Tennessee Post Approved Basic Police Academy. Full-time position with benefits Qualified applicants may apply at City Hall, Human Resources (3rd Floor), 101 East Main St., McMinnville, TN 37110. For more information, to apply online, or to view the full job description please visit our website at www.mcminnvilletenn.com Open until filled. The city of McMinnville does not discriminate based on race, color or national origin in federal or state sponsored programs, pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. (42 U.S.C. 2000d). EOE

#### STREET MAINTENANCE

FAIRVIEW. The city of Fairview Community Services Department is accepting applications for a full-time Street Maintenance Worker. Applicants must possess a minimum of a High School Diploma or equivalent and pass a pre-employment physical including drug screen. A more complete job description is available on the city of Fairview website. Applications may be obtained at Fairview City Hall or online at www.fairview-tn.org. Submit applications to the City of Fairview, Attn: City Recorder, 7100 City Center Way, Fairview, TN 37062. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. The city of Fairview is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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The demands facing government entities are more challenging than ever. So our specialized client teams work side by side with you to turn challenges into opportunities. To help you do more with less with greater efficiency, transparency and control. After more than a century of experience serving the public sector, we're here with advice and a range of solutions including credit, treasury and liquidity. Bringing the capabilities of a global financial services organization to the state and community level.

#### DIRECTOR

SPARTA ELECTRIC SYSTEM. The city of Sparta is seeking qualified applicants for the position of director of the Sparta Electric System.. The successful candidate will perform complex professional and difficult administrative work overseeing electric utilities of

## Tom Boyd Senior Client Manager Bank of America Merrill Lynch Government Banking 1.615.749.3618 thomas.boyd@baml.com bankofamerica.com/government



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## The 'Silver Tsunami' has arrived in government

## **BY MIKE MACIAG** Governing Magazine

For years, there have been warnings about the forthcoming retirements of a large segment of the public sector's most experienced workers. Now, it appears those retirements may be accelerating across many state and local governments.

A new Center for State and Local Government Excellence survey indicates that governments are experiencing an uptick in retirements. More than half — 54 percent - of surveyed governments reported an increase in retirements last year from 2014, while just 10 percent reported a decrease.

"The looming talent crisis that we've been talking about for years is right on our doorstep," said Elizabeth Kellar, the center's president.

Older workers in all sectors pushed back their retirement in the years following the Great Recession. In the center's 2012 survey, about 46 percent of human resources representatives reported workers were postponing their retirements. That figure has declined each year since, with only 21 percent reporting retirement postponements in the latest survey.

Baby boomers at or near retirement age make up a large share of senior-level managers in many agencies. Compared to the private sector, public-sector workers tend to be older and possess higher levels of education.

In Virginia, nearly 12 percent of state workers were eligible for retirement, and another quarter of the workforce was eligible to retire within five years as of last year, according to the state Department of Human Resource Management. Similarly in Washington state, 31 percent of executive branch employees are age 55 or older.

While it's rare for a large swath of public employees to retire all at once, the expiration of union contracts or cuts to retirement benefits have led to spikes in retirements in a few states. In New Jersey, for example, union officials contend that threats of benefit cuts by Gov. Chris Christie led more workers to retire last year. What's been called the "Silver Tsunami" will instead play out over a number of years given that the youngest baby boomers just turned 52.

Senior-level fire department staff are one segment that's been hit particularly hard with retirements, said Kellar. That's partially because public safety personnel are generally eligible to retire earlier than other public employees.

The survey also found that 40 percent of governments experienced year-over-year increases in employees quitting (excluding retirements), while just 11 percent reported declines. That's up from last year, when 28 percent of responding governments said more employees were quitting. Kellar said poor salary increases or pay freezes that have persisted for years may be one explanation. Another contributing factor could be large numbers of younger workers seeking new employment as they tend to switch jobs more than veteran employees.

At the same time, governments report that they're also hiring more workers. Sixty percent of survey respondents hired more employees last year than in 2014, compared to just 8 percent hiring fewer workers. More recently, employment estimates published by the federal Labor Department suggest overall local government employment picked up modestly over the first few months of this year.

Meanwhile, state government job estimates have remained mostly flat for more than a year now. The extent to which individual local governments are able to hire more workers or replace those who retire varies greatly as property taxes and other major sources of revenue have yet to fully recover from the recession in some jurisdictions.

Not surprisingly, recruiting and retaining qualified workers were identified as the most important workforce issues to governments in the survey. Not too far behind were succession planning and staff development.

That's something the Los Angeles County, Calif., government — which saw retirements climb 20 percent in 2015 - is already working on. To prepare the workforce, management-level employees participate in experienced-based and classroom learning programs. Each of the county's 34 departments are expected to maintain and carry out their own succession plans.

Most participants in the survey, which was conducted this spring, represented local governments and were members of either the International Public Management Association for Human Resources or National Association of State Personnel Executives.



#### June 18: Oak Ridge

Lavender Festival in Historic Jackson Square, held 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., celebrates health, herbs, and the environment. You'll find live music under the large festival tent, shopping with artisan vendors, everything from homemade jam to fine art, a lively children's tent, and cooking demonstrations and educational presentations throughout the day. For more info, visit www.jacksonsquarelavenderfestival.org.

## June 18: Bell Buckle

22nd Annual RC-MoonPie Festival, held 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Held the third Saturday in June for 22 years, the April 2016 USA Today's food and wine guide chose the Bell Buckle RC-MoonPie Festival as one of the sweetest festivals in the nation. For more info, call (931)-389-9663.

## June 23-26: Knoxville

Kuumba Festival, The largest African American cultural arts festival in East Tennessee showcases the extraordinary Kuumba Watoto Dance and Drum Ensemble, artists, entertainers, demonstrations, live music, food vendors and the African Marketplace, featuring an array of arts and crafts that will fill this four day event. For more info, visit www. kuumbafestival.com.

## June 25: Alcoa

FreedomFest 2016, Alcoa's 38th edition of the overwhelmingly popular Independence Day celebration is set for Saturday, June 25th from 6 p.m. until 11:p.m. at the Alcoa Duck Pond. The entire community is invited to attend the exciting family fun filled event. The world renowned Pyro Shows, Inc., a fireworks production company headquartered in LaFollette, will again provide the event's patriotic firepower. For more information, call 865-380-4787 or email freedomfest@cityofalcoa-tn.gov.

## June 30-July 2: Jonesborough

Jonesborough Days Festival, Take part in historic Jonesborough's story through its patriotic celebration featuring live music, storytelling, a parade, fireworks, children's entertainment, craft vendors, games, food and much more. For information, visit Jonesborough Days on Facebook or call 423-753-1010

## **UT-MTAS JULY MAP CLASSES**

## MUNICIPAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

This course will provide a summary of legislation passed by the Tennessee General Assembly during the 2016 Session that will impact municipalities. Public Acts touching every aspect of municipal operations will be discussed. The course will be conducted by MTAS legal consultants and will offer participants the opportunity to ask questions about any new legislation.

Target Audience: Elected of-Credits: 4 CLE/4 CPE/ CMFO ficials, appointed officials, city (Financial) (PA)

attorneys, city recorders, code enforcement officials and utility and public works directors and managers

Times: All classes are scheduled for 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. local time.

## Dates & Locations

Dates & Locations	
July 12	Jackson
July 13	Franklin
July 14	Knoxville
	G 11 1

July 15 Collegedale July 19 Kingsport



To register for a course, go to www.mtas.tennessee.edu, or fax to 865-974-0423. Credit card payments must register online with the Solution Point System: http:// www.solutionpoint.tennessee.edu/ MTAS or by invoice. For registration assistance, call 865-974-0413. Or for more information, contact

Tennessee Municipal Attorneys Assn. Tennessee Municipal Judges Conference Tenn. Chapter, American Public Works Tennessee Recreation and Parks Assn. Tennessee Chapter, American Planning Tennessee Personnel Management Assn. Tennessee Assn. of Public Purchasing TN Section, Institute of Transport Tennessee Public Transportation Assoc. Assn. of Independent and Municipal Schools

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Kurt Frederick, training consultant, at 615-253-6385.

## No loan is too large or too small



The city of Kingston closed a loan through the TMBF loan program in the amount of \$250,000 for a capital outlay note issued for parks and recreational facilities.



See us for your special projects needs. (615) 255-1561



The city of Jackson closed a variable rate loan through the TMBF loan program in the amount of \$17.4 million to finance its three-year capital improvement plan.

Tennessee Municipal League 2015-2016 Officers and Directors

Use QR Code Scanner App to open Marketplace Ads

## Be sure to visit the TML Marketplace at TML's Annual Conference June 12-13 at the Gatlinburg Convention Center —

The Exhibit Hall will be open Sunday, June 12, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and on Monday, June 13, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The TML Annual Conference is fast approaching and the Exhibitor's Program plays a significant role in the entire conference experience. The services and products presented by the Conference Exhibitors help city officials solve problems and serve their community. Many city and town officials look to convention exhibitors for the latest information about the techniques, products, and services their municipalities need. Be sure and check out some of this year's highlighted vendors. By scanning the QR code with your smartphone app, you can learn more about each company listed below and featured in our on-line TML Marketplace showroom.



## Gatlinburg Mayor Mike Werner discusses tourism, local growth

## **BY LINDA BRYANT**

As mayor of Gatlinburg, Mike Werner oversees a small mountain city with a population of about 3,900. But in many ways, he might as well be dealing with a large metropolis.

Adjacent to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the country. During peak season as many as 60,000 tourists pass through the city every day. Thousands of them spend the night within the city limits or in nearby resorts, cabins and chalets. They patronize local restaurants, entertain themselves at some of Gatlinburg's signature tourist attractions and buy souvenirs in local retail shops.

Visitors also flock to Gatlinburg to get married. The city hosts more weddings than any other American city with the exception of Las Vegas.

Werner grew up in the small farm town of Princeville in North Central, Illinois. After attending college and playing football at Elmhurst College near Chicago, he moved to Gatlinburg. He settled into a job selling and managing property rentals at The Highlands Condominiums, and he never looked back.

Now, over three decades later, he's one of the city's most well-known citizens.

"I fell in love with Gatlinburg the first time I visited, and within two years, I moved here," Werner said. "I've never once regretted it. There's no place I'd rather live."

Werner's real estate and property management career, which was increasingly successful, often put him in front of city and county government officials. He eventually got involved with the Gatlinburg City Commission in the late 1990s, and his experience in civic affairs grew from there.

"The mayor is appointed by the Gatlinburg City Commission every year," Werner said. "I have been appointed seven times to this parttime position. We rely very heavily on a city manager and our city departments. I couldn't do this job without them."

Gatlinburg City Manager Cindy Ogle calls Werner a "significant leader."

"Mayor Werner is very well regarded," Ogle said. "He's a visionary as it relates to some of our major capital projects — the renovation of the Mills Conference Center, the installation of underground utilities and the building of the Rocky Top Sports World." [Mayor Werner talks about these projects in the interview below.]

During football season, Werner can often be found behind the microphone at Gatlinburg-Pittman High School, providing commentary for his favorite team. He has seven children, eight grandchildren and works alongside his wife, Cindy, at The Highlands Condominiums.

## TT&C: You're a long-time resident of Gatlinburg, but not a native. What brought you to the area?

MW: I moved to Sevier County in 1980

**MW:** I could go on and on about our great city departments — police, fire, paramedics, street department, and garbage removal. They not only take care of our residents; they take care of more than 10.5 million visitors a year. It's quite a juggling act. It takes a lot of really gifted and talented people to provide service to that many people.

If there's ever an emergency, which doesn't happen often, all the departments pull together. It's a great thing to be a part of.

The marketing of the city is ultimately quite critical. We have to be on top of it because tourism is our major industry. We have outstanding volunteer boards in Gatlinburg, including a planning board, and a redevelopment and housing board. They make our jobs so much easier. I'm really impressed with the people who serve on these boards. They are often performing thankless jobs, and they don't get paid a thing. Our volunteers have great spirit. They want to see Gatlinburg succeed, and we do.



Gatlinburg Mayor Mike Werner



From left to right: Gatlinburg City Commissioner Don Smith, Commissioner Mike Helton, Commissioner Jerry Hays, Mayor Mike Werner, City Manager Cindy Ogle, Vice Mayor Mark McCown, and City Judge Jerry McCarter

"I'm thankful that my fellow commissioners and city manager are so good at what they do. Everyone is united in promoting a friendly, safe, family-oriented city." -Mayor Mike Werner

## TT&C: Can you give an example of one of your volunteer boards?

**MW**: The Environmental Design Review Board is just one example. When you have a design for a building or a sign you go before this board. They make recommendations. We have fought hard for things that help maintain our quaint town atmosphere. For example, we have ordinances in place that disallow electronic or reader board signs. We want to continue to promote and maintain our great charm.

There are Gatlinburg residents from families who lived in the national park before the park was born. They take a lot of pride in Gatlinburg. These families are very giving. They have contributed greatly to our success. A lot of our traditional families are still big stakeholders and volunteers. They have a lot of influence in keeping Gatlinburg beautiful. the off-season. It's more effective to think in terms year-round rather than strictly about your peak season business.

## TT&C: How was the city impacted by the Great Recession? Have you recovered from it?

**MW**: Tourism dropped off as a result of the recession. Real estate dried up totally, but thankfully it's come back. We were very thankful that the impact of the recession was not as bad as it could have been. We had a zero-percent budget during the recession. We met it. tremely valuable to us. It's the country's largest organization of independent artisans. They create beautiful handmade items — pottery, woven baskets, quilts, paintings, dulcimers, and hand-dipped candles. So many people come to Gatlinburg to find crafts that can't be found in your typical shopping mall. We also have Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, a historic school that attracts students from all over the world.

## TT&C: Other cities in your county, particularly Pigeon Forge and Sevierville, are also dependent on tourism. Do you work together on projects?

**MW**: No matter where you are in Sevier County you're dealing with a tourism-based economy. We try to work together as much as we can. Pigeon Forge has really invested in baseball. They have the Ripken Experience, a beautiful venue for baseball-related events. I can see bigger sports events coming here because of Rocky Top Sports World and the Ripken Experience. I envision events that will make use of all the sports venues in the county. We just had the AAU girls' national championship at Rocky Top Sports World. It was packed and turned out to be one of the most exciting sports events we've hosted.

We get along very well with the other cities. I regularly get together with other elected officials, both county and city. Everyone knows we have to work together in order to remain competitive. We all want to do the right thing for this area. We have a solid waste facility that's one of the very best, and all of the cities participate in the plant. It's a huge composting plant and one of the few of its kind in the world.

## TT&C: What are some of the biggest challenges you face? Are there some things you'd like to see happen?

**MW:** We need to continue to look at smart redevelopment. We could be a little more aggressive in trying to recruit businesses that complement our community. When you have growth you have to always think about improving your infrastructure. You need to be proactive instead of reactive and think more and more about the future. We need to ask ourselves, "What can we act on now that will prevent future problems down the road?"

Growth and development are always a challenge. We have an excellent planning department. We have different (development) zones in the city. Everybody wants to squeeze everything they can into every square foot, and that can sometimes bring tension. Parking is always a challenge even though we have more available parking downtown than ever.

I have visions that Gatlinburg in the future will have more pedestrian-only areas. I could see closing off the Main Street and parkway like we do during our annual Winter Magic Kickoff and Chili Cook Off. It creates a really great atmosphere.

TT&C: With so many yearly visitors do you have issues with crime and littering? MW: Thankfully, we have very little crime. Having well-run departments and excellent city leadership keeps many issues such as crime at bay. Our city manager, Cindy Ogle, does an amazing job. All things get done in a timely manner. We try to promote good civic behaviors such as no littering. We have bearproof garbage containers, and we work with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to keep people safe.

because of a connection with an interdenominational church group. I got involved with the chamber of commerce and started selling condominiums. I created a rental company in 1986, and I've been doing that for over 30 years. It's been interesting — and exciting — to be involved with the chamber and the convention and visitors bureau. I chaired a special committee to market the city for two years, and learned quite a lot during that time. I ended up running for the Gatlinburg City Commission in 1999, and I've been on the commission ever since.

## TT&C: What are some recent highlights or accomplishments?

**MW:** We've done some interesting and substantial things in the past few years. We buried power lines through downtown, and it has really enhanced the community. We added a huge addition to our convention center. It's a beautiful building, and now we have the capacity to attract a wider array of events. The convention business is about 20 percent of our overall business; it's very important to us. [The Great Hall at the convention center provides 67,000 square feet of exhibit space and accommodates 6,000 people and 350 booths. The adjoining W.L. Mills Conference Center provides an additional 50,000 square feet, a 17,000-squarefoot ballroom and 18 meeting rooms.]

Rocky Top Sports World, a joint-venture between Gatlinburg and Sevier County, opened in 2014. It's a \$20 million sports facility that operates in conjunction with the high school. It's really a game-changer, and it's been a huge success. We have about 20 basketball courts, 20 volleyball courts and seven outdoor artificial turf fields for soccer, lacrosse, football, and cheerleading. [In its first fiscal year Rocky Top Sports World surpassed its targets by 69 percent. Economic goals were set at \$10 million but were recorded at \$17.5 million.]

We recently put the Gatlinburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority in place. It consists of a five-person board. We've been able to identify some blighted areas. It's important to understand that to redevelop Gatlinburg we usually have to tear down and rebuild. We are really tight for land. We have 3,800-plus residents but we can often attract more than 60,000 visitors a day.

TT&C: You have an unusual situation because millions of people who aren't residents use your services and enjoy your city. Arguably, you have some of the most complex issues of a town your size in the state. What are some of the secrets to making it work?

### TT&C: Services such as maintaining safe streets and having efficient garbage collection are critical to Gatlinburg because of the many thousands of tourists staying in the city at any given time. How do you deal with your infrastructure issues?

**MW**: Tourists are charged an additional tax. There's lodging tax and a restaurant tax. We sell an attractions pass. We have to have the added taxes because it would be hard for the citizens alone to pay for the infrastructure for 10.5 million visitors. Additionally, all businesses pay a gross receipts tax.

It's important for all cities to have stable governments and leadership. It's critical to have people who are on the same page and want the same thing for the community. Sometimes that's hard to do, but I can say that we usually stay on top of it in Gatlinburg. I'm thankful that my fellow commissioners and city manager are so good at what they do. Everyone is united in promoting a friendly, safe, family-oriented city. I'm always preaching about the importance of customer service, and I think that's an issue we're all on the same page with. Tourists can go anywhere. They don't have to come to Gatlinburg. If they come here, have a good time and leave with a good experience, we get a huge repeat customer base.

## TT&C: Do you think there's a lesson in this for other small towns and cities in the state who want to build a stronger tourism economy?

**MW**: I'd recommend that other communities think about what's different about their area. What can be developed into something tourists can get interested in? It doesn't have to be something huge; it can be a niche activity or event. Anything that relates to heritage and history is a good place to start. My advice is, "Don't be afraid to be a little aggressive. Reach out to travel writers who might give you a chance." There's no doubt that tourism is a revenue-driver that can be further developed in many places in the state.

I'd also encourage other cities to think about what they can do to create more off-season business. Gatlinburg has a lot happening in the off-season now. For example, a lot of events at Rocky Top Sports World are held in The last couple of years our economy has done extremely well. We are in a new phase of growth. You see new hotels, restaurants and retail. There are new developments on Airport Road — a new Hampton Suites, Courtyard Marriott and Holiday Inn. Several 100 rooms are coming online.

We don't have the amount of available real estate many other areas do. As a result, we're looking at a lot of teardowns and redevelopment. Plus, there are only certain areas we can redevelop. The redevelopment of Highway 321 is one of them. Rocky Top Sports World is having an impact on that part of Gatlinburg. When you see McDonald's run out of food several times, you know you're growing. We love the new development, but we also want to make sure it's a good fit with the city.

## TT&C: Can you tell us something we might not already know about Gatlinburg?

**MW:** There are so many jobs in Sevier County right now. Every time you turn around there's a job fair. It's almost to the point of having more jobs than people to fill them. There's a family-like atmosphere here. A lot of people have lived and worked here for decades. People are also continuing to relocate to Gatlinburg because we have four seasons to enjoy. Our cost of living is low compared to many other places.

There are all kinds of facts about Gatlinburg that people might not know. The schools in Gatlinburg — Pi Beta Phi Elementary and Gatlinburg Pittman High School — are successful. The high school has more than 30 students that have scored over 30 on their ACTs.

Did you know the No. 1 thing people want to see when they come here is a black bear? There's so much to do here that you can't do it all in one trip. That's a factor that keeps people coming back again and again. We are a great draw for hiking enthusiasts. The national park has over 800 miles of trails. Plus, we have a wonderful ski lodge and resort here — Ober Gatlinburg. It's just amazing that we have our own ski resort right in our backyard. It's the only one in Tennessee.

## TT&C: There's so much to do in Gatlinburg. Please keep going and tell us more about things about your city you take pride in.

**MW:** We have been blessed with some state grants that have really helped with our quality of life. We have an awesome trolley system. It's really a unique and affordable transportation system. People love to come to Gatlinburg and ride the trolleys to our one-of-a-kind arts and crafts community. That community is ex-

## TT&C: What is your relationship with Tennessee Municipal League?

**MW**: I was elected last year to the board, and I'm thrilled to be asked to serve. Gatlinburg receives so many benefits from TML, so it's important for us to maintain a good working relationship. We always enjoy going to TML's annual gatherings, which have taken place in great Tennessee cities like Nashville, Chattanooga, Memphis, Knoxville, and Murfreesboro. We're thrilled to be hosting this year's conference in Gatlinburg. We hope people get a chance to enjoy all the great things our city offers.

## TT&C: What are your interests outside of work?

**MW:** The thing about Gatlinburg is that it's the kind of a place where you can have a lifestyle that focuses heavily on family, friends and church. My life is centered on those three things. I love to ski and hike, and I'm in the right place for those two activities, too.

### TT&C: Do you have a specific leadership style? How do you deal with situations in the community where there's not uniform agreement?

MW: When I first ran for office there was a lot of division in the community over several different issues. I ran on a platform of bringing unity to the city. A prime example happened when we built our new convention center. A lot of people didn't want to tear down Mills Auditorium. They had childhood memories of attending dances, playing volleyball or going to other memorable events. I encouraged a compromise to keep the auditorium, tear down the existing buildings around it and redo the existing great banquet hall. It ended up being a gorgeous facility. I'm proud of how it turned out. I like to let people have a lot of freedom, but I also expect a lot out of them. When you expect great service and performance out of people, they usually meet your expectations. Of course, I like to treat people the way I want to be treated. You want to be fair, kind and always expect the best.