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Closing of Main Street retailers impacting cities

BY CHRISTINA MCFARLAND
NLC Research Manager

Locally owned retailers operating on Main Street appear to be the hardest hit by the current economic downturn, more so than retailers with a national presence, according to city officials. *The State of America's Cities: Local Retail Slowdown* survey conducted by the National League of Cities (NLC) showed that in three out of five cities across the country, local retailers on Main Street have closed their doors in the past year.

"Locally owned businesses are vital to the health and makeup of a community," said NLC President, Kathleen M. Novak. "The relationships established among local businesses create a strong network with broad economic dependencies. With their loss, the impacts can be enormous on a community. Many individuals will be unemployed and cities will have less money to provide basic and much-needed services."

Sixty-four percent of city officials report that retail sales are down. These trends are having troubling impacts on cities nationwide, many of which depend on sales taxes to support local services. Three-fourths of city officials report that declining revenue is a pressing local concern.

More than seven in 10 city officials also note that poor retail sales and increased store closings are negatively impacting other local

See **RETAIL** on Page 6

Tennessee's impact

In Tennessee, retail sales are also down. According to the University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research, when comparing sales tax collections for the third quarter in 2008 to the third quarter in 2007, furniture and home furnishings saw more than a 6 percent decline; apparel and accessory stores sales were down by 5 percent; food stores were reporting a 3 percent loss; general merchandise stores were down by more than 2 percent; and eating and drinking establishments were reporting a 1 percent decline.

State data also shows a loss of 14,300 retail jobs in Tennessee in January. Analysts attribute the spike in retail job losses to dim holiday sales and anticipated weaker sales this year as consumers rein in spending.

February revenue numbers released by the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, reveal an even gloomier picture. For the seventh consecutive month this fiscal year, sales taxes and corporate income taxes have experienced negative growth over a year ago.

Sales tax collections were \$53.8 million less than the estimate for February. The February growth rate was negative 7.88 percent. The year-to-date growth

See **TENNESSEE** on Page 6

Bredesen presents 2009-10 state budget

Stimulus funds help divert 1,700 in layoffs

BY CAROLE GRAVES
TML Communications Director

Reiterating that it's not a silver bullet, Gov. Phil Bredesen told lawmakers while unveiling his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010 that federal recovery funds will help buy time and ease what could have been substantial departmental cuts and massive employee layoffs.

"What I am trying to achieve with this budget is sensible, conservative long-range fiscal stewardship; to recognize these funds for the one-time help that they are, and to use them wisely and compassionately, and most of all, when this recession is over, to leave our state looking to the future strong and independent," said Gov. Bredesen.

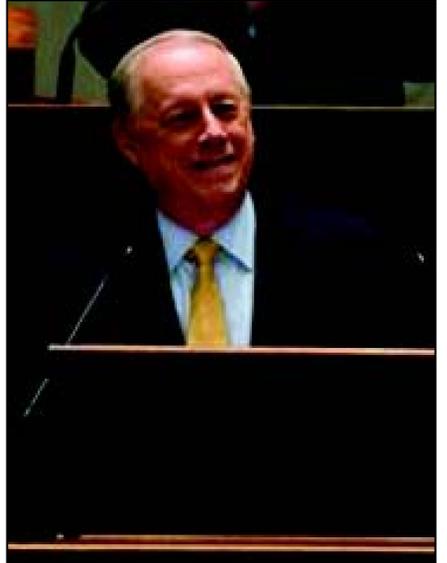
In his address to a joint session of the General Assembly on March 23, Bredesen outlined a multi-year proposal for using funds provided by the American and Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA); plans for addressing a \$1.1 billion shortfall in the current budget year, and a four-year plan for steering the state through an economic recession that includes phasing in a 12 percent

reduction in state government by 2012.

"This budget is presented in an economic environment more difficult than any we have been through since the Great Depression," said Bredesen. "We are on the one hand faced with an unprecedented downturn in state revenues; on the other, we temporarily have unprecedented amounts of federal cash coming from the President's economic Recovery Act."

Dating back to August 2007, revenues collections have continued to underperform at record levels. State collections for the current budget year reflect a \$1.1 billion shortfall. Without the ARRA funds, state agencies were bracing for 14-15 percent cuts, which included layoffs estimated to be some 1,600 to 1,700 state employees. With the ARRA funds, departmental cuts have been kept to minimal - averaging some 3.5 percent - and only 80 positions have been eliminated.

ARRA funds for Tennessee are estimated to be some \$5 billion. Of



In his address, Gov. Bredesen outlined a multi-year proposal for American and Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

that, Congress has specifically earmarked approximately \$2.9 billion, or some 58 percent, for pre-determined purposes, including \$490 million for the food stamp program, an additional \$318 million for unemployment insurance, and \$573 million for road and bridge infrastructure.

See **BUDGET** on Page 3

Legislative Conference provides forum to educate, update, network

BY CAROLE GRAVES
& VICTORIA SOUTH

Plugging a \$1.1 billion deficit in the state budget, how the federal stimulus package will affect the state and local governments, and which TDOT projects qualify under the Recovery and Reinvestment Act, were among the many topics discussed during the Tennessee Municipal League's Annual Legislative Conference.

Held March 23-24 in Nashville, the two-day conference provided an excellent forum for city officials to interact with their legislators and to be updated on the many legislative issues currently being addressed by the Tennessee General Assembly.

John Morgan

At the forefront of everyone's mind is the state's financial situation and balancing the budget while facing a \$1.1 billion deficit. John Morgan, deputy to the governor, helped kick off the conference by providing an update on the state's financial situation and how some \$5 billion in federal funds allocated to the state under Obama's America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) will be distributed over the next two years.

"We are facing extraordinary and difficult times," said Morgan. "This is the worst financial shape this country has gone through since the Great Depression and the worst in terms of revenue collections that Tennessee has experienced in modern history."

State collections for the current budget year reflect a \$1.1 billion shortfall, with actual collections 8 percent less than a year ago. Consumption taxes and corporate taxes have been hit the hardest. Morgan said that it would be 2012 before tax collections will be greater than 2008.

Morgan acknowledged that the some \$5 billion coming to the state through ARRA funds will prevent massive layoffs at the state level and



Photo by Victoria South

Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey (left) was one of many state leaders that addressed TML's membership during the two-day legislative conference. Pictured with him are Kingston City Councilmember Teresa Ferguson and Kingston Mayor Troy Beets. See more conference coverage on Pages 3, 4 & 5.

will allow more time for departments to implement reductions in a more strategic way, but that in three years "state government will be 12 percent smaller than it is today."

Morgan said that the base budget proposed for FY 2009-10 is \$225 million less than this year's budget with more dramatic reductions planned for FY 2010-11.

"This is a substantial and significant challenge for us," said Morgan. "Gov. Bredesen has made it very clear that there is no wiggle room. And he is committed to when he leaves office that the budget is balanced with recurring expenditures paid for by recurring revenues."

Leslie Newman

Fire education for citizens, firefighter training and a statewide residential building code were the main topics addressed by Leslie Newman, state fire marshal and commissioner of Commerce and Insurance. As part of his proposed

energy package, Gov. Bredesen is pushing a bill which would enact a statewide residential building code in every jurisdiction in Tennessee. Tennessee currently abides by the International Building Code for everything except one- and two-family homes with homebuilding standards left up to jurisdictions.

"This program is not an unfunded mandate," Commissioner Newman stressed. "We have modeled our program to lower any additional cost to local governments." The bill would also provide resources to help counties enforce the code. According to Newman, the code will only apply to new construction. While there would be no mandates on sprinkler systems, the bill will not pre-empt local governments' ability to require them.

Benefits, according to the commissioner include: reduction of contractor complaints, protection against loss of property or loss

See **CONFERENCE** on Page 3

TML Pool announces member dividend, no rate change for 2009-10

The TML Risk Management Pool Board of Directors are happy with the success and productivity of this partnership and are pleased to announce that the dividend for the 2009-2010 fund year will be \$8.25 million.

This is the third largest dividend provided to Pool members.

Dawn Crawford, TML Pool executive vice president and CFO said, "With the current national economic crisis we are all experiencing and with the rate reductions that were

enacted for this year, it is unlikely we can maintain such large dividends on a go forward basis. However, this Dividend Program is all due to the members managing their risks and performing better than actuarial and underwriting expectations. With that, we are very excited to be able to do this. Were it not for the member's success in managing their losses and making good risk management decisions, we would not be able to do this."

The TML Pool Board of Direc-

tors also voted to continue the base rate reductions that were put into place for the 2008-2009 fund year. As financial budgets are tightening it is our hope and desire that where possible, with no changes to our base rates we can bring some stability in the insurance pricing for our members.

The TML Pool Board and Staff want to thank all of the membership for their continued support and their success in helping the citizens get the very best for their tax dollars.

Biggest losers are winners in Johnson City

BY VICTORIA SOUTH
TML Communications Coordinator

You won't see popular fitness trainers Jillian Michaels or Bob Harper around, but Saturdays are still number crunching days in Johnson City, as residents weigh in for Freedom Hall Pool's Biggest Loser Competition. The 12-week weight loss program sponsored by the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department runs March 7-May 23 and includes group and individual competition.

This pared-down version of the popular TV series includes activities such as: How Many Steps Can You Take in a Week, three water activities, relays, walking trail and A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words, where participants must take a picture of their group or individual participating in an exercise activity. Smiling is optional. And, of course, no exercise program is complete without assorted push ups, sit ups and jumping jacks.

Just like the TV show, contestants are weighed in on a weekly basis, to get their percentage of weight loss calculated by dividing their starting weight by the pounds lost multiplied by 100. "The Biggest Loser" book, which can be purchased at local bookstores, supplies exercise tips and nutritious menus.

"Our goal is to promote and support the contestant's efforts to establish healthy patterns that they will be able to continue long after the contest is over," said Heather Morgan, aquatics supervisor. "It's pretty ba-



Johnson City Biggest Loser contestant Susan Bass arrives for her weigh-in.

sic. It doesn't matter what level you are physically."

Most of the activities are timed such as clocking how many repetitions a participant can complete in one minute. Unlike the T.V. show, contestants work for a few weeks on their own, receiving passes for the water activities and access to the track and walking trail before coming together for group activities in April.

"We currently have small

See **LOSERS** on Page 6

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BY TML STAFF REPORTS

ALCOA

The city is expected to cancel its annual FreedomFest celebration this year due to the slump in the economy and construction at Alcoa Elementary School. Construction scheduled to take place this summer at the elementary school, the site of the fireworks display, and projected revenue shortfalls in the current and upcoming budget were cited as the contributing factors for the cancellation of the event. FreedomFest has been held annually for 32 years. In addition to fireworks, the day-long event features food concessions, games and activities for children and performances by local music bands.

CHATTANOOGA

The State Building Commission gave a green light to the planned \$40 million Volkswagen training center in Chattanooga. It also approved grants continuing to reimburse the city and Hamilton County for local funds already spent on site preparation under agreements with the state. Officials at Volkswagen, despite a record 2008, said that vehicle sales, revenues and earnings would fall in 2009 amid the global downturn. But, the company says it is positioned for a rebound in the market.

FRANKLIN

The city's new police headquarters will be the city's largest public building, complete with an evidence storage area, forensics lab, vehicle exam bay, K-9 kennels, emergency communications office and community meeting room. The \$36 million project, which includes the cost of the land, will also have space for a records division, training rooms, roll-call room, fitness center, suspect holding and interview rooms, weapons arsenal and traffic operations center. Much of the building has been constructed or designed to be energy efficient and more environmentally friendly. The three-story, 92,281-square-foot building is just a shade smaller than the county sheriff department and jail combined, which is 102,000 square feet. And it has space for 250 employees, well more than the police department's existing 170 people. Construction began almost a year ago and is expected to be completed by December.

FRANKLIN

For just a few cents every month, or a few dollars a year, citizens can help

reduce the overall price of a new home for families that cannot typically afford to buy a house. Through the Voluntary Roundup Program, utility bill customers will receive a sign-up form in their bills beginning March 15th and be asked to round-up their utility bills to the nearest dollar, with the extra change going to the program. On average a person's annual contribution would be about six dollars and never exceed \$12 a year. The extra change will be placed into a special fund designated for affordable and moderately priced housing paying for water and wastewater fees that are required with new construction. To qualify for the Roundup funds families must meet the income levels defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. For more information, visit www.franklintn.gov/roundup_program.

JOHNSON CITY

Johnson City is in the process of inventorying trees located on public property. With the new software, a tree's location can be plotted on a map. This software replaces an old inventory system that could only identify trees by property addresses. The tree inventory will be used to direct and track daily tree maintenance activities. It will also provide information so that long-term goals and management plans can be developed for Johnson City's urban forest. The information in the inventory includes a tree's location, trunk diameter, height, condition, maintenance needs, and conflicts with overhead wires. It is estimated that there will be 8,000-10,000 trees in the inventory. The project is funded by a grant from the USDA Forest Service and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry.

KINGSPORT

The ongoing national nightmare of plunging home prices continued to be largely absent from the Tri-Cities in 2008, which ended with the Kingsport-Bristol metro area posting the nation's third-highest price increases, out of 291 metro areas, compared to a year earlier. Kingsport-Bristol saw a gain of 6.26 percent. Over the past five years, Kingsport saw price appreciation totaling 37.3 percent, fourth-highest among this quarter's top 20. Those compare to rates of 19.1 percent in Tennessee and 12.7 percent nationally. This would mean someone who

bought a house for \$150,000 five years ago would see that house today, on average, worth \$205,950 in Kingsport.

KINGSPORT

The city is planning to build a multi-story parking garage downtown to accommodate the estimated parking demand from the Kingsport Center for Higher Education and the Regional Center for Health Professions. The \$3.8 million project has been funded as part of a recent bond issuance, and city officials say the plan is to build a three-story parking garage with 350 to 400 spaces, with the first floor possibly containing retail and office space. The parking garage will be located on the Shelby Street parking lot site — beside City Hall and the Justice Center.

KNOXVILLE

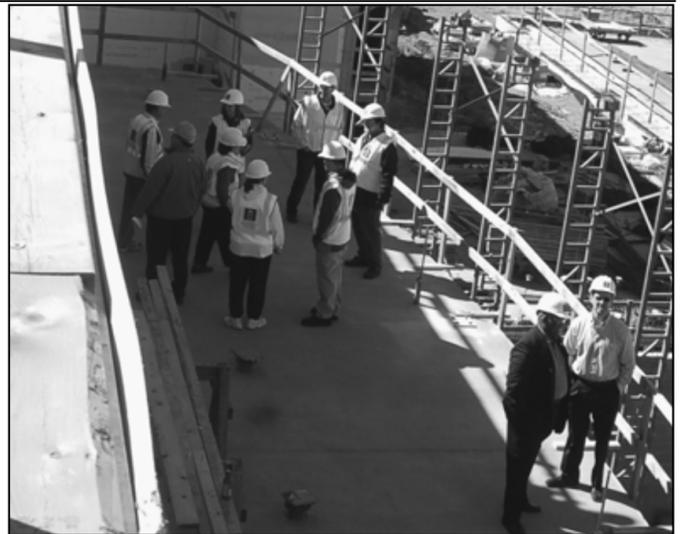
Data through an outreach program called CARDIAC Kids, (Coronary Artery Risk Detection in Appalachian Communities), which screens fourth- and fifth-graders around East Tennessee for their risk of heart disease, reveals that 43 percent of the children screened have at-risk body weights, 23 percent have high cholesterol, and 10 percent have elevated blood pressure. The screenings, which are free for students and their schools, consist of a finger-stick test for total cholesterol and glucose levels, including HDL, or good cholesterol levels. Students also are measured for height, weight and blood pressure, and they even receive a screening for Acanthosis Nigricans, a marking found on the back of the neck of children who may be at risk of getting diabetes. Following the school screening, the families of at-risk children are given vouchers for a free screening with Mercy Health.

LEBANON

Dell is laying off an unspecified number of workers in Middle Tennessee. The layoffs affected employees at the company's distribution and cell centers off Murfreesboro Road in Nashville and at a plant in Lebanon that refurbishes computers, servers and other Dell products. The computer hardware manufacturer has employed about 3,200 workers at the Lebanon plant and the Nashville distribution center. In late January, Dell shut down its desktop manufacturing operation in Lebanon, citing reduced demand for the product line due to the economy and consumer preference for small, portable laptops and notebook computers.

LEXINGTON

A new manufacturing company is expected to create about 60 new jobs



Franklin city officials take a tour of the new police headquarters under construction off Columbia Avenue. The \$36 million project will be packed with energy saving features and will be the city's largest public building, complete with an evidence storage area, forensics lab, vehicle exam bay, K-9 kennels, emergency communications office and community meeting room.

by year's end and 150 jobs within three years. Summit-Brantley Building Innovations will manufacture exterior wall panels, interior wall panels and floor systems for multi-family, single-family and student housing as well as hotels.

MT. JULIET

Last year, Mt. Juliet received \$375,000 in grant funding from the Tennessee Housing Development Agency to help residents make their homes more livable. The Greater Nashville Regional Council uses a formula to determine eligibility. That formula examines income, how many people live in the home, the home's condition and whether there are children in the home. The grant funding can't be used to make mortgage payments.

NASHVILLE

United Neighborhood Health Services, a Nashville-based nonprofit, has received nearly \$1 million from the federal stimulus package to expand affordable health care. The \$973,593 award is believed to be the first federal stimulus money to be-

come available for use in Tennessee and will create about 15 new jobs in three new clinics. Together, the clinics are expected to provide health care for an additional 4,500 mostly uninsured patients in the Nashville area.

OAK RIDGE

The U.S. Department of Energy laid out plans for a regional "energy park" that would be anchored in Oak Ridge and leverage existing assets, including surplus federal properties, research capabilities and a highly trained work force. If successful, the project would clean up the environment, bolster energy security and create jobs in the four-state Tennessee Valley Corridor, and DOE said it could be used as a model for similar ventures elsewhere in the country. DOE did not release any dollar figures for what's being called the Tennessee Valley Energy Enterprise or estimate how many jobs could potentially be generated. But billions of dollars apparently would be invested over time, including federal stimulus money that's dedicated for cleanup and energy development.



PEOPLE

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

Mike Morrow,

Assistant Commissioner of Finance and Administration and a 34-year veteran of state government, has been selected by Gov. Bredesen to step into the state's primary Recovery Act management role. Morrow will lead a state ARRA task force that includes representatives of Finance and Administration's budget and information resources divisions, the Office of State Policy and Planning, and designated representatives from state agencies involved in implementation of the Act. Charles Harrison, who was originally tapped to lead the state's implementation effort, decided not to continue in the role.



Morrow

Philip E. Smith of Madison has been appointed to the Tennessee Circuit Court for the Twentieth Judicial District, Division IV. Smith will fill a vacancy created by Judge Muriel Robinson's recent announcement of her plans to retire. The 20th Judicial District serves Davidson County.

Gary Palmer has been appointed by Farragut's Board of Mayor and Aldermen as interim Town administrator.

Jim Lee has assumed his duties as Fayetteville's new city administrator. Previously serving as Bolivar's city administrator from 2001 to 2007, Lee is a retired colonel with the U.S. Army Reserves and managed industry and government operations from 1984 until 2001.

Dortch Oldham, a Republican candidate for governor in 1974 and former state party chairman, has died. The retired Southwestern Co. president was 89.

Zane Whitson,

75, former state representative from Unicoi, has died. Whitson was best known in the region for his 24-year tenure in the state House from 1978-2002.



Whitson

Gary Johnson, a state representative from Hamblen Co. from 1990 to 1994 has died. He was 52.

Municipal Administration Program April Schedule

Planning & Zoning

Planning is a process that seeks to guide the future. Decisions regarding zoning, building development, and growth issues affect landowners, neighbors, and the entire community — often with significant impact on property values, community character and quality of life — and even the municipal budget.

This course will address the following topics: Legal Basis for Planning, Comprehensive Planning Process and Implementation of Land Use Decisions

Instructor

Stan Harrison, Planning and Zoning

Time

Public administration courses begin at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 12:30 p.m.

Dates and locations

April	1	Bartlett
April	2	Jackson
April	8	Johnson City
April	9	Knoxville
April	14	Collegedale
April	16	Franklin

Training Facilities

Bartlett Bartlett Performing Arts and Conference Center, 3663 Appling Road
Collegedale Collegedale City Hall, 4910 Swinyar Drive
Franklin Williamson County Exposition Center, 4215 Long Lane
Jackson West Tennessee Center for Agricultural Research, Extension, and Public Service, 605 Airways Boulevard
Johnson City Johnson City Public Library, 100 West Millard St.

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Knoxville University of Tennessee Conference Center, 600 Henley Street

To register for this municipal administration program class, please visit the MTAS web site at www.mtas.tennessee.edu or contact Elaine Morrisey at elaine.morrisey@tennessee.edu or 865.974.0411. For program information, contact Izetta Slade, MTAS Training Program manager, at 865.974.9855 or e-mail Izetta.slade@tennessee.edu.

Fees are \$25 per person per class for municipal employees and \$55 per person per class for all other participants.

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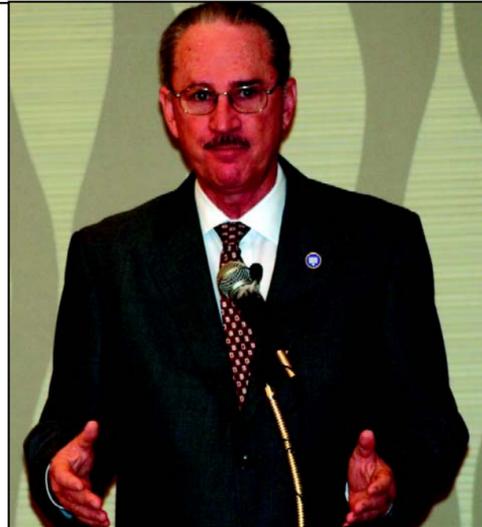
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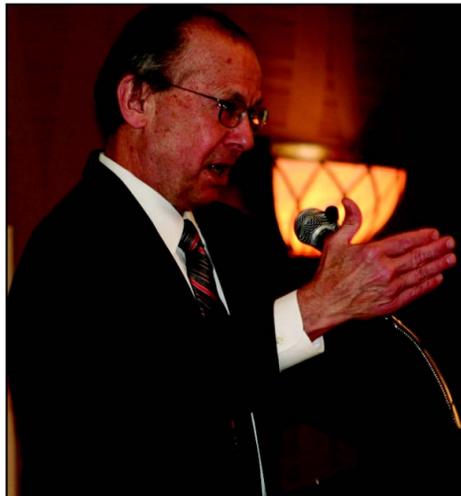
Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey



House Speaker Kent Williams



Deputy Gov. John Morgan



Commissioner Gerald Nicely
Tennessee Department of Transportation



Commissioner James Neeley
Labor and Workforce Development



Commissioner Leslie Newman
Commerce and Insurance

Photos by Victoria South

Money, roads, building codes among topics discussed

CONFERENCE from Page 1

lated to shoddy housing and lowering the electric rates for some customers.

As in years past, Newman stressed the importance of fire safety public outreach programs targeting seniors and school children, as Tennessee ranks among the highest in the nation in fire-related deaths. Education efforts have been extended to volunteer firefighters, roughly 80 percent of the state's fire personnel, currently without access to state-mandated training. Developmental assistance by The Municipal Technical Advisory Service and the County Technical Service has provided a 16-hour training program for volunteers, The Fire Services and Codes Enforcement Academy located in Bell Buckle, which provides in-field training to help prepare volunteer firefighters across the state for what they may face.

Gerald Nicely

"There's good news and bad news," began TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely as he addressed the state's plan for \$572 million in Economic Stimulus funding toward the state's bridges and highway system. "The funds will be a temporary reprieve."

With \$85 million in funding sub-allocated for Metro Government projects, \$72 million will be directed toward the transit-system, and Nicely is also proposing a \$350 million bond issue toward bridge work to service about 200 state structures.

"We are under a mandate where 50 percent of the projects must be obligated within 120 days," he said. "Our goal is to beat that and have 100 percent under contract within 120 days."

According to Nicely, the state must ultimately whittle its project costs from \$900 million down to \$487 million. As a criteria connected with the stimulus funds, priority must be given to distressed areas where the unemployment rate could equal 1 percent of the national average.

Nicely said that at least 60 percent of future projects are eligible for state funding while 50 percent are eligible for a similar distressed counties package funded under Tennessee's Department of Economic and Community Development. TDOT recently received contract bids on 10 bridge projects from small rural counties.

Nicely reminded the audience that long term trends have been problematic for the state's road system and that over the long term, gas taxes or vehicle title and registration fees have not kept up with the needs. Nicely expressed hope that the recently appointed transportation study committee will come back with new recommendations, adding that he has been assured that the stimulus funding would not detract from reauthorization of federal transportation funding, which would help state and local governments to plan for the future.

"There's a lot more needs than there are funds," Nicely concluded adding that although citizens will be seeing a fresh crop of orange barrels along the highways soon, the stimulus funds are simply buying time.

James Neeley

With state unemployment numbers at the highest level since 1973 (9.1 percent for February) James

Neeley, commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, told the group that the state's unemployment trust fund will be broke by the end of this year if something isn't done to infuse more money into the account, which currently stands at \$240 million and sinking. During good times, the federal government recommends the state of Tennessee to maintain a balance of \$1.2 billion.

Commissioner Neeley is recommending increasing the base taxable wage from \$7,000 to \$9,000 and raising the UI tax rate on employers by 0.6 percent.

"If we don't do anything we will be \$50 million in the hold by the first quarter of 2010 and \$565 million by the first quarter in 2011," said Neeley.

He said some stimulus money was allocated for unemployment. However, it is to be used to cover extended unemployment benefits provided for in the Recovery Act and administrative costs associated with the high demand of department services.

Neeley also encouraged local officials to conduct his department about a summer youth jobs program being made available through federal stimulus funds. About 12,000 jobs will be in coming in June to low-income 14- to 24-year-olds and will be in places like state parks, city maintenance crews, and government offices. The \$25 million program is part of a larger \$1.2 billion pool of stimulus funds aimed at putting young people to work nationwide. In Tennessee, participants will make \$7.25 to \$10 an hour — paid by stimulus funds, not the employer, during the eight-week program.

Lt. Gov. Ron Ramsey

Lt. Gov. Ramsey also spoke of the state's financial situation, noting that the state's biggest revenue producers (sales and franchise and excise taxes) are down by 23 percent. But he also advised that Tennessee has the reputation of being a very well-run state and compared to other states, dealing with a \$1.1 billion shortfall is much easier to manage. Virginia is facing a \$2 billion budget deficit; Georgia is \$3 billion in the hole; and California is in serious trouble with a \$42 billion deficit.

Ramsey also informed city officials about the \$534 million in federal funds that will be directly allocated to local school districts primarily based on their proportions of low income and special education students.

"I want to remind local school boards to make sure it is spent properly. This is one-time money and should not be used by hiring additional staff. So please, manage this money well," Ramsey said. "That's the problem with this stimulus package. We are trying to figure out how to deal with two years of money and then it's gone."

Speaker Kent Williams

Speaker Williams told the membership of his pledge to lead in a bipartisan matter, beginning with committee assignments that gave both parties equal representation on committees and each party the same number of chairpersons. He complimented Gov. Bredeesen on his forward-looking budget that outlines expenditures for four years. And, he promised municipal officials that he would always be mindful not to pass down unfunded mandates to local governments.

Bredesen's budget plan includes reductions

BUDGET, from Page 1

"While these are programs we technically administer in various ways, they do not directly affect the discretionary state budget except insofar as they improve the general economy," Bredeesen said.

Where the ARRA funds do help ease the state's budget crisis is in the area of TennCare, higher education, and some \$1.6 billion to be used under certain guidelines for budget stabilization.

TennCare will receive \$1.1 billion with the federal government shouldering more of the burden. As a result, it will help free up additional dollars to use for other state programs. "Some states have to use this help simply for the survival of their Medicaid programs," said Bredeesen. "Tennessee has already stabilized its program well and has far more flexibility."

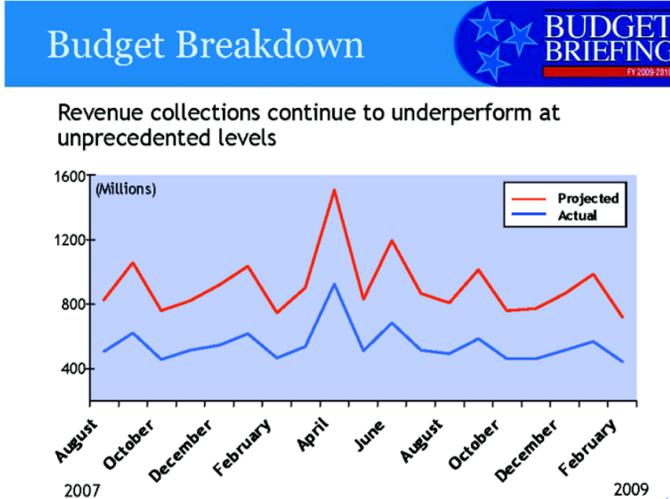
Higher education will also receive a substantial windfall, some \$500 million over the next two years. However, it's not given without caution. "When this money ends 21 months from now, our campuses will suddenly need to begin operating with about \$180 million less in state funding than they had this year," said Bredeesen. "More than most other areas, higher education has dodged a bullet and bought some time, but there is a great deal of work to be done to reorganize and streamline for a much leaner future — to practice good stewardship. I ask you to work with me over the months ahead to reposition higher education to better meet the challenges we face."

The majority of the AARA funds will go directly to the state, with no category of funding for local governments. One of the few direct appropriations includes \$524 million that will be paid directly to local school districts primarily based on their proportions of low income and special education students.

Bredesen stressed, however, that these are not recurring funds and should not be used on recurring expenditures like hiring additional

Net Base Budget Cuts	
✓ TennCare	\$ 101 M
✓ Correction	\$ 43 M
✓ Children's Services	\$ 15 M
✓ Non-BEP Education	\$ 12 M
✓ Mental Health	\$ 5 M
✓ Environment & Conservation	\$ 5 M
✓ Revenue	\$ 5 M
✓ Health	\$ 7 M
✓ Higher Education	\$.86 M
✓ Miscellaneous	\$ 30.24 M
Total Reductions	\$ 224.1 M

Gov. Bredeesen's base budget proposed for FY 2009-10 is \$225 million less than this year's budget with more dramatic reductions planned for FY 2010-11.



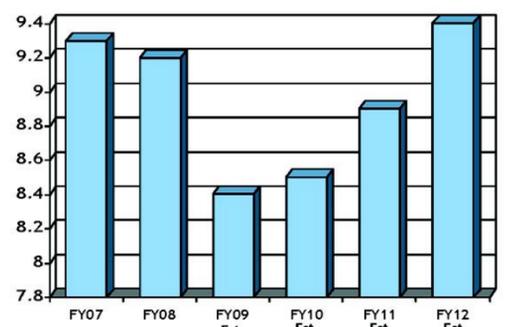
Since August 2007, revenues collections have continued to underperform at record levels. State collections for the current budget year reflect a \$1.1 billion shortfall.

staff. "Unless there is a local commitment to provide long term funding after the federal stimulus ends, I would strongly recommend to local districts that these be spent on one-time items or used as transitional funds, lest you just create a budget

crisis for yourselves two years from now."

For the coming fiscal year, Bredeesen is proposing a \$29.3 billion budget, a \$438 million reduction from last year's budget, despite the infusion of federal money.

General Fund Collections Actual and Estimated



State economists are projecting it will be 2012 until revenue collections will be back to the level of 2007.

The state currently has about \$750 million in its rainy day fund. The FY 09-10 budget proposes using some immediately (\$64 million) but plans to rebuild the fund back to \$750 for the next governor.

"It is important to me to not

leave to my successor, or the next General Assembly, a budgetary cliff to fall off. I take the idea of long-term stewardship — financial and otherwise — seriously, and leaving the state in good shape is very much a part of that concept for me."

TML Board of Directors conduct business prior to legislative meeting



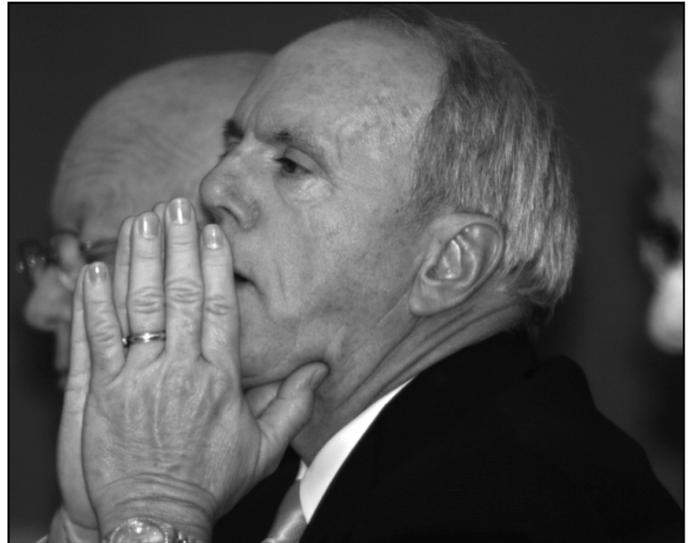
Sparta Mayor Tommy Pedigo, Alamo Mayor Tommy Green, and Covington Mayor David Gordon



Oak Ridge Mayor and TML President Tom Beehan



Bartlett Mayor Keith McDonald and Memphis Administrator for intergovernmental relations, Tajuan Stout-Mitchell



Clarksville Mayor Johnny Piper



Nashville Mayor Karl Dean



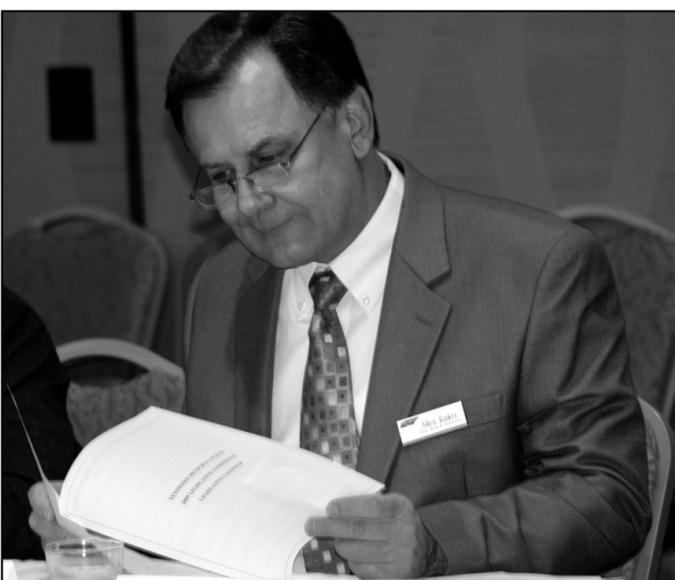
Farragut Mayor Eddie Ford and Jackson Councilman Johnny Dodd



Huntingdon Mayor Dale Kelley and TML Executive Director Margaret Mahery



Cleveland Councilmember David May, Cleveland Mayor Tom Rowland and Charles "Bones" Seivers, president and CEO of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund



Pictured to the left: Humboldt Mayor Alan Barker

TML Conference provide forum to educate, update, network



House Speaker Kent Williams and Farragut Alderman Dot LaMarche



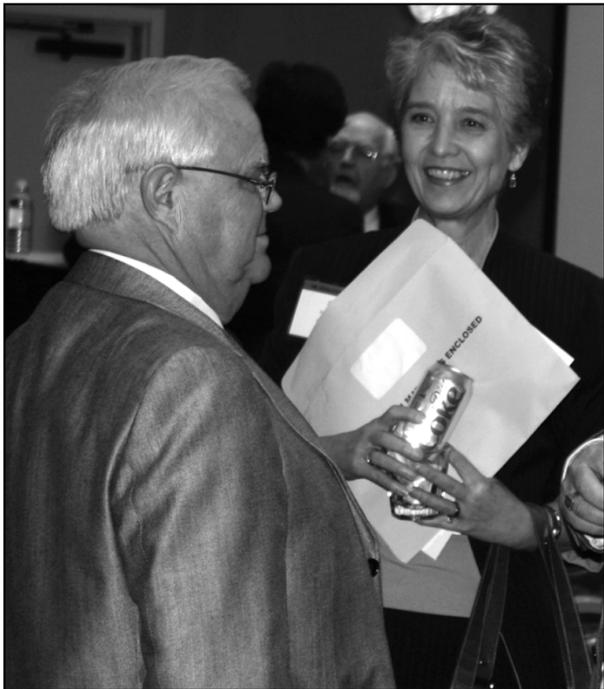
White House City Administrator Angie Carrier, Johnson City Manager Pete Peterson and Alcoa Assistant City Manager Bill Hammon



Kingsport Mayor Dennis Phillips and Kingsport City Attorney Michael Billingsley



LaFollette Councilmember Joe Bolinger, LaFollette Mayor Michael Stanfield, LaFollette Councilmember Hansford Hatmaker, and Shelbyville Councilmember Lee Roy Cunningham



Sparta Vice Mayor Hoyte Jones and Crossville City Clerk Sally Olgesby



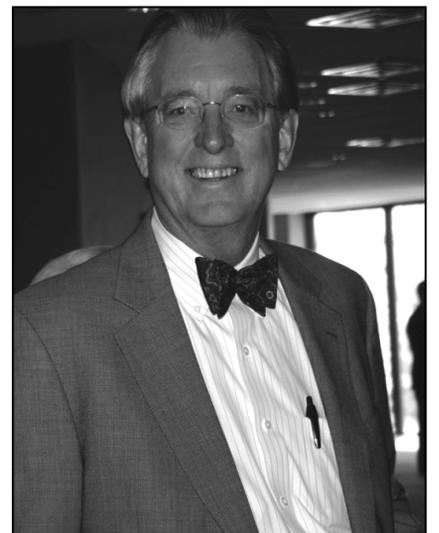
Columbia Mayor Bill Gentner, Columbia Councilmember Dean Dickey, Coopertown Alderman Linda Lee and Coopertown Mayor Sam Childs



Athens City Manager Mitch Moore and Signal Mountain Town Manager Honna Rodgers



Franklin Mayor John Schroer and City Administrator Eric Stuckey



Shelbyville City Manager Ed Craig



Oak Ridge City Manager Jim OConnor and Kingston Councilmember Norman Sugarman



Pictured left: Ducktown Mayor James Talley and Alcoa Mayor Don Mull

Tennessee's impact

TENNESSEE from Page 1
rate for seven months is negative 5.99 percent.

State-shared taxes are also below estimated projections. For February, the city-county fund was under collected by \$1.68 million, with year-to-date figures totally \$27.4 below the budgeted revenue estimates.

Based on the state's collections that reflect a \$1.1 billion shortfall for the current fiscal year, local governments are also bracing for a decline in sales tax revenues. This is in addition to sluggish collections last year. Nearly half of the 347 cities in Tennessee either experienced a real reduction in collections or only a negligible increase of less than 1 percent in collections for FY08.

An informal survey conducted by the Tennessee Municipal League reveals that 73 percent of those responding experienced a decline in local options sales tax revenues when compared to last year; 43 percent saw a decline in local business taxes; and 29 percent experienced a decline in state-shared revenues.

During the last 12 months, 62 percent of municipal governments also reported plant closures, layoffs, and business closings.

Residential and commercial building permits are also down — 28 percent report a substantial decrease in residential permits, and 13 percent experienced a decline in commercial permits.

To combat the effects of the continued economic recession, Tennessee city governments have implemented a number of procedures including: across the board reduction in spending (59 percent); eliminated or delayed capital projects (52 percent); eliminated or delayed planned purchases (51 percent); eliminated or delayed infrastructure projects (47 percent); implemented a hiring freeze or laid off employees (39 percent); utilized budget reserves (27 percent); enacted or increased fees (18 percent); eliminated or reduced local services (11 percent); and enacted or increased taxes (4 percent).

Big losers are winners in Johnson City

LOSERS from Page 1
prizes to give away throughout the contest," said Morgan, "but we're working on getting donations for a main prize for the winner such as massages, facials or a one-month gym membership."

In 2008, Tennessee ranked third highest in obesity, according to reports by the CDC, with over 30 percent of the population overweight. Mississippi placed 1st with Alabama 2nd. Approximately 1 in 4 adults are overweight nationally, with the South reporting the highest weight for at least 27 percent of the population.

For more information on Johnson City's "The Biggest Loser" competition, contact Heather Morgan at 423-461-4872.

Cities report Main Street retailers shutting down

RETAIL from Page 1
businesses and the regional economy, resulting in unemployment and a decline in new business start-ups.

In the face of this retail meltdown, two-thirds of city officials report they are collaborating with the business community to deal with critical local challenges. One-third of city officials report they are also working with other local governments in their region, as well as with community groups. Once the market returns, more than half say that they plan to pursue mixed-used redevelopment.

When examined across different types of local tax structures, city officials from sales tax-reliant cities are more likely to report worsening retail sales (66 percent) and retail store closings (60 percent), than city officials from property tax-reliant cities (55 and 50 percent, respectively) and city officials from cities relying on a combination of property, sales, and income tax revenues (42 and 33 percent, respectively).

Over time, sales tax-reliant cities have likely focused more on retail development as an economic development strategy, increasing their reliance on sales tax revenues and during economic upturns, producing more revenue. In contrast, property tax-reliant cities and cities reliant upon multiple sources of revenue are more likely to have pursued different economic development and revenue-generating strategies.

When examined by type of city, city officials from core cities of large metropolitan areas (87 percent) are more likely than city officials from other types of cities to report worsening retail sales, although majorities of city officials from core cities of smaller/medium metropolitan regions (67 percent) and rural regions (51 percent), as well as inner-ring, developed suburbs (68 percent) and newer suburbs (64 percent) also report worsening retail sales.

Only one-third of city officials from rural cities and towns (33 percent) report increased retail store closings, compared with at least 50 percent of city officials from all other types of cities. These findings imply that retail markets in rural areas may be less "saturated," or experience less competition, and in a better position to ride out the economic crisis. Additionally, the current downturn in retail may challenge suburban and urban communities to reassess their capacity for

LOCATION OF RETAIL STORE	TYPE OF RETAIL STORE			
	Entire Retail Area	Anchor/Large Retail Employer	Smaller Chain Retailer	Locally Owned Retailer
Regional Mall	3%	18%	27%	15%
Neighborhood Center	2%	16%	36%	42%
Downtown/ Main Street	1%	4%	14%	63%

Note: Respondents could check all that apply among the various options. Percentages will not add to 100% as a result.

When looking at the types and locations of retail closings in cities, locally owned main street retailers appear to be hardest hit by the current downturn. Three in five city officials (63 percent) report that the types of retailers most affected by the economic downturn are locally owned retailers on Main Street, followed by locally owned (42 percent) and smaller chain retailers (36 percent) in neighborhood centers and smaller chain retailers in regional malls (27 percent). Alternatively, only about 15 percent of city officials report that anchor stores and large retail employers in malls (18 percent) or neighborhood centers (16 percent) have closed.

Conditions Resulting from Decline in Retail	Major/Moderate Problem	Minor/ No Problem
Negative impact on other businesses	81%	19%
Negative impact on regional economy	80%	20%
Decline in new business start-ups	78%	22%
Declining tax revenue	77%	23%
Unemployment	70%	30%
Negative impact on nearby neighborhoods	51%	49%
Vacancy and blight	51%	49%
Increased crime	31%	69%
Lost sense of "community"	24%	76%

Locally owned retailers are vital to the stability of local and regional economies because they tend to spend more of their revenues on inventory, supplies, and services provided by other local businesses. When asked directly about the most pressing local implications of the retail slowdown, four in five city officials report negative impacts on other local businesses (81 percent) and negative impacts on the regional economy (80 percent). Nearly four in five city officials also report a decline in new business start-ups (78 percent). This finding indicates that the current economic crisis is not only resulting in slower sales and increased store closings, but that the business churning process, whereby newer, more productive businesses enter the market place, is also being disrupted. Additionally, seven in 10 report unemployment as a problem faced by their city as a result of deteriorating retail conditions; three in four (77 percent) report a decline in tax revenue.

retail and to redevelop accordingly.

Retail Closing and Local Implications

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City officials from sales tax-reliant cities (79 percent) are more likely to report declining tax revenue as a pressing local concern resulting from the retail downturn, compared to city officials from property tax-reliant cities (67 percent) and city officials from cities relying on a combination of all three sources of revenue (59 percent).

The results indicate that sales tax-reliant cities are feeling increasing fiscal pressures from the retail slowdown, whereas city officials from cities relying on three sources of revenue are perhaps more likely to be buoyed by their diversity of revenue streams.

Local Responses

In the face of the retail downturn, a key challenge confronting city officials is how to respond to issues surrounding closed stores, vacant properties and future retail development. Collaboration with other local stakeholders is one response, and two-thirds of city officials (67 percent) report that they are working closely with members of the business community, including corporate leaders, developers, and chambers of commerce. City officials report that they are also collaborating with other local governments in their region (35 percent) and community groups (35 percent).

When economic conditions improve, one in two city officials (51 percent) say that their plans to redevelop vacancies left by retail closings will include mixed-use projects that will incorporate some combination of retail, restaurants, offices, open space and higher-density residential. One in two (49 percent) also report that they plan to target new retail.

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STATE BRIEFS

BY TML STAFF REPORTS

More than \$3.6 million in federal money has been awarded to state transit groups to lay the groundwork for a public transportation network that would connect residents in rural parts of the state to Tennessee's bigger cities. In all, the grant money will help connect more than 40 rural towns and counties to larger cities. The state-administered money will go to seven community groups and private companies. According to the Tennessee Department of Transportation, it can be used to buy buses and vans, as well as wheelchair lifts, computers and other equipment used to get transit systems off the ground.

A new list recently published by Chief Executive magazine lists Tennessee as the fifth best state in the U.S. for jobs and business growth. Tennessee follows Texas, North Carolina, Florida and Georgia as the top five states. The list is based on a survey completed by 543 CEOs, who looked at issues like proximity to resources, regulation, tax policies, education, quality of living and infrastructure. Over the last four years, Tennessee has consistently moved up on the list, after being ranked 11th in 2006.

In what could be one of the worst summers ever for young people looking to land jobs, there is one bright spot: about 12,000 jobs for youth are coming to Tennessee in June as part of the federal stimulus. The jobs will go to low-income 14- to 24-year-olds and will be in places like state parks and government offices. Some private employers with established internship programs also may take part. The \$25 million program is part of a larger \$1.2 billion pool of stimulus funds aimed at putting young people to work nationwide. In Tennessee, participants will make \$7.25 to \$10 an hour — paid by stimulus funds, not the employer, during the eight-week program.

Tennessee is the No. 1 state for motorcoach travel in 2009. The designation comes from *Byways Magazine*, a bimonthly publication aimed at motorcoach charter and tour planners. It means the state is projected to have more motorcoach

travel in 2009 than any other state. Helping attract motorcoach travel are the Smoky Mountains, Bristol Motor Speedway, the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga, the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville, music attractions in Nashville and Memphis and the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

State data show a loss of 14,300 retail jobs in Tennessee in January, with many of those layoffs across Middle Tennessee. Retail job loss in January outstripped the volume of cuts in manufacturing and construction — perhaps the two categories that have been battered the most by recession here and nationally. Analysts attribute the spike in retail job losses to dim holiday sales last year and anticipated weaker sales this year as consumers rein in spending.

Pickwick Landing State Park's Inn and Conference Center was recently presented with Convention South Magazine's annual Reader's Choice Award for 2009. The park was one of four meeting sites in the state of Tennessee to receive this prestigious award. Recognized as the leader in covering the South's meetings industry for the last 26 years, *ConventionSouth Magazine* solicited more than 18,000 meeting professionals across the nation to name the convention and visitors' bureaus, convention centers, conference centers, hotels, resorts and other meeting sites they believe display exemplary creativity and professionalism to guests.

Tennessee's high school graduation rate rose more than any other state's between 2002 and 2006 according to researchers at Johns Hopkins University. The national graduation rate remained flat at about 75 percent. A report released by the Everyone Graduates Center found the largest gain was in Tennessee, where the rate rose from 61 percent to 72 percent in those years. The Tennessee Department of Education notes Gov. Bredesen's increased funding toward students considered at risk and students for whom English is a second language.

Tennessee and Georgia soon will get \$223 million to make homes

more energy efficient. Tennessee's Department of Human Services is due \$99.1 million for weatherization assistance for low- and moderate-income families. The money comes from the recently approved federal stimulus package. In Hamilton County, the Chattanooga Department of Human Services expects to get \$3.6 million for home weatherization assistance. Over the next 18 months, such assistance could fund insulation, caulking and other energy efficiency measures for more than 500 local homes.

Recent research shows tornadoes in Tennessee have the most potential for deadly damage. Meteorologists and researchers question whether the Great Plains' version of Tornado Alley actually poses the greatest threat. Tornado Alley is traditionally thought to include parts of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska, however, "Dixie Alley," has about the same number of strong and violent tornadoes but more killer tornadoes. Dixie Alley is defined as an area stretching from Arkansas and Louisiana to Middle Tennessee and Georgia, from Tennessee's northern boundary to the Gulf Coast. Dixie Alley experiences tornado threats most of the year while the threat in the Great Plains Tornado Alley occurs mainly April through June.

State health experts are urging Tennesseans to get influenza vaccines as this season's outbreak peaks later than usual. Tennessee is one of 27 states nationwide whose flu status is categorized as widespread — when activity is scattered across the state, according to a report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There have been 36 laboratory-confirmed cases of flu since the season began in the early fall. At this time last year, there were 59 lab-confirmed cases. The majority of flu cases are not reported to state officials because doctors do not perform lab tests to confirm whether a patient's flu-like symptoms are caused by the virus.

The heavy downturn in the manufacturing industry, which has cost Tennessee tens of thousands of jobs, could stretch two more years, according to Ken Currie, director of the Center for Manufactur-



Dixie Alley, defined as an area stretching from Arkansas and Louisiana to Middle Tennessee and Georgia, from Tennessee's northern boundary to the Gulf Coast, has about the same number of strong and violent tornadoes but more killer tornadoes than the traditional Tornado Alley. Several students were pulled from the rubble when the dorms collapsed at Jackson's Union University during a deadly Feb. 5, 2008 twister, costing the school an estimated \$40 million in damages.

ing Research at Tennessee Tech University. A turnaround could possibly come in late 2010, but would take a while for work to rebound to manufacturers because wholesalers and retailers will have to sell off large backlogs of goods before new orders are needed.

Tennessee's unemployment rate soared to 9.1 percent in February, the highest level of people looking for work since 1973, state officials said. Economists say it's an indication of the deepening effect of the recession in Tennessee, with the number of jobless workers likely to rise through the summer and into the fall. Nationally, continuing jobless claims jumped 185,000 to a seasonally adjusted 5.47 million, another record high and more than the roughly 5.33 million economists expected.

At a time when jobs are being lost all across middle Tennessee, there is an intense effort by state officials to create new ones. The Tennessee Department of Economic Development is hitting the road in hopes that face-to-face meetings with business leaders will bring new jobs to the state including those in solar energy. State Economic Development Commissioner Matt Kisber is traveling the world with a sales speech about Tennessee, including information that a new solar institute is being formed at the Oak Ridge National Lab combined with the recent announcements of two new solar cell plants.

The state senate passed legislation increasing the size of the State Election Commission by two members until four-year terms expire in 2012.

Electronic tax filings filed from home computers in Tennessee are up more than 20 percent. As of March 5, more than 457,000 income tax returns were filed from personal computers in Tennessee, up 20.2 percent compared to the same time last year, the Internal Revenue Service reports. Tennessee follows the national trend, in which more than 18 million income tax returns were filed electronically, up 20 percent from the 15.3 million filed from home by the same time last year. Combined with electronic filings from tax preparers, 1.27 million tax returns have been e-filed in Tennessee through March 5.

As unemployment figures continue to climb, state leaders are grappling with ways to assist the growing number of jobless workers, according to the Tennessee Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development. To process all the new claims, the department has beefed up its staff and expanded online programs to assist those finding themselves out of work. State Unemployment Insurance Department officials say 50 unemployment insurance interviewers have been added since last July with the department working nights, weekends and holidays to handle the huge volume of claims.

NATIONAL BRIEFS



The 13 Appalachian states could create thousands of jobs and save billions of dollars in energy costs if they aggressively pursued a strategy of energy efficiency, a report for the Appalachian Regional Commission concludes. The report predicts a 28 percent rise in energy consumption by 2030 for the 23.6 million residents of the Appalachian region, which stretches from Mississippi to New York. That consumption rise compares with a national increase of 19 percent. Meeting that kind of demand will require 40 new coal-fired electric power plants and 182 million barrels of oil, according to the report prepared by the Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance. If the states respond with an array of energy saving suggestions, they collectively could cut energy consumption by 24 percent by 2030.

Census data shows roughly one-fourth of the children in U.S. kindergartens are Hispanic, evidence of an accelerating trend that will see minority children become the majority by 2023, seven years earlier than was estimated. Hispanics also make up about one-fifth of all K-12 pupils, those in kindergarten through 12th grade. The accelerated timetable is predicted to be due to immigration among Hispanics and Asians, and declining birth rates among non-Hispanic whites. Minorities are projected to become the majority of the overall U.S. population by 2042.

With more food recalls happening weekly, consumer advocates, supermarket chains, and legislators are exploring better ways to stop the sale of tainted food. A plan under discussion by California lawmakers involves using supermarket checkout scanners. Programming supermarket computers to trigger an alert everytime a recalled product is scanned at the checkout counter to protect shoppers from buying and eating tainted foods.

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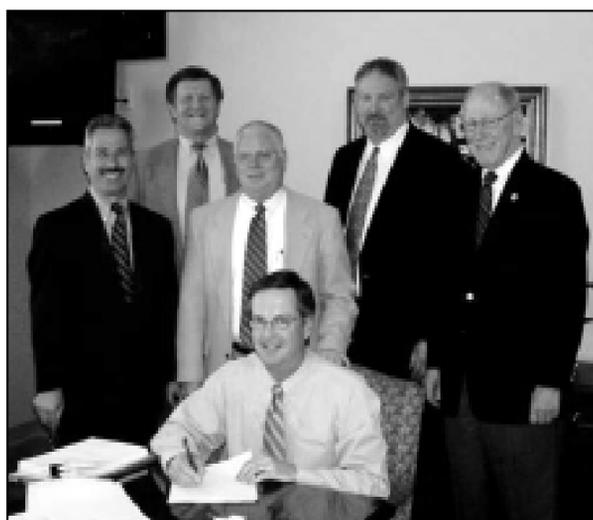
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Smart grid's growth depends on states

BY DANIEL C. VOCK
Stataline.org Staff Writer

Now that Congress has directed \$4.6 billion in stimulus spending toward developing a "smart" electric grid, it will be up to the states to get consumers on board and adjust rates to pay for the technology.

The improvements, backers say, will change nearly every part of the nation's aging power transmission system — from how power plants distribute power to how consumers use it at home.

The idea behind a smart grid — parts of which are already being introduced in Los Angeles, Boulder, Colo., and Austin, Texas — is to install devices that, working together, can save energy by increasing efficiency, reduce blackouts and cut customers' bills.

Smart meters, for example, could instantly report to customers the cost of electricity at any moment. Penny-pinching consumers could then turn off the air conditioning on a steamy August afternoon or run their clothes dryers at night to save money. Some appliances even could be programmed to turn off automatically if power gets too expensive.

Behind the scenes, new tools will also be able to quickly divert electricity around highly congested power lines, reducing the risk of costly and inconvenient power outages. Jesse Berst, the managing director of GlobalSmartEnergy.com, told a panel of governors in Washington, D.C., in February that the August 2003 blackout in the Northeast left 50 million people in eight states and Canada without power and caused \$6 billion in damages. And it happened in just 9 seconds.

Sensors also could better direct repair crews to the site of a downed power line, and utilities could remotely test a customer's connection to determine whether a power outage at a home is the result of a grid problem or wiring in the customer's house.

But for the plans to succeed, state regulators must overhaul the rules they have used for decades to determine electric rates.

"You can't have a smart grid and dumb rates. We have been used to — for over 100 years — rates that are the same all day, every day. That's not the way electricity is produced," Frederick Butler, president of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners.

Regulators likely also will be asked to approve rate hikes to pay for improvements to the grid. Much of the \$4.6 billion in the stimulus plan likely will be matching grants. State regulators could be asked to step in and approve rate hikes to

The American stimulus package is providing \$1.1 billion for utilities to develop smart grids. Included within the package is \$4.5 billion for the Department of Energy to use as matching grants for power providers and another \$6.4 billion that most likely will be used as loans for the power industry. Tennessee has been allocated \$190 million for smart grid investments.

A smart grid will allow utilities to monitor the flow of energy to homes and businesses in ways that were impossible before. Utilities will be able to set the price of electricity according to actual demand, which fluctuates throughout the day. Customers will also be able to manage their consumption more effectively by choosing the most appropriate times to consume power.

According to information provided by the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association, Smart Grid infrastructure and systems, including automated metering, would revolutionize power distribution in the TVA footprint. Estimates are that Smart Grid would, among other things:

- Reduce generation costs by \$1.5 billion, an amount equal to 3,000 megawatts or 10 percent of TVA's total load;
- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 14 million tons annually;
- Reduce, through demand response, 15 percent of TVA's fossil fuel generation; and
- Save \$13 billion in municipal and cooperative savings over the next 30 years.

Smart Grid's potential economic impact is no less dramatic — implementation would lead directly to an estimated 10,000 jobs Valleywide, with many more jobs likely to be created indirectly. TVA estimates that savings on customer electric bills could be as high as \$800 million per year Valleywide.

cover the remaining costs.

Already, states are pushing for major tests of smart grids. After the 2001 energy crisis that led to rolling blackouts in California, regulators there pressed for changes that would help them respond better to future emergencies. The need for a smart grid increased as California enacted new policies to cut greenhouse gas pollution, increase use of wind and solar power and promote the use of plug-in hybrid cars.

As a result, Southern California Edison, which covers a 50,000 square-mile area outside of Los Angeles, began distributing new electric meters to its customers last year. By 2012, it expects all 5 million of its smaller users to have the smart meters. The utility's largest customers — which use 60 percent of its power — have been using similar technology since 2003.

Smart meters are probably the most visible component of the smart grid, because they are in customers' homes. But the technology is most effective when combined with other improvements. A utility has to be able to communicate fluctuating electric rates instantly, for example, for customers to save money by buying cheaper power.

Butler, the New Jersey regulator who heads the national group of commissioners, cautioned that states and utilities should focus on other improvements first, like improving the reliability of their grids, before moving to smart meters. Rolling out the meters too soon could lead to sticker shock for customers, especially if their rates go up to pay for the meters but they don't see

immediate benefits, he said.

"You've got to be very careful in how you deploy these things in a way that end-use customers ... understand why it's worth paying a little extra for this meter," he said.

Southern California Edison is working on getting smart meters and appliances to customers, it's also pushing for upgrades that will help it better monitor its transmission system to get ready for new wind and solar plants in the area.

In Colorado, one utility is trying to combine many of the much-hyped smart grid technologies in Boulder to see whether the smart grid lives up to the promises of its supporters.

Xcel Energy designated the university town of roughly 100,000 people as "Smart Grid City." Xcel will compare customers with smart meters and those without to see whether the meters really pay off, said company spokesman Tom Henley.

The project includes improvements to store energy from Colorado's booming wind and solar industries, so that customers can use the electricity when they need it later.

Many of those technologies are on display at the University of Colorado chancellor's house. Rooftop solar panels collect electricity during the many sunny days; that electricity is then stored in the batteries of a plug-in hybrid vehicle.

So far, Boulder residents have welcomed the upgrades and frequently talking about adding higher-end features such as solar panels and plug-in hybrids, Henley said.



April 18-April 19: Home Grown & Hand Made

Pikeville. Second Annual Tennessee Volunteer Gourd Society's Annual Gourd/Craft Show.

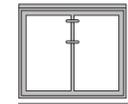
April 18- Thunder Road Festival

Downtown Rockwood. One of Tennessee's fastest growing festivals. Captures Rockwood's past as a location on the notorious Thunder Road. Bluegrass music all day, costume contests, fried pie/stack cake contests, classic cars, motorcycles and more. Check Civic Group Rockwood 2000 website for more details at www.rockwood2000.com or call Erika Schenk at 865-354-6800.

April 25-26- National Cornbread Festival

South Pittsburg. National Cornbread Cook-off, live entertainment, arts & crafts, and food vendors. For more information, call 423-837-0022.

COMING UP



April 2-4: 2nd annual Green Business and Living Summit and Expo on the Lipscomb University campus.

Promotes a sustainability focus on building, energy, transportation, home, office, electronics, waste elimination, and the environment. Keynote address by Gary Hirshberg, President and CEO of Stonyfield Farms. The Expo is open to the public and will feature experts offering exhibits, product demonstrations and information on how to live a greener life as well as products and services to support green business practices. For registration or for more information visit <http://sustainability.lipscomb.edu>

April 7: 11th Annual African American Leadership Conference.

Jackson. Held at the West Tennessee Center for Agricultural Research from 8:30 a.m.-2:15 p.m. Keynote speaker, Beverly Robertson of the Memphis Civil Rights Museum. Participants include entrepreneurs, city/county officials, state reps, college presidents, health officials, and others. Registration deadline: April 1. To register or for more information contact Virginia Grimes at 731-881-7298 or vgrimes@utm.edu.

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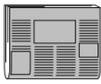
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CITY ADMINISTRATOR

SPRINGDALE, OH. The city is seeking applicants for the position of City Administrator. The current City Administrator is retiring after more than 24 years of service in the position. The Mayor appoints all executive department heads, including the City Administrator. The City Administrator is the full-time administrative officer of the city, responsible to and under the immediate direct supervision of the Mayor and responsible for supervising the administration of all executive departments. A bachelor's degree in public or business administration or a related field and at least five years of increasingly responsible management experience are required. A graduate degree in a related field and an ICMA credential are preferred. Salary DOQ. For more information, visit www.managementpartners.com. Send resumes ASAP to Mike Casey at mcasey@managementpartners.com. Email is preferred, or Management Partners, Inc., 1730 Madison Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45206 or fax 513-861-3480. Telephone: 513-861-5400. EOE M/F/D/V

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

SPRING HILL. The city is seeking an experienced city administrator with extensive knowledge and experience in municipal finance, public works, utility management, community and economic development, retail development, public safety and public relations. The applicant must have strong planning and administrative skills and experience in municipal budgeting in a similar sized city. The new administrator should be capable of developing a strategic plan with a vision for the future. The administrator must instill teamwork within the organization and effectively motivate the staff in the attainment of city goals and objectives. The administrator must have strong conflict resolution skills, be energetic and accessible. The candidate must be an effective communicator with the ability to manage complex projects and issues. The candidate must be a problem solver with the ability to think ahead and effectively communicate with the city council, staff, and the general public. The candidate must be able to effectively plan and execute in a political environment. Minimum qualifications are a bachelor's degree in business or public administration with eight (8) years of municipal experience in a similar sized city. A master's degree in business or public administration is preferred. EOE. Resumes will be received through April 15, 2009. Municipal Technical Advisory Service, 226 Capitol Boulevard, Suite 606, Nashville, Tennessee 37219-1804. E-mail: ron.darden@tennessee.edu

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

CLARKSVILLE. The City has an opening for a Director of Finance and Revenue. The position will be responsible for oversight of the fiscal affairs of the City of Clarksville and will serve as the primary authority and spokesperson for the City on all financial matters. Duties include but are not limited to: advising the Mayor, City Council, and department heads on all fiscal matters; providing oversight and directions for preparation of the annual budget for all funds, including appropriations to external agencies; directing the execution of the city's financial reporting; formulating and implementing fiscal policies and procedures to ensure proper internal controls; and reviewing and approving hiring, promotion, and reclassification

of finance personnel. Work is performed in an office environment with the maximum degree of initiative and prudent judgment. Minimum job qualifications include but are not limited to: A Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Finance, Business, or a related field plus 10 years of progressively responsible accounting experience, with five years at the management level; Certified Public Accountant Certification, Certified Public Finance Officer (Government Finance Officers Association) and/or Certified Government Financial Manager (Association of Government Accountants) preferred; compliance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Officer Certification and Education Act of 2007 within eighteen months of hire; knowledge of leadership and managerial principles; governmental accounting principles and practices; project management principles; applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, codes, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and standards; fund accounting systems and principles; internal control practices; financial analysis principles and methods; generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP); research methods and techniques; policy and procedure development and implementation practices; skill in monitoring and evaluating the work of subordinate staff; preparing and analyzing complex financial reports and financial information; handling multiple tasks simultaneously; collaborating with external agencies, and communicating with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, etc., sufficiently to exchange or convey information. The Director of Finance will perform duties under the direction of the City Council and the Mayor. The salary range for this position is \$66,126 - \$103,200, and starting salary will be based on experience and overall job qualifications. A complete job description is available upon request from the Human Resources Department. Qualified candidates should send resume/cover letter no later than Friday, May 8, 2009, to: Ms. Jackie Perkins, City of Clarksville- Human Resources, 1 Public Square Suite 200, Clarksville, TN 37040, (931) 645-7451 jackie.perkins@cityofclarksville.com

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

SPARTA. The city is accepting employment applications for the position of Public Works Director. Application forms and job descriptions can be obtained at Sparta City Hall, 6 Liberty Square, Mon. through Fri., 7:30 AM until 4:30 PM. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. For more information, call 931-836-3248 or email llspivey@citlink.net. It is the policy of the City of Sparta not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability in its hiring and employment practices, or in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services and activities.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS MUNICIPAL PLANNING SERVICES

The Town of Kingston Springs is requesting proposals for the provision of professional, contractual planning services on a part-time basis. Proposals will be accepted at City Hall beginning March 30, 2009 and ending on May 15, 2009. Services are to be provided beginning July 1, 2009. Applicants must minimally have a bachelor's degree in planning, Masters' Degree preferred. Five years of experience preferred, government experience a plus. Specifications for the RFP are available on the website at www.kingstonsprings.net or at City Hall or by calling 615-952-2110, ext. 15 during business hours, 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Mon. through Fri. City Hall is located at 396 Spring Street, Kingston Springs, Tennessee. The mailing address is P.O. Box 256, Kingston Springs, TN 37082, Laurie Cooper, City Manager.

ACEC presents Awards for Engineering Excellence

TML associate member Gresham, Smith and Partners, Nashville, has won the 2009 Iris Award, the Grand Award for Engineering Excellence and top prize in the annual statewide awards competition sponsored by the American Council of Engineering Companies of Tennessee (ACEC of Tennessee). Honored in Nashville before an audience of more than 250 Tennessee engineers, business and civic leaders, and officials for its water resources engineering work on the New Orleans Pump Station Expansion completed in Louisiana for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, the firm's storm water pumping station system was designed to withstand a threshold category 5 hurricane.

The team designed and constructed two pumping stations capable of unmanned operation, the project confirms that marine structures can be adapted to accommodate large pumps instead of a more typical concrete structure and may lead to new standards in pumping station design.

TML associate members receiving Honor Awards for completed projects include:

- **Allen & Hoshall, Memphis,** The David Crockett State Park Energy Conservation Project in Lawrenceburg completed for the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration;
- **AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc.** An Honor Award for The Wolf Creek Dam Integrated GIS Database, Website, and 3D model, a surveying and mapping technology project completed for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District;
- **Askew Hargraves Harcourt & Associates, Inc., Memphis,** The Highland/Getwell Force Main and Pumping Station in Memphis, completed for the City of Memphis;
- **Barge, Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon, Inc.** An Honor Award for The Stream Relocation/Restoration for Volkswagen Site in Chattanooga, a water resources engineering project for the Hamilton County Government;
- **Camp Dresser & McKee, Inc.,** The Wastewater Capacity Information Management System in Knoxville, a studies, research and consulting engineering project completed for the Knoxville Utilities Board; and
- **EnSafe Inc., Memphis,** The Smarthouse Way Southern Tract in North Little Rock, Arkansas, completed for Main Street Argenta, Inc.



Gresham, Smith and Partners, Nashville. The New Orleans Pump Station Expansion, a project completed in Louisiana for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District.



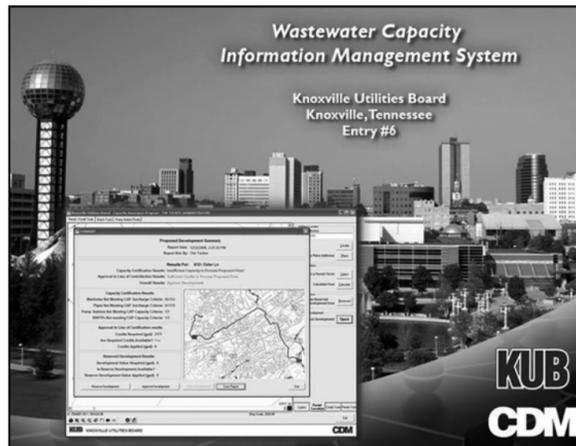
EnSafe Inc., Memphis, The Smarthouse Way Southern Tract in North Little Rock, Ark.



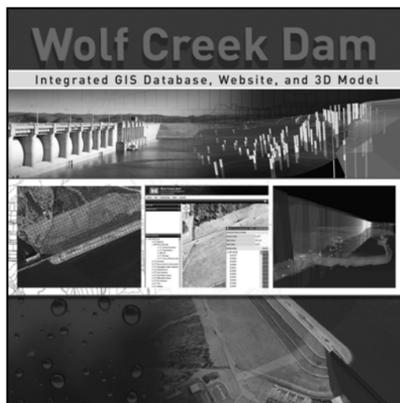
Allen & Hoshall, Memphis, The David Crockett State Park Energy Conservation Project in Lawrenceburg.



Barge Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon Inc., The Stream Relocation/Restoration for the Volkswagen Site in Chattanooga.



Above, Camp Dresser & McKee, Inc. The Wastewater Capacity Information Management System in Knoxville, a studies, research and consulting engineering project.



At left, AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc. The Wolf Creek Dam Integrated GIS Database, Website, and 3D model, a surveying and mapping technology project completed for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Nashville District.

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Toolbox reflects Lebanon's urban, transit-oriented future

BY VICTORIA SOUTH

TML Communications Coordinator

This article is the second of a four-part series about Cumberland Region Tomorrow's quality planning efforts across Middle Tennessee showcasing Toolbox Pilot projects.

As she journeyed through the land of "Oz," Dorothy made an amazing discovery, not only was there "no place like home," but the choice to return there had been hers all along. National trends in regional development are drawing many Tennesseans home to "livable communities" by way of new urban revitalization and design. A resurgence of quaint town centers, mixed-use developments and historic overlays paired with mass transit and pedestrian friendly options: commuter rail, bike lanes, sidewalks and greenways holds the promise of exciting hybrids where 21st century technology meets the solid design principles of the past.

"Many communities think that the only way they can grow is out or through annexation," said Dr. Bridget Jones, PhD., executive director of Cumberland Region Tomorrow (CRT), a non-profit group that with its partners provides encouragement, technical assistance and the educational tools to help facilitate and implement quality regional planning.

Magi Tilton.

Lebanon's vision, revitalizing and reinvesting in their downtown district, would provide more connectivity and an urban feel while tying the city's vital core amenities together that include the historic Town Square, The Mill, a large factory undergoing renovations as a conference center, and a greenway system that links the square and the mill to the Music City Star rail stop which borders a favorite town park. A local Farmer's Market, Cumberland University, and the former Castle Heights Military Academy are all high points as well.

"Transit-oriented development with people living in nice condos, a way to get to downtown that's walkable and bikable would work great in Lebanon," McDearman said.

"The transit option really puts us in front of some other communities," Tilton added.

"Cumberland University, our transportation system, a greenway system, the park, all touch



Photo courtesy of CRT

A half-mile radius being considered for redevelopment encompasses Lebanon's historic town square, The Mill, a renovated factory featuring meeting spaces, a greenway system linking the square and the mill to the Music City Star transit stop and the Don Fox Park.



Photo by Victoria South

Magi Tilton, Lebanon planning director, Professor TK Davis, UT Architecture School and John McDearman, senior vice president of Wilson Bank & Trust discuss plans to make Lebanon a transit-oriented, urban community through downtown redevelopment projects.

CRT's *Quality Growth Toolbox*, addresses suburban sprawl and the disintegration of Southern downtown districts that once served as social and economic hubs. Successful revitalization efforts, according to CRT, include reinvestment, maintenance, renovation and reuse of older core commercial areas, neighborhoods, buildings, and infrastructures, which are ultimately linked to a community's historic sense of place and identity.

"We want to get people excited about doing these things," said Jones. "Our goal is to make communities wildly successful. We sat

the edge of the town square. This is how our city was originally developed."

During an 18-month time line beginning in 2007 and culminating to the recent development of proposed master plans, CRT got busy helping the city coordinate leadership teams and preparing an invitation list that included local stakeholders, city and county officials and civic and business leaders for the 2007 and 2008 visioning workshops. Both workshops were free and open to the public. Architects and engineers volunteered their services for the workshops at an estimated value of



Photo courtesy of CRT

During Lebanon's AIA 150 Blueprint for America Assessment and Visioning Workshops, teams broke into smaller groups to review and mark blueprints of Lebanon's downtown area.

down with Ed Cole, TDOT's chief of Environment and Planning, and decided to take the *Toolbox* into communities that already had a strong interest and leadership in place. Our whole approach is community based; therefore, strong interest and leadership must already be in place for the process to work."

In a partnership forged in 2007 between CRT and The American Institute of Architects (AIA), Kingston Springs, Springfield and Lebanon were selected as promising Toolbox pilot communities and would complete AIA 150 Blueprint for America Assessment and Visioning Workshops honoring AIA's 150th birthday.

As the final stop on Nashville's Music City Star commuter rail line, Lebanon is currently the only one of the three with a transit-oriented development option. In a prior meeting with CRT, public officials there indicated increasing concern about the quality of the city's growth patterns, and the desire to retain the community's traditional character while undergoing sustainable growth.

"Bridget Jones came to town and opened my eyes to the possibilities here," said John McDearman, senior vice president of Wilson Bank & Trust, who co-chairs Lebanon's pilot project along with the city's Planning Director,

\$25,000 per session.

With community interest running high, six key community leaders volunteered to serve as co-chairs of the AIA Visioning Workshop focus groups and a citizen-based AIA Advisory Committee completed the 4-hour "Reinvesting in Towns and City Centers and Communities Planning and Design Workshop" based on CRT's *Quality Growth Toolbox*.

CRT also coordinated site visits between the AIA Advisory Committee and the neighboring cities of Gallatin, Springfield, Franklin, and Columbia helping Lebanon research the Best Practices methods of other CRT communities.

More than 140 people turned out both days of the August 2007 workshop, with similar attendance figures in 2008. Participants answered AIA's community assessment questionnaire determining Lebanon's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats while teams broke into smaller work groups headed by architects and with blueprints and pens in hand, drew concepts reflecting Lebanon's potential as a transit-oriented community.

"The 2007 workshop was highly beneficial," Tilton said. "We broke through to citi-

zens about our goal to make Lebanon more pedestrian friendly."

Tilton was also instrumental in updating city zoning ordinances that prohibited living above businesses in downtown. She notes that persistent concerns depicting downtown as a flood zone have been alleviated by a recent floodplain study initiated by Historic Lebanon Tomorrow, which revealed a more positive and cheaper outcome than anticipated.

Designating downtown as a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district or utilizing some other investment strategies for downtown projects have been financing options discussed by AIA participants.

"We need to think outside the box," said Dave Keiser, CRT program director. "Everybody wants mass transit, (statewide and nationally) but they're not using it because it's not close enough to where they



Photo by Victoria South

Thomas McDaniel, Vanderbilt professor for the Owen Graduate School of Management Real Estate Development program, facilitates discussion at a recent meeting between students and the Lebanon community.



Photo by Victoria South

Lebanon is the final stop station on Nashville's Music City Star commuter rail line. One of the prototypical opportunities at all six of the Music City Star's transit stops is transit-oriented development.

live."

"Our transportation system, with its vast network of roads, bus routes, rail lines, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes, is the backbone of the region, said officials with the Nashville Area MPO.

"Coordinated planning of that system is critical to the continued growth of our local and regional economies."

In Lebanon, tomorrow's visionaries are already leading the way. CRT provided an option for the city's visioning process to be adopted as a design project for students of The University of Tennessee Knoxville School of Architecture who, for the first time, teamed with third year students from the Vanderbilt University Owen Graduate School of Management Real Estate Development Program.

Instructed by Professor TK Davis, UT's students, have been designing Master Plans covering the half-mile radius encompassing Lebanon's downtown area and transit stop as part of a portfolio, while the Vanderbilt students, assisted by professional developers from the Urban Land Institute Nashville District Council, are conducting market analysis and strategies for future developments as they prepare a detailed pro forma financial analysis of the project.

"We've had people say we've been down this road before," McDearman said, "but since then, things have happened to help make this project a reality."

At a recent meeting, an audience of AIA visioning team members, public officials, and

local residents were enthralled as the students presented renderings of a revitalized downtown Lebanon complete with residential lofts, a hotel, parking garage and space for eclectic shops and restaurants. All plans, according to Davis, follow the guidelines of CRT's *Quality Growth Toolbox*.

"It is a brilliant document," said Davis "It fits every situation. It is as useful in Mountain City as it is in Memphis."

Lebanon's hard work will culminate when the students present the city's Master Plans before 25 developers April 24 in downtown Nashville.

"We're so excited about this last piece of the puzzle," said McDearman. "The students have presented great ideas and are working to make them attractive to developers. There must be a mindset for change to get people on board with the cost."

"The Toolbox program is a wonderful way to approach new development," agrees Jones. "It's the wave of the future."

To view the results of Lebanon's AIA 150 Blueprint for America Visioning Workshop, visit Cumberland Region Tomorrow's website at www.cumberlandregiontomorrow.org.

CRT offers training for planners and elected officials as well as classes on community reinvestment and other regional development topics. For more information or to obtain a copy of the *Quality Growth Toolbox*, call Executive Director Bridget Jones at 615-986-2699 or visit the CRT website at www.cumberlandregiontomorrow.org.



Make plans to attend CRT's upcoming "Convening the Region" Summit 2009

Cumberland Region Tomorrow (CRT) is an organization with a single goal: to make a difference in our region's future. To learn more about the CRT's opportunities, make your plans to be at the 2009 "Convening the Region" Summit May 27, 2009.

Come and share your input and insights on how to make the Cumberland Region better for tomorrow.

For more information about this event, including registration, speaker bios and agenda, visit the Summit website at www.10power.org. Visit CRT's website at www.cumberlandregiontomorrow.org.

