6,250 subscribers www.TML1.org Volume 74, Number 2 February 2023

The Time is Now!

Our state's economy is strong and the envy of our neighboring

Tennessee's solid financial position continues to outpace the national averages in economic growth, population growth, and in GDP growth. According to recent reports from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Tennessee had the second fastest economic growth in 2022. Tennessee's economy grew to a record \$368.6 million in output, nearly two-anda-half times above the national average. And Tennessee's population outpaced the nation as a whole.

This news is only underscoresd by the recent January revenues report released by the TN Department of Finance and Administration that shows the state collected \$1.2 billion more than the budgeted estimate for the first six months of the 2022-2023 fiscal year, which represents a growth rate of 8.75 percent for the first half of the year.

Cities and towns have played an integral role in the state's fiscal prosperity. On average, about 90 % of the sales tax revenues are generated within city limits.

And with unprecedented growth related to the influx of people who are relocating here and have chosen to make our great state their home, cities and towns are worried how they will continue to keep up with the investments needed without further burdening our taxpayers.

Our cities and towns are facing ever-increasing costs to provide essential services, keep our communities safe, and to maintain vital



Bobby King Henderson Mayor TML President

infrastructure.

With more than nine years of economic growth, now, is the time for the state to return 100% of the shared revenues that will help local governments manage inflationary pressures, and ease the burden on the local property tax.

Now is the time to urge your state lawmaker to pass legislation that would return more sales tax dollars to all cities and towns.

Gov. Lee and members of the Tennessee General Assembly not only need to hear from you about what these essential revenues will mean for your community, but it is imperative that you secure your legislators' support for this restoration legislation. Every municipal official must communicate the benefits of restoration to their legislators and secure their support for this effort.

This legislation SB462 (Briggs) / HB1187 (Garrett) is the League's No. 1 priority for 2023. In order for us to succeed, your support of and engagement in these efforts are essential.

The Time is Now!

Gov. Lee delivers fifth State of State

Touts economic growth and fiscal stability

Gov. Bill Lee delivered his fifth State of the State address and presented budget and legislative priorities for the upcoming year to a joint session of the General Assembly on Feb. 6.

"Our state's strong fiscal stewardship places Tennessee in one of the strongest budgetary positions in history and allows for investments to secure continued success," said Lee.

His proposed \$55.6 billion budget includes major funding for transportation, K-12 education, public safety, and the creation three additional state parks.

Key highlights include: Transportation & Infrastruc-

ture Funding \$3B to alleviate urban congestion and fund rural road

- projects across the state \$300M added to the State Aid
- Road Program for local road Proposing new comprehen-
- sive legislation centering on Alternative Delivery Models, Public-Private Partnerships, Electric/Hybrid Vehicle Fees **Education**

- \$350M including \$125 million for teacher pay raise
- \$952M updates existing TCAT facilities and creates new buildings and additions for state-wide facilities

Law & Safety

\$33.25M to adds 100 state troopers and related supervisory staff as well as 25 forensic services staff to improve public safety



(AP Photo/Mark Zaleski)

Gov. Lee's proposed \$55.6 billion budget includes major funding for transportation, K-12 education, public safety, and the creation of three additional state parks.

\$50M - Violent Crime Intervention Fund expansion which expands grant funding to local communities and provides new support for local jails and sheriffs through new training programs **State Parks / Environmental**

\$328 .7M to improves accessibility to state parks, upgrade existing outdoor spaces, and to create three new state parks.

Tax Cuts

\$412 Million for tax cuts in-

cluding \$288.3M for a one-time three-month sales tax holiday on food from August 1 to October 31,

Rainy Day Fund

\$250M to the state's Rainy-Day Fund, taking the total to more than \$1.8 Billion.

Key highlights and the full speech can be found <u>here.</u>

A Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget overview can be found here.

Register for TML's Legislative Conference

Gov. Bill Lee will head up an all-star lineup of state officials who are scheduled to speak at TML's 2023 Legislative Conference, slated for March 13 - 14 in Nashville at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Downtown.

Also confirmed on the agenda are Lt. Gov. Randy McNally, House Speaker Cameron Speaker, TN Comptroller Jason Mumpower, TDOT Commissioner Butch Eley, and TBI Deputy Director Brad Nealon.

Registration opens Monday, March 13 at 8:30 a.m. with a meetand-greet coffee break with TML's sponsored programs - Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund, Public Entity Partners, and the various TML Partnered Programs.

Lunch will be served at noon. The conference program will run from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. with a host of speakers from our state leadership. Attendees are encouraged to attend the House and Senate floor sessions that evening at the Capitol.

Tuesday's agenda will begin with an early breakfast and more presentations before adjourning to attend committee meetings at Cordell Hull.

The Legislative Conference is a great opportunity to connect with your fellow municipal officials;

hear from our state leaders on key legislation and public policy matters affecting your municipality; and to meet with your Senator and Representative on Capitol Hill.

Monday, March 13 8 -11:30 am Sponsorship

Program 8:30 a.m. Registration 12 noon Lunch 1 - 4 p.m. Speaker Program Visit Capitol 5 p.m.

Tuesday, March 14 8 a.m.Breakfast 8:30 - 10 a.m. Speaker Program Adjourned

10 a.m. For a tentative Agenda To register, Register City Officials

Negative perceptions, divisions leading younger generations from careers in local government



Feelings that local governments don't represent them or aren't interested in their opinions are one of the many reasons Millennials and Gen Zers aren't seeking local government jobs or to run for local elections. As more Baby Boomers leave the workforce, municipalities may need to rethink their approach to hiring and their image if they want to attract more employees from younger generations into local government.

Bv KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

While many local governments were struggling to fill positions prior to 2020, the pandemic combined with the Baby Boomer generation reaching retirement age has meant that municipal governments are struggling now more than ever to hire for open positions.

A recent survey by the Mission Square Institute found that 38% of state and local government employees who were retirement eligible had accelerated their retirement date and a full 52% of local and state employees were considering leaving their position - either retiring or moving into the private sector – due to factors like burnout and low pay.

"Retirees are not being replaced by new workers, as applications for state and local government jobs dropped by an alarming 32 percent between fiscal years 2019 and 2021," the survey stated. "This is also visible in opening rates: The hires-per-job opening ratio for state and local government (excluding education) is lower than for all other private sector industries."

Recruiting younger employees

DIVISIONS Stacy Richardson, chief of staff for the National League of Cities (NLC), said many municipalities find that how younger people perceive both local government and governments in general can sometimes be an obstacle.

PERCEPTIONS AND

"There is a big perception problem at play," she said. "Many people – especially younger people - see the hyper-partisan rhetoric happening at the state and federal level is becoming increasingly localized and think public service is not a worthwhile endeavor. They may feel like they can make more of a difference in the private sector either for a non-profit or mission driven for-profit organization." Jacob Gottleib, a research spe-

cialist with NLC's Center for City Solutions, said with corporations and nonprofits marketing themselves as places that provide public good, local governments may need to rebrand their own message of the positive change and community good government employees can accomplish.

"The public sector used to have this capitalization of social enterprise," he said. "People felt if they worked for local government, they could bring about change in their community. Governments need to update that message a little and give it a facelift. Instead of talking about making changes in your community, talk about See YOUTH on Page 6

What the new "Waters of the U.S." rule means for local governments

BY CAROLYN BERNDT NLC Sustainability Director

In December, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) released a new final rule on which waterbodies are federally regulated as "waters of the U.S." (WOTUS)

under the Clean Water Act.

This Biden Administration rule represents the third such rule to define and clarify which waterbodies are considered "waters of the U.S.." Previously, the 2015 Obama Clean Water Rule and the 2020 Trump Navigable Waters Protection Rule were struck down by the courts. One of the goals of the agencies with this rule is to establish a "durable" definition, which has been the subject of long-standing confusion and uncertainty following Supreme Court rulings in 2001 and 2006.

With this new rule, the regulations revert back to those in place "pre-2015"—meaning those in place in 1986 with key changes to align with the 2001 and 2006 U.S. Supreme Court rulings.

Here are four key things for local leaders to know about the Revised Definition of "Waters of the United States."

One of the controversial pieces of the WOTUS rulemakings has been the determination on wetlands. Under this new rule, wetlands and other water bodies that meet either of the judicially



The new rule tries to find the middle ground compared to the Obama and Trump rules. The rule provides an exclusion for waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons that are designed to meet the requirements of the Clean Water Act, but not specifically for stormwater.

created tests would be regulated under the Clean Water Act:

Being "relatively permanent," standing or continuously flowing or with a connection to larger waterbodies; or Having a "significant nexus"

connection or effect on larger waterbodies.

While the Obama rule greatly expanded the number of waterbodies federally regulated with its definitions, including placing distance limits on how far wetlands and other waterbodies could be from larger waters and be covered under the Clean Water Act, the Trump rule narrowed federal jurisdiction and instead relied on the States to offer protections for important waterbodies. This new rule falls someplace in the middle.

In a joint comment letter to

EPA and Army Corps in Feb. 2022, NLC urged the agencies to make public and private stormwater control features and other municipally-owned facilities, particularly those related to drinking water, wastewater and stormwater control features, explicitly excluded under the final rule, as was in both the Obama and Trump rules.

For example, the 2020 Trump rule stated that, "stormwater control features constructed or excavated in upland or in non-jurisdictional waters to convey, treat, infiltrate, or store stormwater runoff" were not "waters of the U.S." In leaving this language out of this new rule, the agencies state that including the exclusion would not be consistent with the pre-2015 regulatory regime. The agencies See WOTUS on Page 7

can help bridge the gap, but many local governments are struggling to recruit and retain employees from younger generations. One reason for this may be that many younger citizens feel disconnected from government.

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BRISTOL

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has awarded top honors to the city of Bristol for demonstrating a "spirit of full disclosure" when preparing the city's annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021. The latest award recognizes Bristol's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for 2020-2021 and marks the 19th consecutive year the city has received GFOA's highest form of recognition in government accounting and financial reporting. Award winners are selected by members of the GFOA professional staff and a committee comprised of those with expertise in public sector financial reporting.

CLEVELAND

SK Food Group, Inc., officials announced the company will invest \$205.2 million to construct its fourth production facility in Cleveland, creating 840 new jobs by 2030. K Food Group's new 525,000-square-foot manufacturing facility will support the company's growing consumer demand by utilizing state-of-theart automated technology to assist with sandwich assembly and food handling. Located on Lot 1 in the Spring Branch Industrial Park in Cleveland, construction will begin before the end of the year and is anticipated to reach completion in 2025. Founded as a mobile catering business in 1942, SK Food Group is an Arizona-based premium custom foods manufacturer. Today, the company specializes in supplying sandwiches, wraps, snacks, flatbreads, burgers and other protein snacks for branding by corporate customers worldwide.

Nokian Tyres officials announced the company will double its tire production capabilities by investing \$174.1 million to expand operations at its Dayton facility. The Dayton location was Nokian's first U.S. factory and opened in 2019. The expansion will create an additional 75 jobs, bringing the company's total number of employees in Tennessee to 475. With the additional employment and construction of a 600,000-squarefoot tire warehouse, Nokian Tyres will strengthen the company's nine-warehouse network across the U.S. and Canada by reaching full production capacity of up to four million tires per year by 2024. Hiring at the Dayton factory will begin in March. Founded in Finland, Nokian Tyres develops, manufactures and distributes its premium tires worldwide with operations in Europe, North America and Asia. Since establishing a presence in Dayton three years ago, Nokian Tyres will have invested more than \$400 million and created 475 new jobs in Tennessee once this expansion is complete.

JACKSON

Pace Industries, LLC officials announced the company will expand manufacturing operations at its Lower Brownsville Road facility in Jackson. Pace Industries will invest \$2.8 million and create 49 new jobs through the expansion. Once complete, the increase in staffing and additional investment in the Jackson location will allow Pace Industries to better serve its growing customer demand for aluminum, zinc and magnesium die casting. Founded in 1970, Pace Industries, LLC is North America's leading full-service aluminum, zinc and magnesium die casting manufacturer. From automotive to lawn and garden, the company serves an array of industries with die casting from its 17 operations across the U.S. and Mexico.

KNOXVILLE

A new museum dedicated to an influential artist is on track to open next year in Knoxville. The Beauford Delaney Museum will pay tribute to the world-renowned artist and his family, who were prominent members of the Knoxville community. Delaney was a well-known painter of the Harlem Renaissance and his brother Joseph Delaney was also a noted artist. The Delaney home will be renovated into a museum space that provides gathering spots for artists and visitors, exhibits on Delaney's work and life in Knoxville, an augmented reality experience

bringing visitors into Paris as it was in the time period Delaney lived there, and serve as a revitalization project for the larger community. Organizers hope the museum will be open in early 2024. The home is next door to the Beck Cultural Exchange Center and will be a part of the museum and community center's campus. Beauford Delaney's older brother Samuel was one of the founding members of the Beck and Joseph Delaney was the first artist to have an exhibit at the Beck.

LA VERGNE

The city of La Vergne has approved and authorized a citywide conversion of its streetlight system to new energy-efficient LED fixtures in a process that will save the city more than \$4.3 million and pay for itself in 15 years. These LED streetlights will reduce ongoing energy and maintenance costs while providing enhancements to both the aesthetics of our community and public safety. The project will take place between February and April. The total upfront cost for the project is \$2,347,829 while the annual ECM savings is expected to be \$159,726. Based on the savings, the project will pay for itself in less than 15 years, with an estimated 20-year return on investment of \$4,356,932, for a net savings of almost \$2 million over that time frame. The city has also applied for and was approved to receive TVA Energyright incentives in the amount of \$40,847 for this project. Hydaker-Wheatlake, through their contract with PATH Company, will conduct the conversion and installation of the new fixtures.

LEBANON

A.O. Smith Corp said they will spend \$30 million to expand their Lebanon plant and build a product development center, adding 150 employers. The Milwaukee-based company already runs a facility in Wisconsin showcasing his advanced water heating and water treatment research and development efforts. The Lebanon facility will serve as a hub for commercial water heating and hydronics product development. It will bring together the company's North America water heating commercial engineering, platform electronics, product support and product management functions with Lochinvar engineering and product management, a Lebanon-based company A.O. Smith acquired in 2011. The company also has a product and support management team in Ashland City and another facility in McBee, S.C

The city of Martin will conduct a yearlong celebration of the city's sesquicentennial. The celebration of the 150 years since Martin's incorporation will include a digital campaign highlighting the city's history and providing a schedule of the numerous events planned for the celebration. Events begin with a kickoff concert on July 1 followed by festivities on the Fourth of July, at the Martin Marks Market on July 29, the 30th Annual Tennessee Soybean Festival, Martober and Christmas events. For more information, visit www.cityofmartin. net/150th.

MEMPHIS

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital has filed for permits to construct the largest project by dollar amount to be done in Memphis history. The nonprofit filed a construction permit with the city and the Shelby County Division of Planning and Development to erect two 15-story towers on its campus. The first is a \$40 million outpatient clinic building while the second is a \$34 million clinical office building. Combined, the two buildings will be valued at \$1 billion, making it the largest project in city history. The towers are part of St. Jude's larger five-year, \$12.9 billion strategic plan that will also bring 2,300 new jobs to the area. St. Jude has also set aside another \$1.3 billion for other renovations and construction, including Domino's Village and smaller projects.

MILAN

ZLINE Kitchen and Bath officials announced the company will be investing in a multimillion-dollar expansion in its Northwest Tennessee distribution operations by locating

Rivian opens charging site in Paris park



Rivian and Clearloop have unveiled the first of Rivian's new Waypoints electric vehicle (EV) charging site outside of a Tennessee state park at Eiffel Tower Park in Paris. The charging site is part of a partnership to support the development of one megawatt (MW) of the Paris Solar Farm project. The Waypoints chargers across Tennessee will be powered by 100 percent carbon-free renewable energy. Rivian and Clearloop are working together to expand access to clean energy in the communities that can benefit the most. Solar power currently makes up less than 1% of Tennessee's total electricity mix. Rivian's new Waypoints will allow any electric vehicle to charge with renewable energy at Eiffel Tower Park thanks to its industry-standard J1772 plug. Waypoints chargers are currently located in 11 state parks across Tennessee. As of December 2022, Rivian's 1MW portion of the Paris Solar Farm-Puryear is expected to annually generate more renewable energy than is needed for all of these sites combined.

Lakesite buries 50th anniversary time capsule



The city of Lakesite has marked its 50th anniversary with the burial of a time capsule to be reopened in 2072. The time capsule is the first in city history and contains treasures and mementos from citizens collected from the 50th anniversary celebrations held last October. Items were collected representing both current and historical Lakesite events as well as a badge from the former city police department, photos of commissioners past and present, a map of Hamilton County from after the city was incorporated in 1972, and marketing material from the original Lakesite subdivision. Items commemorating the COVID-19 pandemic, a letter from Mayor David Howell to the future mayor of Lakesite, and other items were also included. The capsule was recently buried in front of city hall and will wait another 50 years to be dug up when Lakesite celebrates its centennial.

a new facility in Milan. Four years after establishing its distribution headquarters in Bruceton, ZLINE will expand as it acquires the former Dura Automotive Systems building, creating 50 new jobs in Milan. The additional back-office and logistics workforce at the Milan plant will support ZLINE's logistics headquarters in Bruceton by adding an additional customer service center and enhancing the company's distribution of ranges, refrigerators, stoves, ovens, microwaves and hoods. ZLINE will employ more than 100 people in Northwest Tennessee through the expansion. Founded by Andrew Zuro in 2007 and headquartered in Reno, Nev., ZLINE Kitchen and Bath is a family-owned leading luxury appliance manufacturer and distributor. Each ZLINE distribution center houses various departments, ranging from shipping, customer service, sales, marketing and other business development teams.

MORRISON

Bottling Company International (BCI) officials announced the company will invest \$9.5 million to establish a new bottling, storage and distribution facility in Morrison, creating 57 new jobs. BCI has acquired the former McCormick Warehouse in Morrison, where it will bottle and distribute Nashville-based Pennington Distilling's brand-name whiskey, vodka and rum. Founded in March 2022, Bottling Company International specializes in the bottling and distribution of vodka, whiskey and other spirits. BCI will serve the company's growing customer base from its sole location in Morrison.

MORRISTOWN

Officials with the city of Morristown and Greenworks Commercial celebrated the ribbon cutting of the new Greenworks facility at the former GE building. Greenworks specializes in the manufacturing of lithium-ion battery operated zero-emission outdoor power

Jefferson City Fire Department receives donation from AAA



The Jefferson City Fire Department received a grant of \$14,000 from AAA to purchase needed equipment. The funds have been used to purchase an air jack apparatus, also known as the "jaws of life," which are used to create space and extricate victims. From left to right are Firefighter Andy Morgan, Firefighter Aaron Lee, Jefferson City Fire Chief Lee Turner, AAA's Stephanie Milani, Firefighters Cole Park, Josh Valentine, and Michael Needham. (Photo by Mark Brown, The Standard Banner)

equipment, including lawn mowers, pressure washers, trimmers, leaf blowers, and more. The initial \$25 million investment in the facility will focus on the manufacture of commercial and residential lithium-ion battery ride-on mowers and will create approximately 150 jobs by the end of 230 with a potential to create as many as 400 jobs by 2025 as the company continues to

expand, offering high-tech career opportunities. This initial phase provides an annual production capacity of 30,000 ride-on mowers, gradually increasing to 80,000 by 2025. The U.S. engineering team collaborates with Greenworks' main R&D campus in Changzhou, China, and its Autonomous and Robotics R&D Center in Jönköping, Sweden.

Aging infrastructure, severe weather challenges to water resiliency

By KATE COILTML Communications Specialist

With more frequent and more severe weather occurring, strategies are changing on how cities must manage their water and wastewater resources both in times of crises and

day-to-day.

A recent webinar co-sponsored by Government Technology and Governing magazine, "The Climate Crisis is a Water Crisis: The Role of Collective Government Action in Addressing Water Crises," addressed how cities need to take a proactive approach to water resiliency during a time when aging and outdated infrastructure is facing the demands of extreme weather events that are increasing in number, frequency, and the amount of damage they cause.

Andy Kricun, managing director at Moonshot Mission and a senior fellow at the U.S. Water Alliance, said different parts of the U.S. are facing different issues when it comes to water.

"On the eastern half of the U.S., we have the case of too much water and flooding," he said. "We have aging infrastructure and issues of combined sewage flooding where sewage is going into people's homes or rivers when it rains. In the eastern half of the country, you are also seeing river levels rising. That is a problem for stormwater control and coastal communities. On the western half, climate change has led to drought problems. It is a significant challenge for the entire country. The drought conditions are making water tables drop. In the Southern part of the U.S., we have seen issues where freezing and colder than usual weather has caused the freezing of water lines that were not designed for that weather, causing service interruptions there."

Kricun said severe weather events can also cause secondary issues that have negative impact on water resources.

"Less obvious, for example, is that more severe storm events increase the probability of power outages," he said. "Power outages can then stop the operation plant of a wastewater or drinking water plant, and you lose access to drinking water or have upsets in the wastewater treatment. That is a significant problem that requires a response to ensure resiliency."

Additionally, Kricun said some communities are disproportionately impacted by severe weather events and water issues because of where they are located. Often times, communities are in these areas already have a difficult time recovering from severe weather events as well as preparing for resiliency because the majority of the population is low-income or historically disenfranchised. These are known as "environmental justice" communities.

Michael Craig, an economist with HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research's Housing Finance Analysis Division, said his research focuses on how climate risks contribute to mortgages and



The Chattanooga waterfront. Flooding and rising river levels are a threat to communities across the Eastern U.S. with many water and wastewater infrastructure unable to stand up to the increasing amount and severity of these events

Additional Resources

- EPA Basics of Water Resilience
- CISA Water and Wastewater Systems Sector
- Resilient Cities Network
- 10 Steps to Water Resilience

home financing. Particularly, Craig said his research focuses on how or if people are able to financially recover and stay in their homes if there is a natural disaster.

"If you look at natural disasters, their frequency, and their exposure to the public around the country, flooding is at the forefront," Craig said. "Most people are at-risk of flooding, and it impacts the most number of houses. We have the highest risk of flooding events and some of these events are getting increasingly severe. Hurricanes are becoming less abnormal, which is going to change the dynamic of how people weather these storms both literally and financially."

Kimberly Nelson is the CEO of True Elements, a company that provides real-time and forecasted water data for the water industry. Nelson said access to data and information can help government leaders determine what actions they need to make to both make their communities more resilient to natural disasters as well as recover from them.

"We really have to understand that a water resilient future starts with water intelligence," Nelson said. "We need to make smart decisions. There are many data sources that are important to government decisionmakers. We need to look to the future, and that is really where you need water intelligence for forecasting purpose. I think government leaders need an inventory of their existing water inventory — which they all have — but they also need to understand the capacity of that existing infrastructure. To me, the

capacity of that existing infrastructure includes both the future needs of that community and the ability of that infrastructure to withstand extreme weather. We know that in the past couple of years for many of our communities that current infrastructure will not stand up."

The second major tool Nelson said decisionmakers need is climate data and projection.

"It's really important to understand climate in a geographic area in a smaller, neighborhood level," she said. "The subtleties are very significant at neighborhood levels. We need to understand things like temperature changes, the number and types of storms, the intensity of storms, and these are all really important for predicting and planning infrastructure needs. In the last two weeks, I have talked with leaders in two major cities where this past summer they had both schools and hospitals cut off because of stormwater flooding. We have to do a better job of stormwater management so we can improve infrastructure and make more resilient communities."

Craig said HUD analyzes data including retrospective data on how communities have reacted and responded to natural disaster in the past to better gauge how communities might respond in the future as well as where future natural disasters might occur.

"That is where this forward-looking climate data comes into our research," he said. "From my perspective as a researcher, I would love data about how a specific house might face differing flood risk today versus 30 years from now. There are several private companies that are producing this data."

Nelson said leaders need to think about water differently today than they have in the past.

"Today's infrastructure was used at a time when most of us never used the words 'climate change," Nelson said. "We need to build tomorrow's infrastructure for tomorrow's climate. For some parts of the country, there may be little difference between today and what the future climate looks like. However, for most places it is very different. We are going to see things getting wetter or drier and more of it. Both of these things have adverse impacts. We need to make sure our infrastructure stands the test of time. We can see siting decisions for landfills, superfund sites, and wastewater discharge sites have disproportionately affected certain parts of our society in the past. We can't allow that to happen in the future We need to use data – things like understanding drinking and surface water - to ensure decisions at the macrolevel are made more equitably in the future."

Kricun agreed that, because of past decision making, some communities are already at a disadvantage when it comes to making smart, environmental decisions regarding water and other resources.

"The challenge is that we have this climate problem, and there are technology and funding opportunities to help address them," Kricun said. "However, these are often not available to underserved communities. For example, the city I used to work in - Camden, N.J. - had no grant writers, so they couldn't apply or their debt service was too high to qualify for low-interest loans. They certainly didn't have access to technology. Funding and technology is like buried treasure and our underserved communities are lacking shovels. There has to be an intentionality that the promise of the Clean Water Act and the new funding laws and technology reach down into

those underserved communities."

For smaller communities, Kricun said the solution may be as simple as adjusting what infrastructure they already have or leveraging grants into finding out what issues they need to deal with so they can move forward with action plans to address their vulnerabilities. For technical assistance, Kricun said the EPA has formed 29 environmental finance centers across the country to help communities get into and through funding programs.

The recent Bipartisan Infrastructure Act as well as ARP funding offer opportunities for communities who want to improve their infrastructure and resiliency.

"A significant amount of funding has been made available over the past year to year-and-a-half to help these communities get and improve their infrastructure to make it more resilient against climate change," Kricun said. "There are also new technologies. For example, wastewater treatment plants can improve their resiliency by converting their biosolids to electricity, which also reduces their carbon footprint. The key is to make sure the funding and technology seeps down and disseminates to those communities who are less likely to go forward with those opportunities."

For smaller communities with limited budgets and staffs, Kricun recommends looking into both their state's revolving low-interest loan funds for drinking and wastewater as well as EPA grants available through the Justice 40 program aimed at low-income and environmental justice communities. FEMA has also recently begun the Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities (BRIC) that aim at spending proactive, preventative funding before disasters to ultimately decrease the amount that has to be spent on recovery. CDBG funding can also be combined with other federal funding from FEMA and the EPA or leveraged with low-interest loans to help with resiliency.

No loan is too large or too small



Oliver Springs closed a \$260,000 note with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to purchase police cruisers for the town's police department. The town has used the Bond Fund program five times starting in July 2015. Seated L to R are: Joe VanHook, Town Recorder, and Omer Cox, Oliver Springs Mayor. Standing L to R are: Steve Queener, TMBF Marketing Representative, and Thomas McCormick, Town Manager.





The City of Ripley recently closed two notes with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund. One note was issued for \$1.3 million for LED street lighting; a second note was issued for \$800,000 to be used for street paving. The city has used TMBF programs 33 times since May 1997 through November 2022 for a total of \$17,582,000. Pictured are Ripley Mayor Craig Fitzhugh, City Recorder Donna Buckner; and Tommy Green, TMBF Marketing Representative.

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



PEOPLE

Nashville Mayor John Cooper announced he will not seek a second term in office. Cooper was



John Cooper

elected mayor of Nashville in 2019 and is the ninth mayor to serve over the joint Nashville-Davidson County metro area. Cooper thanked numerous members of the Metro Nashville staff and city employees for their cooperation and efforts toward achieving his mayoral agenda, including the increasing pay for teachers, school, and city employees; the Oracle and Nashville East Bank investments; the addition of affordable housing resources and the creation of the Metro Housing Division; and a project designed to make one-third of the city solar-powered. Prior to his election as mayor, Cooper served as an at-large member of the Metro Nashville Council from 2015 to 2019. He has more than 30 years of business and financial experience in retail, banking, and real estate as well as founded The Heritage at Brentwood and Happy ReTales. Cooper holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and a master's degree in business from Vanderbilt University.

Tommy Haun, former state representative and state senator from Greeneville, died Feb.



Tommy Haun

2023, at the age of 72. Haun served in the Tennessee State House for six years and then in the State Senate for eight, also serving as chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee. A longtime Greeneville resident, Haun graduated from South Greene High School and played basketball for Cleveland State Community College before graduating with both a bachelor's degree and master's degree from East Tennessee State University. He served as a teacher and principal in the Greene County school system then established a State Farm Insurance agency in 1980. Greene's first elected position was to the Greene County Board of Education, serving as its chairman.

Jill Holland, former mayor of McKenzie, has joined the staff of the Southwest Tennessee Develop-



Jill Holland

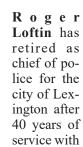
ment District as a local government and special coordinator. Holland served as mayor of McKenzie from 2010 to 2022, on the McKenzie City Council from 2004 to 2010, and on the McKenzie Special School District Board from 1998 to 2006. Holland also served as president of TML from 2019-2020 and on the TML Board of Directors from 2013 to 2022. Holland has also served on the boards of West-Star Leadership Program, TACIR, MTAS Advisory Board, Northwest Tennessee Development District, and the Governor's Rural Task Force Committee.

Patrick Lawton, former city administrator of Germantown, will be honored with the Tennessee



Patrick Lawton

Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE)'s 2023 Ned R. McWherter Leadership Award at the 30th Annual Excellence in Tennessee Awards banquet. Lawton served the city of Germantown for 34 years and is longtime member of TNCPE, including serving on TNCPE's Board of Directors. Lawton was instrumental in the city of Germantown's recognition as a 2017 TNCPE Excellence Winner and 2019 Baldridge National Award Recipient. Lawton retired as Germantown's city administrator in 2021.





Roger Loftin

the department. Loftin served as chief for 32 years, making him the longest serving police chief in Tennessee upon his retirement. Before serving as chief, Loftin worked as a patrolman, shift sergeant, and criminal investigator with the Lexington Police Department.

Jamie Luffman, fire chief of the city of Mt. Juliet, has announced his decision to retire in March. A native of



Jamie Luffman

Mt. Juliet, Luffman has served as the city's fire chief since 2014 having also served as deputy chief. Luffman has been with the Mt. Juliet Fire Department for nine of the 10 years since it was established and has overseen the growth of the department, including the opening of a new fire station with EMS department in coming months. Luffman has more than 25 years of fire service experience, including 17 years in industrial fire with DuPont, 14 years with the Wilson County EMA, and 11 years as a nurse tech at the Summit Emergency Department.

Lisa Maragnano, executive director of the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority



Lisa Maragnano

(CARTA), announced she will be taking early retirement later this year after more than a decade with the public transportation system. Maragnano joined CARTA as its assistance executive director in 2011 and was promoted to executive director in 2013. Prior to that, she was a general manager with Veolia Transportation for six years. Maragnano holds a bachelor's degree in political science, history, and business from Bridgewater State University. CARTA Chief Operating Officer Jeff Smith will serve as interim head of CARTA after Maragnano steps down until her replacement can be found.

Scott Miller will return to his role as city manager of East Ridge. M i 1 1 er served as East Ridge's city



Scott Miller

manager from 2016 until announcing his retirement in 2018 due to health issues. He returned from retirement in November 2022 to serve as interim city manager. Miller has more than 40 years of experience in city management and has played an instrumental part in the city's economic growth. Miller still lives in East Ridge and serves on numerous boards with the city. A native of Pittsburgh, Miller holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Ohio Northern University and a master's in public administration from the University of Pittsburgh. Before coming to East Ridge, Miller worked for municipalities in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida, Illinois, and Georgia.

Jennifer **Moody** will leave her post as city administrator of Tullahoma to serve as city manager of Belle Me-



Jennifer Moody

ade. Moody has served as city administrator for Tullahoma since 2018. She previously served as assistant city manager for Murfreesboro from 2016 to 2018 and as assistant city manager of Columbia from 2010 to 2015. Moody is a director with the

Columbia Police Department holds promotions ceremony for fellow officers



The Columbia Police Department recently held a promotions ceremony. Pictured from left to right are Assistant Chief Jeremy Haywood, newly promoted Lt. Brad Ribley, newly promoted Lt. Orlando Cox, newly promoted Sgt. Doug Faulkner, newly promoted Sgt. Justin Spann, newly promoted Sgt. Alan Irvin, newly promoted Sgt. Neylan Barber, Chief Jeremy Alsup, and City Manager Tony Massey.

Tennessee City Management Association (TCMA) and a member of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) since 2009. She holds a master's in public administration from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree in foreign affairs from Xavier University. She is also a graduate of the University of Virginia's Senior Executive Institute and Leadership ICMA.

Steve Sones has been selected as the new chief administrative officer for Bartlett. Sones has 30 years of experience



Steve Sones

with the city, including 20 years with the Bartlett Police Department. He began his career as a jailer in 2001 before becoming a patrolman in 2004 where he served in the SWAT Team and Crime Suppression Unit. He was promoted to detective in 2012 followed by lieutenant in 2013, then captain in 2017. He began chief inspector over the patrol division in 2019 before being selected as assistant chief in 2020. Sones holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration from Waldorf University and a master's degree in criminal justice from Bethel University.

Charlie Stahl has retired as the assistant city manager for Johnson City after a total of 17 years with the city



Charlie Stahl

and nearly 40 years in local government. Stahl has served in his present role as assistant city manager since 2006 and also served as Johnson City's budget director for nearly five years between 1984 and 1988. Stahl also served as the city treasurer and assistant city manager of Bluefield, W.Va., from 1988 to 1994 and then as the city manager of Elizabethton from 1994 to 2006. He holds a bachelor's degree in history from Ursinus College and a master's in public administration from East Tennessee State University. Stahl also achieved the rank captain in the Tennessee State Guard.

Sue Stuhl, director of parks and recreation for the town of Farragut, is retiring after 31 years of service. Stuhl



joined the city staff in 1991 as a community programs director and was soon promoted to director of parks and recreation. During her tenure with the town, she has overseen the expansion of Farragut's park system from two parks to five and a staff of one to nine. Stuhl has also overseen the expansion of programming and events for the park system, the town museum at city hall, and more. Stuhl holds a bachelor's degree in health and physical education from Maryville College and a master's in recreation administration from the University of Tennessee Knoxville.

Tarwater selected for state Supreme Court

Dwight Tarwater has been appointed to serve on the Tennessee State Supreme Court by Gov. Bill

Tarwater is presently a partner at the Knoxville-based firm of Paine, Tarwater, Bickers, LLP, and will fill the vacancy left on the court by the retirement of Justice Sharon Lee on Aug. 31. Tarwater has more than 40 years of legal background with the Tennessee Supreme Court, including decades of trial and appellate experiences.

He also served as chief legal counsel to Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, providing advice on legal, financial, political, and governmental issues. A member of the Tennessee Bar Association, Knoxville Bar Association, President of the Knoxville Barristers Young Lawyers Division, East Tennessee Governor of the Tennessee Bar Association, and on the Board of the Tennessee Young Lawyers Conference.

He has served many professional associations including the American Bar Association, Tennessee Association for Justice, the Defense Research Institute, the



Dwight Tarwater

International Association of Defense Counsel, Litigation Counsel of America and the Trial Attorneys of America. He is a fellow in the Knoxville, Tennessee, and American Bar Foundations. In 2006, he became a fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers.

Tarwater earned his bachelor's degree as well as his law degree from the University of Tennessee He served as law clerk to the Honorable Houston M. Goddard of the Tennessee Court of Appeals and is one of the cofounders of his law firm in 1987.

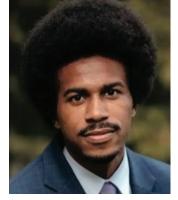
Pearson elected to fill TN House seat of late Rep. Cooper

Justin Pearson has been elected to Tennessee House District 86, replacing longtime State Rep. Barbara Cooper, D-Memphis.

Cooper who was re-elected to the seat after her death in October. At the time of her death, Cooper was the oldest-serving member of

the General Assembly. Pearson defeated a crowd of 10 candidates in the January Democratic primary with 52% of the vote. With no other candidates running for the seat in the March general election, the Memphis City Council voted to send Pearson to the State House as an interim until his term becomes official.

Pearson, 28, is a graduate of Bowdoin College and is present and founder of Memphis Community Against Pollution (MCAP) and co-founder of Memphis Community against the Pipeline. Pear-



Justin Pearson

son is also the co-lead and the strategic advisor for the Poor People's Campaign: National Call for Moral Revival.

He also helped lead a national workforce development non-profit, Year Up, which focused on social, racial, and economic justice and has received numerous awards.

Tonya Tindle has been selected as the new city administrator for the city of Sparta, the first woman

to hold the

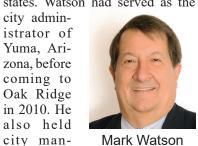


Tonya Tindle

role. Tindle has been serving as the city's interim administrator since November when former city administrator Brad Hennessee tendered his resignation. Prior to taking on the interim role, Tindle served as Sparta's city recorder since 1995. Tindle holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Freed-Hardeman University.

Mark Watson has announced his retirement as city manager of Oak Ridge after more than a dozen years with the city. Watson has 47 years of public service including serving as a city manager in eight cities in four

states. Watson had served as the city admin-



Mark Watson

sitions in Montana, Texas, and Tennessee. Watson holds a bachelor's degree in English and master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas and a doctorate in public administration from the University of Tennessee Knoxville. A second-generation city manager, Watson received a Lifetime Achievement Award in City Management from the University of Kansas and was the recipient of ICMA's 2022 Award for Career Development in Memory of L.P. Cookingham.

agement po-

Gov. Bill Lee addressed Tennesseans during his second inauguration



Gov. Bill Lee delivers his inaugural speech at his second inauguration on Jan. 21.



Gov. Bill Lee, left, and First Lady Maria Lee, prior to the inauguration ceremony.



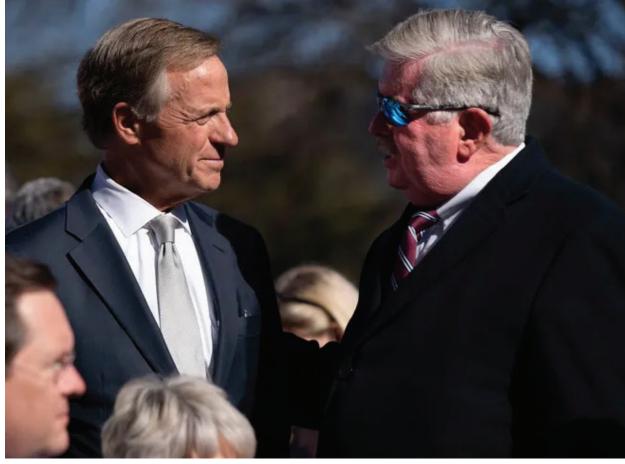
Retired U.S. Sen. and former Gov. Lamar Alexander, left, chats with former Tennessee First Lady Andrea Conte and former Gov. Phil Bredesen, prior to the ceremony.



Tennessee Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger A. Page, left, delivers the oath of office to Gov. Bill Lee, right.



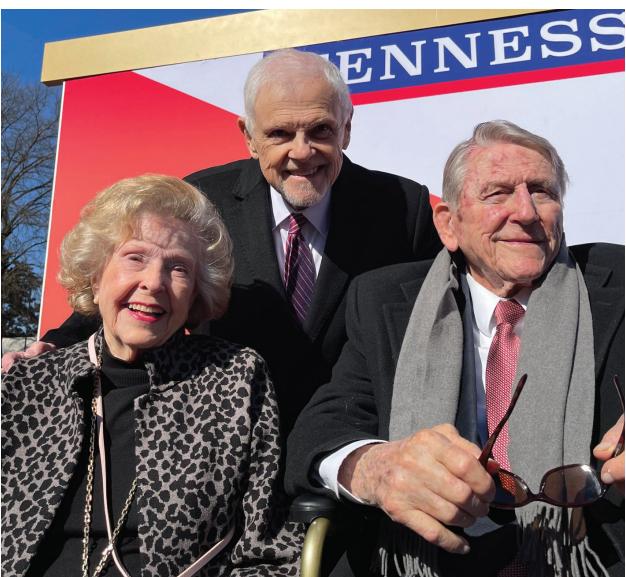
Former U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, left, talks with U.S. Sen. Bill Hagerty, right.



Former Gov. Bill Haslam, left, talks with Lt. Gov. Randy McNally at the ceremony.



Tennessee Speaker of the House Cameron Sexton, left, and Lt. Gov. Randy McNally, right, during the inauguration ceremony.



State Sen. Ken Yager, R-Kingston, center, with former Tennessee First Lady Betty Dunn, left, and former Gov. Winfield Dunn, right.

Negative perceptions, divisions leading younger generations from careers in municipal government

YOUTH from Page 1

making systems change in your community. The concept of social enterprise needs updating because we don't have the ownership over that so much anymore in the public

Another part of the perception problem is that many young people feel present local government structures and officials don't reflect who they are, their goals, or their values. A recent survey of young adults between the ages of 18 to 36 conducted by Next100 and GenForward found that while 48% of young citizens consider themselves politically engaged or active, they don't feel represented by local, state, or government representatives.

Many felt there is a disconnect between themselves and who is representing them in government and are skeptical that local governments would want to hear or encourage their ideas, whether in a council meeting or as a city employee. The survey found many youth voters thought signing a petition could cause more political change than taking on a local government role.

The survey also found young adults feel that governments dominated by "largely white, male and wealthy" officials who are "out of touch and exclusionary." Only 24% of survey respondents agreed with the statement "I believe local government wants to hire someone like me" and only 18% agreed with the statement "I want to work in local government at some point in my career."

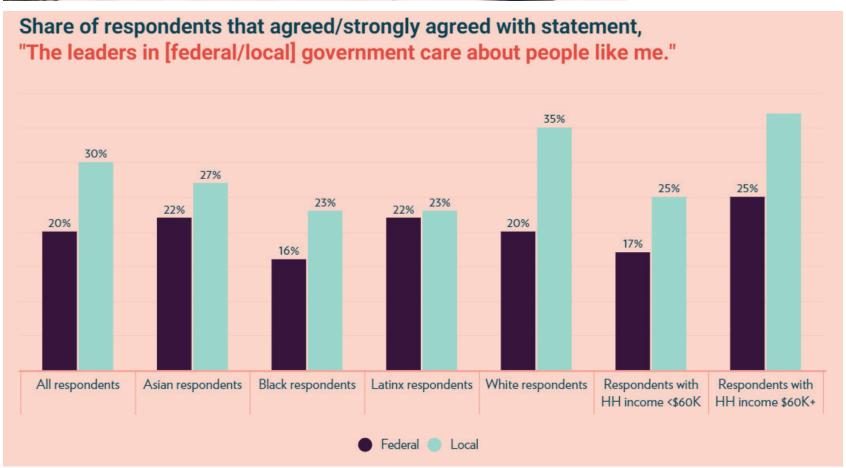
Gottleib said Millennials and Gen Z are statically more diverse than older generations, and a lack of existing diversity in local government may give negative perceptions. As a result, local governments need to help these candidates see themselves in public sector roles.

"A lack of diversity can make it harder to recruit diverse talent," he said. "There is a lot that can be done. NLC found BIPOC communities are largely under-represented in local government workforces. One of the most recommendations from NLC's survey on this issue is to hire a dedicated staff person to focus on this internally. Hiring a chief diversity officer, a chief inclusion officer, or chief people officer or a person whose specific role is to make sure these things are being implemented generationally."

The political divisions at play in creating perception issues also

Left: Younger workers value diversity in the workplace more so than their older counterparts. A recent survey by Pew Research found that Gen Z is the most diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and sexuality in American history while job site Monster.com reported that 83% of Gen Zers said diversity is a "significant factor" when deciding whether to take a job.

Below: A recent survey of Millennial (those age 27-42) and Gen Z (those age 26-13) workers found that negative perceptions are one of the major factors keeping them out of the government workforce. Many believe that local governments especially don't represent them or their values or that those in local government don't care what they have to say.



are making those investments but some communities are still hesitant to because of the perception that they are spending taxpayer dollars on protecting themselves."

BARRIERS AND PATHWAYS

Some contributing factors may also be that the hiring process and requirements for many state and local positions are barriers to employment. The U.S. Bureau of Labor

tional requirements, you can tap into more Millennial and Gen Z workforce participants. You can still give preference to college-educated candidates, but maybe remove questions like that on applications because you see that on their resume."

Gottleib said one major barrier is that younger employees may not have the knowledge of what jobs are available in local government. let alone how to apply for those

just local government – has not set up the pathways for younger people to get into service," Richardson said. "Whether that's internships, or targeted recruiting for entry level positions. This lack of investment has meant there isn't a clear path into the public sector workforce for many younger people. There are several tactics that can be taken – by local governments, individuals and the broader community. The founda-

> tion of our local democracy is trust - so municipalities can take steps to be more transparent and open to the community."

FINDING **SOLUTIONS**

Richardson said there are several things cities can do to make the path to government jobs easier for potential recruits. "This could through intern-

ship programs that allow younger people to see how government

works," she said. "Many local governments have also begun hosting '101' type community courses that are available to the public. These not only spark interest in government careers, they bring more transparency to the way government operates. The job of building local democratic institutions rests with everyone so everyone has a role to play. From voting to staying informed on local events or volunteering to teach a civics course – investing in local democracy has never been more important. Building intentional career pipelines and strategies is critical to engaging the next generation of public service. This can take the form of more flexible work schedules, having career days at local schools, or apprentice programs."

Gottleib said being upfront with potential employees about what they can expect from government work can go a long way toward

and explain that because of this there are going to be a lot of job opportunities," he said. "The most important thing for students coming out of college is securing a stable job that can pay them enough to support their needs and provide benefits. Local government jobs can do that for the most part. Communities need to be willing to have a candid discussion and acknowledging the current state of their workforce with labor participants. Seeing the security and the opportunity will drive more people to seek more local government."

Other initiatives that have proven to be successful to cities include offering remote or hybrid work and flex schedules; allowing floating holidays or unlimited PTO; prioritizing the dismantling of bureaucracies to operate more agilely and responsively; modernizing health benefit offerings; providing on-the-job training'; designing accelerated career paths and education opportunities; giving workers more autonomy; and involving younger or new employees in decision-making.

For more small municipalities, there are also things that can be done that raise the attention of government available positions while not spending a great deal.

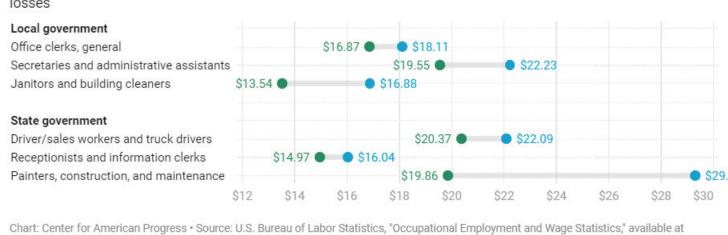
"Smaller cities may have a unique challenge setting up talent pipelines because of their limited staff capacity," Richardson said. "However, simply changing your marketing materials to be more targeted can yield higher results. Making sure that your existing policies that may be attractive to younger generations are featured prominently on materials you send to local high schools and colleges."

Gottleib said smaller local governments looking to recruit younger employees should consider more

"It is important to consider flexible work options, whether that means remote work, hybrid work, flexible hours, working on weekends, or doing four-day, 10-hour days," he said. "Those types of things are attractive in general right now, especially to younger workers. Of course, some roles cannot be done remotely. Another thing to consider is student debt. Public service loan forgiveness is a great tool for recruitment, especially when there are a lot of stories out there of people who have been paying off student debt for 20 years. Small things like going out into the community and engaging with folks, whether at schools or public events, can help."

Many public sector roles requiring a high school diploma or less offer higher wages than comparable private sector roles

Median hourly wages for select occupations that require a high school diploma and have experienced large job losses



https://www.bls.gov/oes/ (last accessed January 2022).

Wages and job descriptions have not kept up with the reality of many positions in municipal government. Requirements that are too stringent may be keeping some potential hires out of the applicant pool entirely.

may discourage younger employees from seeking out government jobs for another reason: safety.

"This is a major challenge to public service as a whole -and not just when it comes to recruiting younger talent," Richardson said. "We recently reported that over 80% of municipal officials have experienced threats of violence in the last year. It is critical that we stem this wave of divisiveness so that people from all walks of life and all ages feel like engaging the political system is safe and worthwhile."

Gottleib said a report published by NLC last year highlighted how rising violence is contributing to a lack of interest in government jobs.

"It creates a barrier to work," he said. "Why would you want a job that makes you put up with that. It's a perception issue, but it is also an issue of personal safety. Communities need to be investing and ensuring the safety of their workers given the political climate. We have seen since 2020, more communities

Statics found that state and local government positions are more likely to require postsecondary education than the public sector, even though such degrees may not be necessary for job function. Many government entities also lack the HR staffing need to individually evaluate the hiring process, which can mean revising job descriptions to make them easier to fill or assessing individual skill and

According to the Center for American Progress (CAP), many governments are using ARP funding to help leverage wages to make positions more attractive or invest in recruitment and training. Gottleib said he has had a lot of discussions with city officials who found that certain accreditation or degree requirements are barriers to filling positions.

"There are a lot of jobs that people don't need a bachelor's degree for if they have a high school degree, an associate's degree or experience," he said. "Many roles can even just be taught. By reducing some educa-

"Local governments historically have tended to underinvest in youth and young adult pathways into government roles.," he said. "A lot of times, younger people may not be aware of all of the job opportunities that are available. Everyone knows that there is a city manager, city planner, or head of parks and rec, but not everyone knows about jobs like codes inspector. Along with that, there is a lack of understanding of how to find and access those jobs."

The survey results found only 38% of respondents to the survey said they knew how to get a local government job with white respondents the most likely to know how to be employed by the local government (42%) and Asian respondents the least likely (29%). Respondents with a household income of \$60,000 or more were also more likely (43%) to know how to get a local government job than those with an income of less than \$60,000 (34%).

"Government in general – not

"I think it's OK to be upfront with them about the Silver Tsunami

STATE **BRIEFS**

The University of Tennessee has received the most competitive pool of applications in the university's 228 history. UT received 48,665 applications by its Jan 1., 2023 deadline, a 40.3% increase or 13,967 applications than received by the same date in 2022. Nearly a quarter of applications were from in-state students, an increase of 13.2% compared to last year. Out-of-state and international applications also increased by around 51.6% compared to last year. However, fewer students will be admitted this year because the university will be reducing the size of its Fall 2023 first-year class due to issues many students have had find $ing \,housing. \,UT \,is \,presently \,working \,$ with the State Building Commission on public-private partnerships to build more residence halls and other off-campus housing opportunities.

Tennessee's December unemployment rate remained unchanged from November at 3.5%, according to information from the state. For the entirety of 2022, unemployment in Tennessee remained between a high of 3.5% and a low of 3.2%, down 0.1% from the 3.6% to 3.5% high and low of the previous year. The state added 1,500 nonfarm positions in December with the largest increases in the trade, transportation and utilities sector followed by the government sector, and then the mining, logging and construction sector. The state reported an increase of 104,800 new jobs for 2022 overall. An in-depth analysis of December's unemployment and labor force data

Tennessee has the 10th lowest cost of living in the nation based on the cost of goods, rent, utilities, and other services according to recent data from the Tennessee State Data Center at the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee. Tennessee prices were roughly 9% cheaper than those in the average U.S. in 2021 and utility costs for Tennesseans were the fourth lowest in the nation, about 25% cheaper than the average costs for the U.S. Rent in Tennessee is also on average 25% cheaper than the average in the U.S. While Tennesseans earn on average 14% less than the national average, their dollars go further in terms of cost of living. Tennessee's price-adjusted median household income rose to \$66,000 a year, which is still about \$4,000 less than the national average.

Marriage and divorce rates are down in Tennessee, following a decade-long nationwide trend. According to state data, Tennessee saw a 15% increase in marriages from 2011 to 2021 and a 23% decrease in the divorce rate in the same time frame. Tennessee has the seventh highest marriage rate per capita of any state and tenth in terms of its divorce rate. This follows a national trend that has seen a general decline of both marriages and divorces in the past decade, according to the U.S.

TN has second fastest economic growth of states

Tennessee had the second fastest economic growth in 2022, being outpaced by Idaho according to estimates by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Idaho had a 5.7% economic growth rate followed by Tennessee's 4.5%. Following Idaho and Tennessee were Texas (4%), Florida (3.5%), Oregon (3.3%), Colorado (3.2%), North Carolina (3.2%), New York (2.8%), New Jersey (3.8%), and Utah (2.75).

CivMetrics, who compiled the data based on U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, found that all of the top states for growth also saw a growth of population, especially among younger people with college degrees, combined with a strong job

Tennessee's economy grew to a record \$368.6 million in output, nearly two-and-a-half times above the national average. Additionally, Tennessee's population outpaced the national average.

"There's been a slower rate of growth across all states, but Tennessee remains a very bright spot among all states," Don Bruce, director of the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, said. "During and beyond the pandemic, a lot of folks have moved here, and many businesses have also decided to relocate here as well."

While Tennessee landed its biggest investment ever in late 2021 when Ford Motor Co. and SK Innovation announced plans to invest \$5.6 billion for an electric vehicle and battery production complex near Stanton in West Tennessee.

LG Chem also announced plans for a \$3.2 billion battery plant can be found here.

Census Bureau.

in Clarksville 14 months later after LG Chem and GM announced plans for the joint, \$2.3 billion Ultium Cells battery plant in Spring Hill. Together, these three facilities will create 7,660 jobs.

Bruce said Tennessee continues to benefit from its location within a day's drive of 60% of the U.S. population and its favorable energy prices, state and local taxes, and costs of doing business.

'With more remote workers able to live anywhere, we're seeing an increase in migration to Tennessee from other higher-cost-of-living states," Bruce said.

In its annual economic forecast, UT's Boyd Center predicted Tennessee will avoid a recession this year and grow another 0.7% for all of 2023. Nationwide, the U.S. economy is projected to decline by 0.2% for all of 2023.

Keep TN Beautiful to hold spring kickoff

Keep Tennessee Beautiful will launch their spring kick off on March 2 at Paris Landing State Park as part of 2023 Keep Tennessee Beautiful Month and the Great American Cleanup.

The kickoff event will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and will feature keynote speaker John J. Deberry Jr., senior advisor to Gov. Bill Lee and former state representative.

Those who wish to attend can register to do so here.

Additionally, Keep Tennessee Beautiful will present the 2023 Love Where You Live Award and KTnB's Leader Against Litter Award during the event.

Founded as the Clean TN Program in 1983, Keep Tennessee Beautiful works for environmental education, litter prevention, recycling, with the Adopt-A-Highway program, and provides grants toward keeping the state beautiful.

Keep Tennessee Beautiful is the state level affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. Keep Tennessee Beautiful gives support to over 30 local/county KAB affiliates across the state. Keep Tennessee





Beautiful works constantly to recruit new affiliates from Memphis to Mountain city. Contact them if

you are interested in starting a new affiliate by visiting https://www. keeptnbeautiful.org/.

TN January 2023 revenues up 6.25% over 2023

Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration Commissioner Jim Bryson announced that January state tax revenues exceeded budgeted estimates.

Revenues for January totaled \$1.9 billion, which is \$212.9 million more than budgeted and 6.25% greater than revenues received in January 2022.

"Second quarter total tax growth slowed to 5.89 percent and was lower than the 9.94 percent growth the state experienced for the first quarter of the fiscal year," Bryson said. "We are very mindful that economic activity appears to be moderating from early elevated levels. January sales tax receipts, reflecting consumer holiday spending in December, followed reports of lower sales trends nationally - the lowest growth rate since September 2020.

"On a positive note, state corporate tax revenues, or franchise and excise taxes, and mixed drink taxes outperformed expectations. Still, rising interest rates have caused sharp declines in realty transfer and realty mortgage tax collections reported within privilege tax receipts. All other monthly taxes combined declined when compared to last year. While we are pleased with the strong revenue growth seen in the first half of this fiscal year, we remain cautious, closely monitoring economic conditions and revenue trends to ensure fiscal stability."

On an accrual basis, January is the sixth month in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

General fund revenues were greater than the budgeted estimates in the amount of \$197.9 million while the four other funds that share in state tax revenues were \$15 million more than the estimates.

Sales tax revenues were \$131.4 million more than the estimate for January and the growth rate was 5.51%. For six months, revenues are \$730 million higher than estimated. The year-to-date growth rate for six months is 8.75 percent.

Franchise and excise tax revenues were \$78.6 million more than the January budgeted estimate. The growth rate compared to January 2022 was 23.18%. Year-to-date franchise and excise tax revenues are 14.68 %higher than this same time last year and \$394.8 million more than estimated.

Gasoline and motor fuel revenues decreased by 2.15% compared to January 2022 and were \$3.2 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$110.2 million. For six months, revenues are less than estimates by \$6.5 million. Motor vehicle registration

revenues were \$4.1 million more than the January estimate, and on a year-to-date basis exceed estimates by \$19.7 million.

Tobacco tax revenues were \$1.5 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$16.3 million, and for six months are \$6.9 million less than the budgeted estimate.

Privilege tax revenues were \$9.2 million less than the January estimate, and on a year-to-date basis, August through January, revenues are \$26 million less than the estimate.

Business tax revenues were \$2 million more than the January estimate. For six months revenues are \$15.5 million more than the budgeted estimate.

Mixed drink, or liquor-by-thedrink, taxes were \$6.2 million more than the January estimate, and on a year-to-date basis, revenues are \$32.2 million more than the budgeted estimate.

All other taxes were more than estimates by a net of \$4.5 million.

Year-to-date revenues for six months were \$1.2 billion more than the budgeted estimate. The general fund recorded \$1.1 billion in revenues more than estimates, and the four other funds totaled \$92 million more than year-to-date estimates. Budgeted estimates for 2022-2023 are available on the state's website.

What new WOTUS rule means for local governments

WOTUS from Page 1

further state that they will continue to assess jurisdiction of stormwater control features on a case-by-case basis and note that some features may fall under other exclusions, such as ditches.

The new rule also provides exclusions for wetlands that were converted to cropland before 1985, ditches carved wholly in dry land that don't carry relatively permanent flow, and artificial lakes and ponds.

Any existing AJD (except those issued under the Trump rule) will remain valid to support regulatory actions, such as permitting, until its expiration date, unless one of the criteria for revision is met or the recipient asks the Army Corps

to issue a new AJD.

For any currently pending or future permit action intending to rely on a Trump rule AJD, the Army Corps will discuss with the applicant whether the applicant would like to receive a new AJD under this new rule to continue their permit processing or proceed in reliance on a preliminary jurisdictional determination or "no JD whatsoever."

Trump rule AJDs issued prior to the rule being vacated that are not associated with a permit action (also known as "stand-alone" AJDs) will remain valid until their expiration date unless one of the criteria for revision is met or the recipient requests that a new AJD be provided.

Apending U.S. Supreme Court

Case could leave this rule in limbo.

This new "waters of the U.S." rule will be effective 60 days following publication in the Federal Register.

In October 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the case of Sackett v. EPA, in which the court will decide the proper test for determining when wetlands are "waters of the U.S." NLC filed an amicus brief in the case arguing that municipal water infrastructure is not a WOTUS. The Supreme Court will issue its ruling before the end of the term in June.

It's possible the U.S. Supreme Court ruling could come before the effective date of the rule. Additionally, the opinion could render

this final rule moot or create a new test for determining jurisdiction, among other outcomes.

At the outset of the EPA and Army Corps rulemaking process, the agencies stated they would undertake a two-step process on WOTUS. This final rule represents step one. Depending on the Supreme Court ruling, the agencies could pursue a second rule defining "Waters of the United States" and consider revisions to this rule.

Financial Capability Assessment

EPA is encouraging communities to use integrated planning and innovative technologies, to achieve CWA compliance in a timely, flexible, and cost-effective manner.

To access Financial Capability Assessment Guidance, click here.

COVERAGES DESIGNED TO PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY



- GENERAL LIABILITY
- CYBER COVERAGE
- LAW ENFORCEMENT LIABILITY
- EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES LIABILITY
- WORKERS' COMPENSATION
- PROPERTY



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Darrell Duncan

Stefanie Dalton

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Alderman, Somerville (District 7)

Bethany Huffman

Vice Mayor, Millington (District 8) **Blake Lay**

Mayor, Lawrenceburg (District 6) Tim Kelly

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Considering COVID recovery funds in your next municipal budget

If your municipality is on the July 1-June 30 fiscal year, this upcoming budget cycle will be the last full fiscal year to incur expenses with these dollars

BY MICHAEL GLEESON NLC Legislative Director

Right now, many cities, towns and villages are planning for their next budget cycle. This timing presents an opportunity for local governments to consider how they will incur expenses for their remaining State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF), which were provided through the American

Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). It is key to remember an expense for every SLFRF dollar must be incurred by December 31, 2024. Since many American municipalities are on a July 1-June 30 budgeting year it is important to determine now what expense(s) your municipality will incur with these dollars. If your municipality is on the July 1-June 30 fiscal year, this upcoming budget cycle will be the last full fiscal year to incur expenses with these dollars.

What Does Incur Mean?

The Department of Trea-

sury has used the word "obligated" in place of "incur". In short, local governments must determine the purpose for how each SFLRF dollar will be used by the deadline established in the ARPA legislation.

What is the Deadline and Why is it Important?

The key deadline by which eligible costs must be incurred is Dec. 31, 2024. These funds have an expiration date coming up quickly, and time is running short to incur expenses with them. If a municipality has not incurred the full amount of their SLFRF award by the deadline, they risk losing the opportunity to spend their allocated dollars, and the money will be returned to the federal government. Therefore, it is important for local governments to focus on using these dollars to best serve their communities ahead of the deadline. These dollars were meant to be transformative for communities across the county, and it would be unfortunate to see dollars not utilized in upcoming budgets for municipalities across the nation.

What are the Next Steps?

If you are in the middle of your budget planning process for the next budget cycle and have not developed a plan to incur an expense with all of your SLFRF funds, now is a good time to pause in your process! We recommend taking a step back and evaluating how the allocated federal money can be used to improve your municipality and the lives of your residents. Develop a plan for incurring expenses in the next fiscal years, or budget cycles, before the obligation deadline of Dec. 31, 2024. Remember, these dollars are meant to be transformative, and it is imperative this one-time transfer of resources from the federal government to local governments not go unused.

The State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program was an essential experiment for transferring power from the federal government level to the local government level. Local leaders have proven governments can responsibly and effectively spend the unprecedented investments provided to them, and this is the last chance to maximize these funds for your community.



Feb. 25: Oak Ridge

Oak Ridge International Festival The Children's Museum of Oak Ridge hosts this family-friendly festival from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The event features a variety of fun and interactive activities that showcase various cultures from across the world, including musical and dance performances, art, food, and more. For more info, visit this link.

Feb. 25: Knoxville

Farm to Tap Festival Farm to Tap is an initiative of the Tennessee Craft Brewers Guild in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Agriculture. It is dedicated to the awareness, promotion, and advancement of local farm products by craft brewers. The festival in Knoxville will showcase 20+ Guild member breweries from across the state and showcase beers brewed with agricultural products from Tennessee. To top it off there will be farmers, food trucks, vendors, and entertainment. For more info, visit this link.

March 3-4: Etowah

28th Annual Cousin Jake Bluegrass Festival

The Etowah Arts Commission and Gem Theatre present the Annual Cousin Jake Bluegrass Festival in downtown Etowah, honoring the musical legacy of Etowah native "Cousin" Jake Tullock. Concessions, door prizes, raffles, live music and family fun await you at this beloved festival. For more info, visit this link.

March 11: Castlian Springs County Sumner Irish Festival

The County Sumner Irish Festival is a fantastic event held in March at Bledsoe's Fort Historical Park in Castalian Springs. The park is home to an authentic Irish cottage built by Hugh Rogan in the late 1790s, as well as a historic trail that runs alongside a settler cemetery and remnants of a 19th-century spring house. The Irish-themed event features music, food, guided hikes, storytelling, craft beer, historic house tours, kids activities, food vendors, and more. For more info, visit this link.

March 18: Bell Buckle Daffodil Day

Since 1978, Bell Buckle has celebrated the coming of spring with Daffodil Day in honor of the planting of daffodils in the area by Webb School founder Sawney Webb. For more info, visit this link.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

Inflation has continued to decelerate for a seventh straight month in January, according to information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Consumer Price Index data showed that price increases picked up on a monthly basis for both gas and grocery prices, which serve as key indicators because of their month-over-month volatility. While improving supply chains have improved prices somewhat, it may take a while for the country to return to the 2% annual gains rate that was considered average. The price index was at 6.4% in January, down from 6.5% in December and from the peak of 9% during

U.S. home sales were at the slowest pace in nearly a decade as high prices and mortgage rates pusneu nomeownership out of the reach of many Americans. The National Association of Realtors said that U.S.

the summer.

home sales totaled 5.03 million last year, a 17.8% decline from 2021. This is the weakest home sales have been since 2014 and the biggest annual decline since 2008 during the housing crisis. The median national home price for 2022 was \$386,300, a 10.2% increase over the previous year and a 42% increase from pre-pandemic prices. Mortgage rates almost doubled in 2022 to a two-decade high

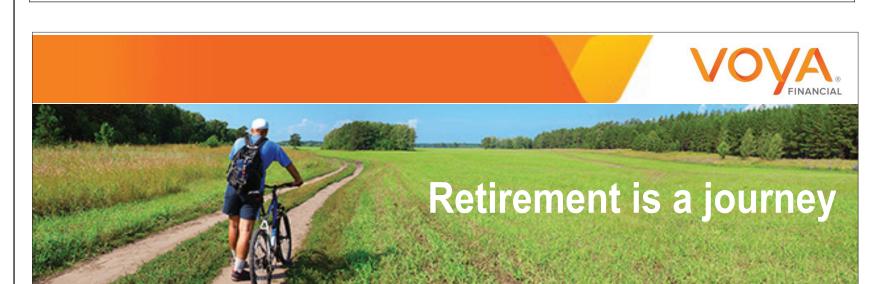
U.S. GDP increased at an annual rate of 2.9% in the fourth quarter of 2022, down slightly from 3.2% in the third quarter. The U.S. Commerce Department said economic growth remained solid with a strong job market and cooling inflation allowing Americans to keep spending despite recession fears. Consumer spending grew at an initial rate of 2.1%, though economists expect this number to be revised. Economic output contracted in the first half of 2022, prompting recession concerns, but down from 5.7% growth in 2021. The U.S. labor market added 517,000 jobs in January and dipped down to 3.4% unemployment, according to newly revised

rebounded in the second half. Over

the year as a whole, GDP grew 1%,

information from the U.S. Labor Department. Analysts had predicted only 185,000 in job gains for the month and for the unemployment rate to edge up to 3.6%. Growth was the highest in the leisure and hospitality sector, which added a monthly average of 128,000 compared to 89,000 at the same time last year. Hourly earnings also rose by 0.3% or 10 cents to an average wage of \$33.03 per hour. Over the past year, earnings have increased by 4.4% on average. Inflation was reported at 6.5% in December, down from a high of 9.1% in June but outpacing wage growth. The personal consumption expenditures price index is up 5% for the year but down 6.8% from the summer.

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Ed Stewart, ChFC, CLU, CF **Financial Advisor**

Cities across Tennessee offer ways to explore black history, culture

BY KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Throughout the month of February, cities across the state of Tennessee have plenty of ways for residents and visitors to explore local, state, and national black history and culture.

From arts and entertainment to sports to education and history, historic sites and cultural events being held across Tennessee show how black Tennesseans have contributed to strengthening the overall fabric of the state and made their mark both in individual communities and on the nation and world.

Here are just a few places where Tennessee's black history is on display:

BRISTOL

The Birthplace of Country Music Museum in Bristol had Dr. William H. Turner and Dr. Ted Olson highlight their speaker series with a discussion of the history of black life and music in Appalachia. The discussion included the Sepia Tones podcast, how the Harlem Renaissance influenced life in Appalachia coal towns, and how black culture in Appalachia can provide us a richer, deeper understanding of the region's history as a whole.

CHATTANOOGA

The Bessie Smith Cultural Center and African American Museum in Chattanooga will host a month's worth of in-person and virtual speaker events and programming as well as site tours. The museum has recently opened its second phase featuring exhibits dedicated to artists with Chattanooga connections including Montego Glover, Usher, Kane Brown, Bessie Smith, The Impressions, and more.

Culture Books and Rhyme N Chatt Interactive Poetry will also host the Chattanooga Black History Festival on Feb. 18, featuring vendors, authors, interactive activities, cultural food, and performances.

Chattanooga's Tennessee Riverwalk Park includes both murals honoring the city's black history as well as a sculpture honoring Ed Johnson and his lawyers Noah Pardon and Styles Hutchins. Johnson was killed by an angry mob after the Supreme Court ruled to delay his execution because evidence indicated he was falsely convicted based on racial prejudice. The result was *United States v. Shipp*, the only criminal case ever heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

CLARKSVILLE

The Clarksville African American Legacy Trail contains 24 stops through the city including community gardens, historic churches, athletic fields, musical venues, and businesses. Each stop on the self-guided focuses on black trailblazers in Clarksville including classical violinist Clarence Cameron White, fine arts



The Alex Haley Museum and Interpretive Center in Henning details both the life and people who inspired "Roots" author Alex Haley as well as provides resources for those who want to research their own family history.

painter Emma Lee Moss known as the "Black Grandma Moses," professional baseball pitcher Steve Wylie, Olympic track and field star Wilma Rudolph, Dr. Robert T. Burt who established the city's first hospital open to all races, educator Bailey Cobb, and local business owners Nace and Nannie Dixon.

Visitors can also learn more about Clarksville's black history at the Wilbur N. Daniel African American Cultural Center at Austin Peay University, named for the school's first black student who was later an influential minister in Chicago and in the Baptist faith.

From Feb. 6-12, Clarksville hosted its BLK Clarksville Week, a celebration of the city's black owned businesses, culture, and community.

CLINTON

The Green McAdoo Cultural Center in Clinton tells the story of 12 high school students who integrated Clinton High School in 1956 following the historic Brown vs. The Board of Education decision. The museum follows the story of the integration efforts, a resulting bombing of the high school, and how the community ultimately came together. The site is the former all-black high school in Clinton, named for the U.S. Army veteran and Cleveland native Green McAdoo and is both on the U.S. Civil Rights Trail and the National Register of Historic Places.

FARRAGUT

The Farragut Museum is hosting Bright Star Touring Theatre for a Black History Month celebration titled "Groundbreaking Geniuses." The performance will be held at 2 p.m. on Feb. 26 and will feature the stories of black inventors, artists, and thinkers including Ralph Ellison,

Maya Angelou, and Alvin Ailey.

GALLATIN

The city of Gallatin is celebrating Black History Month with avenue banners honoring 16 influential black residents of Gallatin. The banners show a cross-section of life in Gallatin including pharmacist Dr. William Wilson; nonprofit founder Fred Bailey' first African American female Councilwoman Dr. J. Deotha Malone; U.S. Army Deputy to the Commanding General Dr. Eric Moore; civic, church and telecommunications leader Rev. Hillary Wattwood Kay; baseball player William "Bubba" Dunn, James Herbert White; and second tallest man in history John "Bud" Rogan to name

other markers honor local educators, business owners, and pastors as well as two important black history sites in Gallatin: the site of the Colored Fair, the first African-American owned agricultural fairground in America, and Union High School, a Rosenwald school that was the first for black students.

Visitors can also visit the Union High School Resource Center exhibit at the Gallatin Shalom Zone, the former Union High School, which serves as a community gathering space that provides educational and family resources.

HENNING

The Alex Haley Museum and Interpretive Center in Henning details the people, places, and events that inspired Haley's landmark book *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* that inspired generations of African-Americans to seek out their own genealogical heritage. Henning's boyhood home in Henning explores African-Americans through the story of Haley's own family and his life interviewing and writing about instrumental figures in black history.

In addition to Haley's own story, the museum offers genealogical resources to help others trace their own roots. The museum is both on the National Register of Historic Places and recognized as an American Writers Museum affiliate.

KNOXVILLE

The free, self-guided Knoxville African American Heritage Tour takes visitors to 11 important stops across the city. These include the intersection of Central Street and Jackson Avenue that was the site of numerous black-owned businesses, the Green Magnet Math and Science Academy that sits on the site of the former Green School or Knoxville Colored High School, Knoxville College, the Blount Mansion, and Cal Johnson Park, dedicated to a former slave who became one of Knoxville's leading businessmen.

Historic theatres in the city include the site of the former Gem Theatre, the Carpetbag Theatre, the historic Tennessee Theatre, and the Bijou Theatre, the first integrated theatre in Knoxville. The Knoxville Museum of Art also features works by African-American artists and the Emporium Center showcases the work of more modern artists.

The Beck Cultural Center in Knoxville is also the focal point of many of the city's Black History Month festivities. Located in the former home of influential community members James and Ethel Beck, the site showcases and preserves African-American achievement and culture in Knoxville. The East Tennessee History Center contains the McClung Historical Collection as well as permanent and rotating exhibits about local history.



The statue of Olympian Wilma Rudolph is one of several stops on Clarksville's African American Legacy Trail.

The Women's Basketball Hall of Fame is the only facility of its kind in the world and honors the first African American women's basketball teams, members of the WNBA, and other important contributors to the sport.

MCMINNVILLE

The city of McMinnville is home to the Black History Museum of Warren County, an organization that was founded by Wayne Wolford Sr. to preserve the unique and rich black history of the area. Open Tuesday through Saturday, Wolford offers personal tours of the museum and its collections. The museum highlights the contributions of local veterans, professional athletes, cartoonists, police officers, government officials, ministers, and community leaders. The museum also hosts speaker events and provides youth activities.

MEMPHIS

The National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis showcases artifacts from five centuries of African-American history into the modern era while the I Am A Man Plaza commemorates the Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike that brought Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to Memphis in 1968. The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Reflection Park was inspired by the "I Have Been to the Mountaintop" Speech. Other sites in Memphis associated with the Civil Rights Movement include the Mason Temple Church of God in Christ, Beale Street, and the WDIA

Radio Station. The Slave Haven Underground Railroad Museum in Memphis at the historic Burkle Estate showcases how runaway slaves journeyed to freedom while the Cotton Museum at the Memphis Cotton Exchange provides historical and economist context. The First Baptist Beale Street is the first church founded by freedmen and women in 1865 and near the Ida B. Wells Statue and Plaza. Tom Lee Park is named for a local hero who rescued 32 strangers from a steamship crash in the Mississippi from a rowboat despite being unable to swim himself.

Arts and entertainment venues including the Hattiloo Theatre, Orange Mound Gallery, and Ernest Withers Collection Museum and Gallery give insight into the artistic contributions of Memphis' black community both past and present. In addition to Beale Street itself, music

fans can visit the W.C. Handy House Museum, Memphis Music Hall of Fame, Memphis Rock and Soul Museum, Sun Studio, the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, and the Blues Hall of Fame.

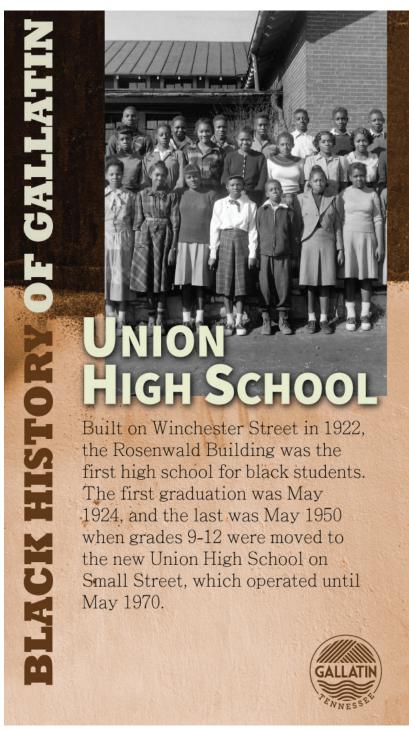
NASHVILLE

The National Museum of African American Music (NMAAM) offers a guide to how black Americans have contributed to music from African roots to modern styles like funk, disco, R&B, and rap. The Fisk University Aaron Douglas Gallery showcases work from the Harlem Renaissance while the Carl Van Vechten Gallery of Fine Arts showcases modern work. Performances by Fisk's famed Jubliee Singers le to Queen Victoria dubbing Nashville "Music City."

The Jefferson Street business district in Nashville is an anchor for the city's black community past and present. It also houses the Jefferson Street Sound Museum that showcases how the business district brought in musical legends like Little Richard, Jimi Hendrix, Etta James, Ray Charles, and Aretha Franklin. Other musical contributions can be found at the Nashville Musicians Hall of Fame.

The Nashville Public Library's Civil Rights Room showcases the history of the Civil Rights movement in the city. After a visit to the library, visitors can also check out important places in the movement including the Fisk and TSU campuses, the historic Metro Courthouse and its Witness Walls, Clark Memorial United Methodist Church, Griggs Hall at American Baptist College, and the former Woolworth's building that was the site of the Nashville sit-ins.

The Tennessee State Museum is hosting a special highlights tour of black history in Tennessee with special curator tours as well as an exhibit titled "A Better Life for their Children" focusing on the Rosenwald Schools located in Tennessee. The museum is also hosting a month-long Lunch and Learn series focusing on black entrepreneurship, highlighting Andre Prince Jeffries of Prince's Hot Chicken, Dr. Ladonna Boyd of R.H. Boyd Publishing Corporation, Cheryl McKissack Daniel of McKissak and McKissak, and Shirley Peace Cobbins and Darrell Cobbins of Peace Realty & Universal Commercial.



One of the banners being displayed in Gallatin for Black History Month highlighting the history of Union High School, now the Gallatin Shalom Zone.