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Your involvement is key to our success!

Dear Members:

It was wonderful to visit and speak with so many city officials from across the state at our recent Annual Conference in Gatlinburg. As I step into the role of the League president, my goal is to build on TML's many successes while working to meet the challenges that awaits us as a League and as public

Our organization continues to move forward. We have completed our strategic plan, have created new opportunities for member involvement, and our proud of the measurable increases in our legislative successes and outcomes.

Our cities and towns – both large and small – have more in common than not. And when we work together, great things happen. With this in mind, we need to convince Gov. Bill Lee and members of the state legislature to return to the practice of returning 100% of state sales taxes revenues to the communities that generate them.

The TML staff has developed and launched a public education campaign - Restore, Return, Relief - designed to build awareness and support for TML's legislative initiative to return essential revenues to Tennessee municipalities and the citizens we serve. Involvement from our members play a significant role in this endeavor.

To join in this effort, go to our website where you can find more information about the proposed legislation, key talking points to



use when addressing civic organizations and speaking with your legislator; estimates of what this increased allocation will mean for your community; sample press releases, a resolution and letters to the editor; plus much more.

To get started, go to tml1.org/ state-shared-sales-tax-and-singlearticle-cap-campaign

The need for cities and towns to speak with a unified voice is more important now than ever before. Your involvement in TML will be what makes the difference in Tennessee's future. Get involved today and help make your community and our state ready for the challenges that lie ahead.

It's an honor to serve as your president.

Bobby King, TML President Henderson Mayor

David Pogue discusses sensor revolution, emerging tech at TML Annual Conference

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Smart home technology, autonomous vehicles, and artificial intelligence-generated art were among the topics discussed by Emmy-winning CBS correspondent and New York Times columnist David Pogue, who keynoted the opening general session at the TML 82nd Annual Conference in Gatlinburg.

Pogue focuses on new and emerging technologies, how they work - or don't, and how these technologies have the potential to change the way everyday life functions.

While many talk about the iPhone revolution, Pogue said he is more interested in what he calls the sensor revolution, such as the 30,000 invisible beams of light the phone uses for facial recognition and other technology.

"I really think that the sensor revolution – the one that no one is talking about - is launching all these new products," he said. "The first big success story here were the thermostats. The guy who invented the iPod also invented this. One day he was reading an article about how 50% of people who buy programmable thermostats never program them because they're too hard. What this thermostat does is have near and far infrared sensors that detects when you're home. It then sets itself to your preferences."

These connected thermostats prompted what Pogue said was a "gold rush of the Internet of things" with companies trying to create more programmable "smart" devices to improve quality of life. Often, these products have had mixed results, such as products including tracking



CBS correspondent David Pogue discusses technology made possible through what he calls the "sensor revolution" at the TML 82nd Annual Conference held in Gatlinburg.

water bottle consumption, dog treat dispensers, and monitors for egg trays and toilet paper. Many of these devices require their own smart phone app to be used.

It was when smart speakers, like the Amazon Alexa, Siri, and Google Assistant, brought the functions of these many smart devices together that the industry began to get back on track.

"You don't need an app, you don't need your phone; You just say 'Alexa turn on the lights,' and it's done," Pogue said. "The whole Internet of things starts to get interesting when it gets larger, when you

get build-ins, for example. This is revolutionizing a lot of industry and commerce. We have all these systems in every building, but they don't talk to each other. If you go into your building late at night, you have to have a card to unlock the alarm system, turn on the lights, for the A/C to come on, and the fire system needs to be on. Now, they are making these things talk to each other so when an employee enters all these things in the building know they're there, and the building manager, from home, can moni-See POGUE on Page 3

Tennessee moving forward with fast-charging network



EV company Rivian has begun installing charging stations at all of the Tennessee State Parks, part of the state's overall EV infrastructure plan.

By KATE COIL

With electric vehicles rolling off the assembly lines of all four major automotive manufacturers in the state of Tennessee in the coming years, building support infrastructure to allow Tennesseans to use

these vehicles is a major priority. Alexa Voytek, deputy director of programs, innovation, transportation, and communications for the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), and Matthew Meservy, director of the long-range planning division of the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), spoke to municipal officials about plans for electric vehicle infrastructure across the state at the Tennessee Municipal League's 82nd Annual Conference in Gatlinburg.

Planning for the future of electronic vehicles is not a new subject for the state. Voytek said the state

set the goal of having 200,000 electric vehicles on Tennessee roadways by 2028 when it established Drive Electric TN (DET) in 2018. At present, there are 20,000 electric vehicles on Tennessee roadways numbers expected to grow as more EVs are produced

"Through that road mapping initiative with Drive Electric TN, we developed a list of 40-plus projects we could be working on to help drive that EV adoption throughout the state in a number of areas, whether that be supportive policies and programs, developing infrastructure, and driving education and awareness," Voytek. "TVA kickstarted in 2019 a statewide electric charging infrastructure needs assessment. Basically, this was a way of taking stock and inventory of the existing charging infrastructure publicly available, See TEVI on Page 5

Chattanooga testbed research bringing datadriven solutions to traffic, infrastructure

By KATE COIL

As emerging vehicle technology and smart infrastructure become more advanced, the city of Chattanooga is working with several partners on a series of testbeds that will pilot new ways municipalities can use smart and electric vehicles for data-driven government.

Dr. Mina Sartipi, director for the Center for Urban Informatics and Progress (CUIP) and computer science and engineering professor with the University of Tennessee Chattanooga (UTC), spoke at the TML Annual Conference in Gatlinburg about how the city of Chattanooga, CUIP, the UTC Smart Communications and Analysis Lab (SCAL), and other partners are working to pioneer ways smart technology on city streets can be applied on a variety of projects, ranging from reducing pedestrian deaths to monitoring local air quality to improving emergency vehicle response times.

Described as "real-world sandboxes for research and de-



This heat map is one of the ways CUIP collects data in the testbed. Data can show different types of vehicles and pedestrians as well as places where pedestrians are crossing the street - even if there is no designated crosswalk in place.

velopment," Sartipi said testbeds can apply research and academic work into the real world, allowing the theoretical to become reality.

Chattanooga presently has two testbeds up and running: the 1.25-mile Martin Luther King Boulevard corridor and the 2.5mile route parallel to MLK Boulevard, and a second on U.S. Route 27 and connected interstate ramps that was financed through a \$1.37 million grant from the National Science Foundation. Recently,

the city also announced a new, \$9.2 million testbed aimed at electric vehicles, funded through a \$4.5 million U.S. Department of Transportation Grant and a \$4.7 million match from UTC, industry partners, the city of

Chattanooga, and EPB. "One of the visions we have is that Chattanooga becomes the city-scale testbed for the future of mobility in terms of modes of connectivity, automation, and See TESTBED on Page 3

Tennessee's EV fast-charging network plan one of first to get federal approval, funds

federal authorities as part of the Na-

tional Electric Vehicle Infrastruc-

ture (NEVI) Formula Program.

By KATE COIL

The state of Tennessee's electric vehicle infrastructure plan is one of the first to be approved by

White House officials announced Tennessee is one of the first 35 states and territories whose plans were approved as part of an overarching project to build out electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across 53,000 miles of U.S. highways. With this early approval, these states can now unlock more than \$900 million in

and FY23. Preston Elliott, deputy commissioner and chief of environ-

NEVI formula funding from FY22

ment and planning for TDOT, said the state will be entitled to \$88 million through the federal program in the next five years.

"Tennessee's Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (TEVI) Deployment Plan allows TDOT to move forward with our National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula Program funding," Elliott said. "In total, Tennessee will see \$88 million in federal NEVI funds which will allow for the successful implementation of a statewide electric vehicle (EV) charging program consistent with national See FEDERAL on Page 5



These roadways will be among the first targeted for expanding fast-charging EV networks across the state. If there are federal funds remaining from those projects, the state has the ability to use them to help shore up charging infrastructure in other areas as well.

NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



BLUFF CITY

A circa-1935 rock building on the former campus of Bluff City Middle School will soon be home to a museum dedicated to the history of the Holston River Valley. The Scenes from the Bluffs Heritage Museum will showcase the history and stories of Bluff City, Sullivan County, and the Holston River Valley, stretching from Abingdon, Va., to Knoxville. The museum presently focuses on four major periods of history: American history, the Andrew Johnson Room, a nostalgia-themed gallery dubbed "Memories of Yesteryear," and an auditorium for video presentations and guest speaker programs. A reception area with a mural depicting the history of the region as well as exhibits about veterans of foreign wars and railroad history. The museum is slated to open in 2023.

CLARKSVILLE

Hankook Tire & Technology Co., Ltd officials announced the company will invest \$612 million in its third major manufacturing expansion since breaking ground on the company's state-of-the-art Clarksville facility in 2014. Located off International Boulevard, Hankook Tire will create 397 new jobs in Clarksville over the next five years. Through this project, Hankook Tire will complete its Phase Two expansion in order to double its production of passenger car and light truck (PC/LT) tires while simultaneously conducting its Phase Three expansion to add the company's first U.S. production line of Truck Bus and Radial (TBR) tires to the Clarksville operations. Upon completion, Hankook Tire's Tennessee plant will house the company's production, warehousing, building, equipment and utilities. The more than twomillion-square-foot facility is expected to begin tire production by the final quarter of 2024, reaching full capacity by early 2026.

CLARKSVILLE

The city of Clarksville Parks and Recreation Department earned its place among the nation's top parks and recreation agencies with its accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with the 154 standards for national accreditation. To achieve accreditation, an agency must comply with all 37 fundamental and 103 out of 114 non-fundamental standards. The city of Clarksville exceeded CAPRA's requirements by meeting all 154 standards and will be the first Tennessee municipality in more than 20 years to receive the accreditation, and only the second ever behind Germantown.

ETOWAH

Piedmont Lithium officials announced the company will invest \$582 million to establish a lithium hydroxide processing, refining and manufacturing facility in Etowah, creating 117 new jobs. Piedmont's new facility will be located at the North Etowah Industrial Park, a CSX and Select Tennessee Certified Site. As a producer of lithium hydroxide, a critical component in the supply chain for both the electric vehicle and battery storage markets, Piedmont's Tennessee Lithium project will support energy security in the U.S. and the transition to a clean energy economy in North America. The new manufacturing plant will utilize more environmentally responsible and economic processing technology, supporting Piedmont's objective of becoming a large, low-cost, sustainable producer of lithium products. Founded and headquartered in Belmont, N.C., Piedmont is a battery-grade lithium hydroxide producer.

KINGSPORT

The Kingsport Carousel has been recognized as one of the Nicest Places in America by *Reader's Digest* magazine. The Kingsport Carousel is located at 350 Clinchfield Street in downtown Kingsport and is open to the public year-round. The carousel includes 32 wooden riding animals and two chariots, 24 rounding boards depicting notable sites within the city and 24 hand-carved "sweep" animals around

the top. The project began 14 years ago as a dream of the late Gale Joh, who grew up in Binghamton, N.Y. — the "Carousel Capital of the World." After Joh died in 2010, former Alderwoman Valerie Joh and local volunteer Reggie Martin picked up the mantle and formed the nonprofit organization "Engage Kingsport" to push the project forward. More than 300 volunteers worked for five years to hand-carve and paint platform and sweep animals for the working 1956 vintage Herschell carousel. The carousel opened to the public in 2015 and since then more than 500,000 men, women and children have taken the \$1 ride on the majestic attraction.

KNOXVILLE

After three years, the \$17 million Knoxville Broadway Viaduct reopened to traffic on Aug. 31, 2020. The bridge serves as a critical connection between North and South Knoxville and is used by around 10,000 vehicles per day. The new bridge replaces a previous structure originally built in 1927. The new bridge has two lanes with a dedicated center turn lane, sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian access. Lighting and fencing will also be installed on the bridge.

NOLENSVILLE

The town of Nolensville and Nolensville Fire and Rescue have received a \$1,153,464 grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program. The grant will be awarded over a threeyear period and will be used to help support the hiring of six new firefighters. In addition to raising the daily staff number for the department, the new hires will also help NFR work better in conjunction with mutual aid departments to reach NFPA standards. The town of Nolensville began offering fulltime fire protection in July 2021 and has been working diligently since to build a combination department that meets the needs of the community.

SURGOINSVILLE

Symmoo Inc. officials announced the company will invest \$13.1 million to expand and locate new manufacturing operations in Surgoinsville, creating 86 new jobs in the next five years as the company locates into an existing facility at 386 Phipps Bend Road. Symmoo's expansion to Tennessee will position the manufacturer to be geographically closer to its largest consumer base while also allowing for increased production capacity, sales volume and potential new partnerships with sub suppliers. Founded in 1952, Symmoo Inc. specializes in the manufacturing of powdered metal for customer-engineered components and stock products, which serve many industries including lawn and garden, medical, power transmission and others. In addition to its manufacturing operations, Symmco also performs secondary machining and in-house tool design. The compa-

Johnson City unveils mural at fire station



City officials, members of the Johnson City Public Art Committee, and officials with Johnson City Fire Station No. 4 gathered to install a mural depicting native wildlife created by artist Ernesto Maranje. The public art committee commissioned Maranje for the project earlier this year and the mural is painting along the side and back walls of the fire station, overlooking Kiwanis Park.

Martin becomes first city in Fast Charge TN Network



The city of Martin has become the first municipality to install a fast charger location as part of the Fast Charge TN Network, a partnership between the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Operated by the Weakley County Municipal Electric System and the city of Martin, the new charging station is part of the regional Fast Charge Network that will cover major travel corridors across TVA's seven-state service area and link in to a larger network across the nation. The new charging station is located at the Martin Public Library in downtown Martin.

ny's 86 new jobs will increase its total number of U.S. employees to nearly 300.

WHITE BLUFF

Ebbtide Holdings, LLC, doing business as TN Composites, will invest \$23.1 million to expand its manufacturing operations in White Bluff over the next five years, expecting to create up to 132 new jobs and more than doubling employment at its existing facility. By expanding, TN Composites anticipates increasing its manufacturing capabilities through the reconfiguration of its facilities, integration of additional technology, expansion of its research and development capabilities and alignment of its process flow. The company expects the result of these changes will drive substantial improvement in efficiency and manufacturing of its quality products and significantly increase the company's boat production to an estimated 14 boats a week by early 2025. Founded in 2018 and acquired by Ontario, Canada-based Limestone Boat Company Limited in 2021, TN Composites manufactures under the brands of Aquasport, Limestone, and Boca Bay Boats.

Morristown's Jolley Park receives ETDD Project of the Year Award



The city of Morristown and the Jolley Family were awarded the East Tennessee Development District's (ETDD) Project of the Year Award at the district's annual awards breakfast for the new Jolley Park. The inclusive playground park was the vision of the Jolley family, who worked with teachers and parents to ensure the park project catered to all children. The park was named after the late Gene Jolley and when gifted to the city of Morristown, the \$3 million facility became the largest single gift to the city in its history. From left to right, Morristown Vice Mayor Tommy Pedigo, Joyce Jolley, and Randall Jolley receive the award.



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Ed Stewart, ChFC, CLU, CF Financial Advisor

Pogue discusses sensor revolution, emerging tech at TML Conference

POGUE *from Page 1* tor what is happening."

Pogue said this allows for the "internet of cities," which includes things like sensors in parking spaces that alert people when and where there is an opening parking space to reduce traffic. Another application is traffic light cameras that can change lights when there is no cross traffic to reduce carbon emissions and travel times.

Autonomous vehicles are another potential technology that could save the lives of 1.5 million people a year in car accidents. The combination of this with driver services like Uber and Lyft could revolutionize how people travel.

"They want to develop self-driving taxis that you will call from your phone, and that car ownership at home won't be a thing anymore," Pogue said. "If 94% of your car's life is spent parked, let's make money while you're not using it. Tesla wants owners to rent out their unattended car to people who need a ride when you're not using it. You need to think about the future some day when people don't need to park cars. All that land you're using now for parking lots could someday be available for other purposes, if we could get self-driving cars to work."

One way these technologies are combining is through drone delivery programs being piloted by companies like Amazon as well as electric vertical take and landing (eVTOL) aircraft designed for urban travel.

"This is going to be the biggest change for cityscapes because the whole thing is designed to bypass congestion and traffic," Pogue said. "Building tops are going to be the new Lyft and Uber stops, essentially. It is a gigantic movement that gets hardly any press, but all these companies are pouring so much money into the concepts of air-Ubers. They have a short range



Smart and autonomous vehicles aren't the only way technology is changing transportation. Electric vertical take and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, like this one, may soon help cut down on traffic in urban landscapes by transporting travelers from rooftop to rooftop instead of along city streets. The vertical take-off and landing technology employed by these aircraft is also being explored as part of drone delivery devices being tested by companies like Amazon.

and can't fly many miles; 100 miles is the max. They can hold maybe two to three passengers and some will be self-driving while others need a pilot."

Smart watches in particular are proving valuable in for public health outcomes as well.

"It's incredible what they are packing into these things," Pogue said. "On the back of the watch, you have green and red infrared lights that are flashing all the time. That is shining light through your skin, into your bloodstream, and measuring how much light bounces back. When you have a pulse, that's a big glob of blood that shows more reflection and when it's a thinner stream between pulses, less reflection."

This allows the watch to measure factors like pulse rate, blood-oxygen levels, and even conducts EKGs with small electrodes. Watches also measure sleep activity, body temperature, detect and report falls, and have micro-sweat sensors that can mon-

"Right now, the sensor technology is way ahead of the software that knows what to do with it," Pogue said. "They have masses of data and they aren't sure how to correlate it and tell you anything useful, but they are getting there. The big one is atrial fibrillation or Afib. Some six million Americans have this and it's the most common type of arrhythmia. You can get a test for this at your doctor's office, but if it may not do it right then and the doctor doesn't see it. You need something strapped to you at all times. These watches have saved hundreds, maybe even thousands, of lives at this point. It will tell you it noticed your heart rate is quivering and to get it checked out."

At present, researchers are looking at ways smart watches can be used to detect other medical conditions like high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, respiratory issues, and sleep issues.

Recent information has shown that smart watches have been able to detect COVID-19 in users three to four days in advance of symptoms because of changes to heart and lung functions.

Being able to combine the data collected from smart watches with other available data like weather, pollen count, pollution rates, and other factors could make it easier for companies to provide individuals with highly specific health advice.

However, Pogue said one of the things that has always held back technology is human concern over artificial intelligence and potential privacy overreach. For example, Pogue said 71% of Americans said they would never use autonomous vehicle technology.

"I think that's fine because the technology is not there yet, but at some point, our terror over technology will lessen and mistakes will be fewer until they overlap," Pogue said. "In the meantime, we should

think about the things that will go away as a result of this technology. You won't need driver's licenses or driver's ed anymore because you won't need to know how to drive a car. You won't need car insurance because these things can go 80 miles per hour, two feet apart without hitting each other. Other things like speed limits, home garages, parking lots, and car alarms were all developed for people."

In order to get people more comfortable with cities using smart technology, Pogue said transparency will be needed at every step, like published white papers online and public demonstrations.

"It's a matter of baking transparency into the design, into the demos, and every step of the way," he said. "I'll give you one example. Drone delivery is coming quick and fast. The air traffic control system for airplanes was actually designed by NASA. The FAA has asked NASA how can we launch a drone delivery program in the U.S. without terrifying the public that they are being spied on. What NASA has thought of is an air traffic control for drones with an app for the public. If you aim your phone at the drone, it will tell you whose drone it is, what it is doing, and where it is going. A lot of push back is just fear of the unknown. You have to acknowledge that fear of the unknown is a thing, and change is difficult even if there is a shining better world ahead of it."

Pogue said technology always has a way of overcoming the stigma.

"I know some of this is alarming and maybe even terrifying, but I caution you to remember that the history of technology is of new inventions terrifying the public," Pogue said. "I know some of these things seem alien and crazy. I can't give you exact and shapes some of these technologies are going form, but I can guarantee this: it's going to be a wild ride."

Chattanooga testbed research bringing data-driven solutions to traffic, infrastructure

TESTBED from Page 1

EVs," she said. "A lot of vehicles that are coming out have sensors, adaptive cruise control, lane adjustment, and there are automated vehicles on the road now. However, this technology counts on only what is built into the car. What we are doing is beyond that. We are not touching anything on the car, but letting the cars talk to each other. For instance, if my car hits black ice on the road it can let other cars around me know there is an obstacle on the road."

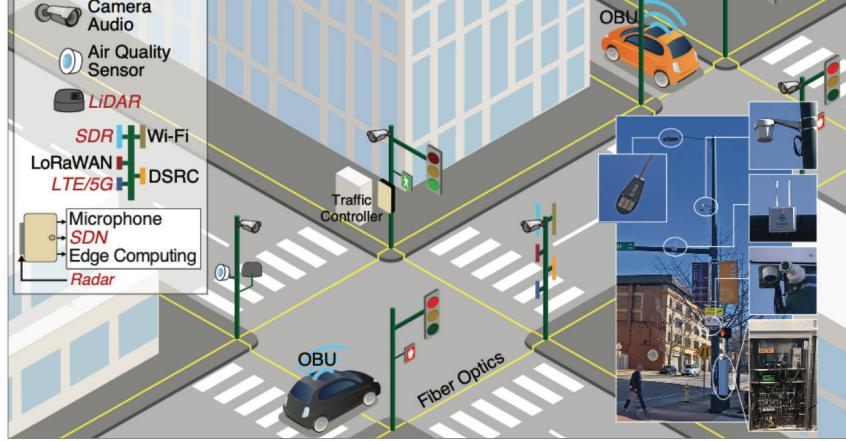
The project began in 2019 focused on a more urban environment on city-owned poles. The project has expanded to include roads managed by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT). Censors are put on poles to ping back information to researchers about what is happening on street level.

"We wanted to understand how people are using the streets and the safety of the streets," Sartipi said. "A lot of the work we have worked on so far deals with pedestrians and cyclists, but expanding the testbed to the highway will allow us to do more work related to automation and connectivity at faster speeds. There are some other pilot studies going on in terms of public health and transit as well."

Sartipi said the first six months of the program was spent alleviating privacy concerns from the community and educating them on what the testbeds could help accomplish.

"The poles on Martin Luther King Blvd. are equipped with different devices and censors that have different computing and wireless communication capabilities," she said. "We have cameras, LiDAR, some with radar, air quality, and microphones on the poles. One of the questions we get is 'are we watching people and are we listening to people,' and the answer is 'No'. We don't store any of the data; it is all dropped. We don't need to know that Mina crossed the street, just that a person crossed the street."

Each object gets a generic label like "person" or "car" along with a time stamp that is stored, allowing researchers to see things like what peak times are for pedestrians or how many cars park in a certain area during the course of a day. The time stamp allows researchers to track a single object as it moves through various intersections, allowing them to see travel times between certain intersections.



The CUIP tested bed on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Chattanooga is providing important data that is not only helping the city of Chattanooga make streets safer but could also have implications for cities across the world.

The 11 censors in place collect about 1 billion points of data daily with different metrics, such as how many vehicles are crossing specific intersections and the makeup of those vehicles, such as cars, trucks, bicycles, buses, and others. Other testing involves seeing the limitations of the technology, such as does the technology understand how trees change their appearances with the seasons or if data can be taken from a smaller vehicle if it is blocked behind a higher-profile vehicle.

The data allows researchers to create a digital twin of real traffic to see things like how changing signal timings could impact traffic or alter the amount of time pedestrians have to wait to cross the road. The more precise the data collected in the real world, the more accurate the research. Another way researchers can use the testbed is by getting out themselves, either driving vehicles around the testbed area or walking around as pedestrians to model different situations.

By predicting trajectories of vehicles, people, and other items on the road, researchers can also see where accidents are most likely to occur. Technology can detect illegal U-turns, when vehicles are traveling in the wrong direction, and other dangerous wrong-way traffic flows. There are numerous public safety applications for the

program.

"We are collecting data and visualizing where people are crossing the road at undesignated areas or how close buses are to the bike lanes, and how often our bike lanes are being used," Sartipi said. "If an accident has happened, there are records of it like 911 calls, which we have access to. One of the metrics is to reduce traffic fatalities to vision zero, and in order to do that we have to see what intersections have higher risks of accidents. There are areas where there may not be an accident, but a vehicle gets too close to a pedestrian or cyclist. Those near-miss incidents are the ones we want to understand."

By identifying these potential problems, partners can work toward improving safety both in the testbed and in other areas of the city. In addition to the testbed, Sartipi said the program also plugs in other publicly available data such as from 911 centers, TDOT E-TRIMS, weather data, and Arc-GIS. By using this data, the team was able to see where accidents happen in the city, what time accidents are most likely to happen, and contributing factors to those accidents, even though the accidents were not occurring in places within the testbed itself.

"There is a section in North Chattanooga that had averaged 80 accidents," Sartipi said. "The speed limit was 35 miles per hour. Our team saw that this is an area that needs attention, but we aren't traffic engineers. We talked with the city to find out what was going on with this intersection. We figured out there was a pole too close to the intersection. This is an area of the city where everything is very tight. We were able to move the pole and add signs. There have been no accidents since."

Another safety initiative involved working with a local nonprofit to determine how accessible sidewalks and crosswalks are for those in wheelchairs.

"This technology is enabling us to identify a person in a wheel-chair on the crosswalk," she said. "We know how long it is going to take them to cross the street because we can measure their speed. We also have data from the signal phasing from the traffic controller, so we know how long the pedestrian has to cross. In real time, we could adjust that crossing by a second or two to help that person cross the street safely."

By seeing when vehicles arrive at intersections and when they are stopped, the technology can also help researchers figure out ways to streamline traffic.

"We have all been sitting at a red light wondering why we are sitting there when there are no cars coming in the opposite direction,"

Sartipi said. "We applied an artificial-intelligence based algorithm and it allowed more vehicles to come through the lights when they are green. We are looking at each intersection independently and what is going to happen at this intersection in the next cycle. We are not looking at what is going on now. The traffic comes from upstream or downstream. We can, with a high accuracy, know what the traffic is going to be at the next cycle and plan the next phase based on that. After we applied that, we reduced time travel by 20% and energy savings from that was about

Of course, Sartipi said by altering things like crosswalk timings, researchers also have to take into account the consequences that will have for other traffic.

"We all know that adding one or two seconds to one intersection can completely mess up the next," she said. "Our goal is how do we do this in a more global way – not necessarily the whole city but maybe the intersections upstream and downstream... We also know that in the real world it's not perfect optimization if someone still needs to cross the street. We want buses to get to their stops not early but on time. We want to make sure that this is something that can be adaptive and done in real time, not that we optimize it once."



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Stan Allen, police chief for East Ridge, will retire after 38 years in law enforcement. Allen began his career with the



Stan Allen

Chattanooga Police Department in 1984, where he was employed until he took an early retirement in 2012 to accept a position in the private sector. He then joined the East Ridge Police Department as it's assistant chief in April 2015 before being appointed police chief in 2019. Allen is also a graduate of the FBI Academy. Assistant Police Chief Clint Uselton will serve as interim chief upon Allen's retirement.

Robert Anderson has been selected as the new finance director and town recorder for the town of Jonesborough. An-



Robert Anderson

derson is a certified public accountant (CPA) who formerly worked with the Tennessee Comptroller's Office. He has 13 years of experience in finance, serving as both an auditor and senior auditor with the state and with Johnson City-based firm PwC. Anderson holds a bachelor's degree in business administration with a focus in accounting and finance from East Tennessee State University. Anderson will be taking over the position following the retirement of Town Recorder Abby Miller in 2021 after nearly 20 years of service. Interim Recorder Pat Ryder submitted his own retirement in July.

Scott Avery has been selected as the new city manager for Millersville. He comes to the city from Missouri where he



Scott Avery

spent 16 years as an instructor and peer team lead for the Commission on Fire Accreditation International as well as in several simultaneous roles including as a professor at Columbia Southern University: city administrator of Houston, Mo.; fire chief of Olivette, Mo.; and as a reserve police officer for the Lake St. Louis Police Department. Prior to that, he served as chief administrative officer of the O'Fallon Fire, Mo., Protection District, as a U.S. Border Patrol Agent, as a public safety officer, and as a paramedic with St. Louis EMS.

Travis Barbee has been hired as the new director of parks and recreation for the city of Morristown, following the



retirement of longtime director Craig Price earlier this year. Barbee comes to Morristown from Bay County, Fla., where he has served as the parks division manager since 2019. Prior to that, Barbee served as director of parks and recreation for Catoosa County, Ga.; Tazewell, Va.; and the town of Unicoi as well as the recreation supervisor for Durham Parks and Recreation. He holds a bachelor's degree in sports management from Kennesaw State University.

Hollie Berry, mayor of the city of Red Bank, is the only official from Tennessee and one of only 15 in the nation to be



Hollie Berry

selected to participate in the third class of the Champions Institute. The program was created by Active People, Healthy Nation Initiative, and Smart Growth America (SGA) to help local elected officials equitably define, design, build, and evaluate Complete Streets in their communities. Berry has been representing Red Bank as a member of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County/

North Georgia Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). Berry has been mayor of Red Bank since December 2020.

Jessica Borne has been hired as the new municipal court judge for the city of Franklin after long-



Jessica Borne

time municipal court Judge Deana Hood was elected to the position of circuit court judge. Borne presently serves at For, Holloway & Rogers. Prior to that, she spent 12 years with the Tennessee Office of the District Attorney General 21st Judicial District. A native of Atlanta, Borne moved to Tennessee in 2001 to attend Middle Tennessee State University where she earned both a bachelor's degree and master's degree in criminal justice. She received her law degree from the Nashville School of Law in 2011.

Tom Clabo has been appointed as director of engineering for the city of Knoxville. Clabo has served as the Knoxville



Tom Clabo

Engineering Department's civil engineering chief since 2006 and has 31 years with the department. He initially started with the city in 1991 as an entry-level engineer, working his way up through the ranks into his current position. Clabo holds a degree in engineering degree from the University of Tennessee College of Engineering.

J. Steven Collie has been selected as the new city manager of Oak Hill. Before coming to Oak Hill, Collie spent nearly



J. Steven Collie

two years as the city manager of Millersville. Collie spent 24 years in the private sector in various human resources roles at various companies. Before that, he spent two years as assistant director for the Center for Government Training at the University of Tennessee and served for three years as the city manager of Waynesboro. He also spent nearly 23 years in the U.S. Air Force, leaving as a commander after being stationed at bases in California, Missouri, Hawaii, South Carolina, and Japan.

Scott Collins has been selected as the new city manager for Shelbyville. Collins comes to the city after serving as



Scott Collins

the city manager of Fayetteville for eight years. Prior to that, he served as city administrator with the city of Newport for five years, as city manager of LaFollette, and as a district executive with the Boy Scouts of America. Collins holds a bachelor's degree in political science and government from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Jamie Ewald has been selected as the new organizational development specialist for the city of Franklin.



Jamie Ewald

Ewald joined the city earlier this year as a management fellow conducting research projects on development and adjustment of city programs. Prior to coming to the city, Ewald served as the director of philanthropy at New Hope Academy, for 11 years in various roles at World Vision USA, as a project manager with PHG Technologies, and as a business administration and public relations coordinator with Capitol Christian Music Group. She holds a bachelor's degree in public relations and political science from Illinois State University and a master's in public

administration from the University of Missouri at Columbia.

Don Farmer, former mayor of Milan, died Sept. 21, 2022, following a heart attack. Farmer served as mayor of



Don Farmer

Milan from 1992 until 1997 and was also the District 7 Director for the Tennessee Municipal League during his service as mayor. Farmer spent many years working at ITT in Milan followed by Glaco, also known as Chicago Metallic, in Humboldt. In addition to serving as mayor of Milan, he was also on the Gibson County Election Commission, board of directors of the Milan Chamber of Commerce, and on the board of trustees for the Milan Special School District. He also served on the Tennessee Democratic Executive Committee and was a delegate for Tennessee to the 2016 National Democratic Convention.

Shawn Fitzpatrick has been selected as the civil engineering chief for the city of Knoxville, taking over from Tom Clabo who was re-



Shawn **Fitzpatrick**

cently selected as the engineering department's new director. Fitzpatrick has been with the Knoxville Engineering Department for 26 years and presently served as a city engineering manager. Fitzpatrick earned his civil engineering degree from Old Dominion University and has been managing designs of city engineering projects since 2005.

Andre Greppen has been selected as the new city attorney for the city of Livingston following the election of previous



Andre Greppen

city attorney John Meadows to the White County General Sessions Court as a judge. Greppen has been with the Cookeville-based firm of Moore, Rader, Fitzgerald, Fitzpatrick, and York since 2018 and has done work with the city before. Greppen holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and his law degree from the University of Alabama School of Law. He served as a judicial intern to the U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Alabama.

Karen McKeehan has been selected as the new transportation engineering chief for the city of Knoxville, the first woman to



Karen McKeehan

serve in the role and as an engineering chief in city history. McKeehan previously served as an engineering division chief with the city's engineering department and has been with the city for 16 years. McKeehan holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Tennessee Tech and a master's in engineering from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Chester Owens has retired as Humboldt Fire Chief after a 45-year career with the Humboldt Fire Department.



Chester Owens

A 1975 graduate of Humboldt High School, Owens went to work as a firefighter with HFD in 1977. Owens was selected as the chief of the department in 1994 following the retirement of his friend and mentor, late Chief Leonard Day. Owens has held the position as chief for 28 years. Owens is a member and past vice president of the Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association. A pilot, Owens said he will remain active in service

TML, TMBF visit Algood



TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes (left) and TMBF President and CEO Wade Morrel (right) spent time in the Upper Cumberland area of the state with a visit to Algood City Hall and City Administrator Keith Morrison. Morrison has been newly elected to the TML Board of Directors as a TML District 4 Director.

Peters to serve as new public works consultant for MTAS

Brad Peters has been hired as a new public works consultant for the University of Tennessee's Municipal Technical Advisory Service (UT-MTAS).

Before coming to work for MTAS, Peters spent 17 years with the town of Greeneville, serving as its public works director, landfill manager, and as an engineer.

During this time, he oversaw the development of numerous roads, trails, sidewalks, and other transportation projects in the town.

He was initially hired as a stormwater engineer by Greeneville in 2005 before being promoted to public works director in 2011. In 2013, he received the additional title of landfill manager.

Before coming to work for Greeneville, Peters worked for a consulting firm based in Johnson City and for the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Peters



Brad Peters

holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

He is a member of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Public Works Association (TCAP-WA). Peters will serve out of MTAS' Knoxville office.

with the Memphis Blackhawks and Team Memphis FedEx during his retirement.

John Owings has been selected as the new municipal attorney for the city of Harriman. Owings has been practic-



John Owings

ing law in the Knoxville area for more than 30 years and has been with the firm of Owings Wilson and Coleman since 2008. He obtained a bachelor's degree and his law degree from the University of Tennessee. While in law school, he also worked as an investigator for the Tennessee Human Rights Commission. He was employed as the first pro se law clerk and staff attorney for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee. He also served as chief deputy law director for Knox County between 1990 and 2006 as well as served on the Knox County Commission from 2006 until 2008.

Bill Stinnett, chief of police for the city of Rockwood, died Sept. 8, 2022, from natural causes at the age



Bill Stinnett

of 60. Stinnett had a 37-year career in law enforcement, all of which was spent with the Rockwood Police Department, and was a veteran of the U.S. Army. Stinnett joined the department in 1985 as a patrolman. He worked his way up through the ranks, serving as a sergeant, investigator, and assistant chief before he was first appointed chief of the Rockwood Police Department in

Carlin Stuart has been hired as the new finance director for Lakeland after the promotion of previous finance director Michael Walker to the position of city manager. Stuart is a CPA who holds a master's in

Carlin Stuart

ministration from the University of Memphis. He most recently served in the office of the Shelby County Trustee. Stuart has more than 20 years of experience in finance and accounting, including managing tax increment financing (TIF) arrangements for the Trustee's office.

Oak Ridge City Manager Dr. Mark Watson was honored by ICMA, the International City/ County Manage-

business ad-



Mark Watson ment Association, as the recipient

of the organization's Award for Career Development in Memory of L.P. Cookingham. The award recognizes an outstanding local government administrator who has made a significant contribution to the career development of new talent in professional local government management. Watson has positively influenced the career paths of over two dozen interns and assistants since beginning his career in local government in 1981. He has shared his knowledge with students and young professionals from around the world including teaching forty students about local government in Beijing, China, in 2018. Watson is a second-generation city manager and has served as city manager for the city of Oak Ridge since 2010. He received a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. His alma mater recently recognized him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in City Management.

Tennessee moving forward with fast-charging network

TEVI from Page 1

looking at the state of operability of that infrastructure, and then thinking through what the gaps are that we needed to build out to meet that 200,000 EV population."

A partnership between TDEC and TVA has identified the major corridors needed for the fast-charging network and is working to fund the development of those. Approximately 40 sites will be developed as part of the plan.

"We also overlaid that with our economic distressed and at-risk counties as well as the locations of our state parks to see what corridors run through those and can help bring economic development to those regions," Voytek said. "The Fast Charge TN network is essentially leveraging two funding sources. On TDEC's side, we are leveraging the Volkswagen Settlement funds and have allocated \$5.2 million toward that. TVA is bringing additional funding to the table."

With the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Deployment Plan New being approved as part of the recent federal infrastructure act, Meservy said there is more funding coming down the pipeline for this project.

"We are going to receive a \$4.2 billion funding pot for the next five years," he said. "These funds will be used primarily for the first round on the designated corridors. IN Tennessee, those are the double-digit interstates – except for Interstate 55 in Memphis – plus the U.S. 64 that connects Memphis to Chattanooga. That is where the funds have to be used first and foremost."

Meservy said that any other federal funds available after this build-out can be used on publicly accessible land and may have similar requirements to alternative fuel corridors plan. Universal plug types and spacing requirements also have to be met under the federal funding guidelines.

At present, there are 1,500 miles of eligible corridors needed for build-out of EV charging networks with each site costing \$1.5 million. Four charging stations able to pull 150 kilowatts simultaneously are also part of minimum requirements from the



A vehicle charges at the one of the EV charging stations on the campus of Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville.

federal funds.

As part of looking into what infrastructure is already in place, Voytek said officials are looking at how the need for charging will change workplaces, multi-family housing developments, individual dwellings, and public or community properties as well as fast-charging corridors. Voytek said 90% of EV charging takes place at the vehicle owner's place of residence, but fast-charging networks are needed for road trips and other forms of long-distance travel.

Additionally, Voytek said the state has partnered with EV developer Rivian, who is donating level two charges to all 56 state parks at no cost to the state. The company will operate and maintain those chargers for the next ten years with 26 operating by the end of September.

Meservy said another part of building EV infrastructure is making sure it stands the test of time.

"We want to make sure that these charging stations will not fall into ill repair," he said. "We have maintenance plans we want to put together. We want to make sure that future vehicles that are created can use these sites, to make sure we futureproof them. We also understand there is some cybersecurity risk as well. There are people out there who want to disrupt new and emerging technology."

While most chargers at pres-

ent are pull-in-, pull-out models, Meservy said the development of trucks, like those to be built at Ford's Blue Oval plant, mean that charging areas will have to be able to accommodate vehicles hauling boats, trailers, and other equipment. Power may also need to be up as EV usage increases.

Additionally, work is being done to ensure that Tennessee's fast charging network fits into the overall federal fast charging network by working with border states.

"Tennessee touches a lot of other states," Voytek said. "As we build out interstate corridor infrastructure in particular, we are wanting to make sure we aren't installing infrastructure right at the border only for there to be duplicative charging infrastructure right on the other side. We have formed a group called the Southeast Regional Electric Vehicle Information Exchange that meets monthly. It is essentially officials from all our state energy departments and DOTs along with Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. We are all discussing our plans and best practices as we build out our infrastructure."

Part of this initiative is a regional mapping tool that is publicly accessible to help guide the location of EV infrastructure at different sites in a way that interconnects.

One major goal toward the

development of electric vehicles in Tennessee is education of the public.

"We are lucky to have a pretty robust ecosystem of partners who are helping us in this space," Voytek said. "The Drive Electric TN is now an initiative managed by a nonprofit out of the University of Tennessee known as the Tennessee Clean Fuels Coalition. They are doing a ton of work to drive consumer education. We also have two different USDA Clean Cities Coalitions that also work as technical assistance providers to consumers, local governments, and public and private fleets looking to transition to electric vehicles."

Meservy said TDOT is also already engaging with the public about the future of EV with public forums about the fast-charging network as well as social media, surveys, webinars, and website outreach. Most questions about what the fast-charging network would provide related to volume, points of interest and destinations, and specific amenities at charging stations.

"Typical fast charger systems take about 20 minutes to get to a roughly 80% charge, so there are instances where if you want a charge you may have an opportunity to go out and visit the area you are in," he said. "Future ideas also have to do with having additional chargers if the demand is great. The

local power companies are coordinating infrastructure to future proof those."

Voytek said that work is also being done to ensure Tennessee's electric infrastructure will also meet the demands for electric vehicles.

"TVA is one of the biggest advocates of electric vehicle adoption, because for a while they were seeing their projected load growth as being flat if not declining," she said. "For them, this is a new way of selling and generating electricity. This is something they have been looking at for years now, as far as modeling and looking at the electric grid. Interestingly, TVA found if every vehicle in the entire Tennessee Valley Region - which includes seven states, not just Tennessee – became electrified over night the impact to the grid would be less than it was when air-conditioning was adopted after World War II. Obviously, we don't expect every vehicle to transition overnight; it's going to be a phased approach. They are working handin-hand with local power companies who will oversee it on the distribution side. These funds are helping to cover those infrastructure upgrade costs."

At this point, Meservy said the plan has unlocked available funds for the development of the EV charging, but there is still a journey ahead to make this network a reality.

"We still have a long way to go," he said. "It is not to where we have specific locations. We don't know exactly who we are going to be contracting with. The feds are giving us approved documents to work on standards to make sure we know how to prioritize locations if we have multiple sites competing for a location.

The Federal Highway Administration will approve those funds by Sept. 31, and in the meantime, we are going to work on how we will get these funds out for implementation, developing standards, and make sure we have covered all of our bases for our goals and associated risks. Hopefully, if everything goes right, by June of next year we should be releasing and awarding contracts."

Tennessee's EV fast-charging network plan one of first to get federal approval

FEDERAL from Page 1 standards."

Prior to this approval, TDOT has already begun staffing and activities directly related to the development of their plans. With the approval, the state can now be reimbursed for those costs as well as use funds for projects directly related to the charging of vehicles.

"The next step in the process is creating the public-private partnership with EV charging vendors so that Tennessee residents and the motoring public can confidently and reliably make long distance travel throughout the state," Elliot said. "The first corridors to have such EV charging stations, every 50-miles within a mile of an interchange, is Tennessee's interstates and other designated alternative

fuels corridors. Over the next year we will be working through the procurement process and hope to have stations on the ground by the end of 2023."

The funds will go toward charging station grants for entities in Tennessee with locations within one mile of the designated alternative fuel corridors, which includes Interstates 24, I-26, I-40, I-65, I-75 and I-81 as well as U.S. Highway 64.

The state will be able to provide partnering entities with 20% of the cost of construction of electric charging stations as part of the project. The grantees will have to maintain these stations for a set period of time with more rules and regulations to be determined.

The use of funds can also in-

clude the upgrade of existing and construction of new EV charging infrastructure, operation and maintenance costs of these charging stations, installation of on-site electrical service equipment, community and stakeholder engagement, workforce development activities, EV charging station signage, data sharing activities, and related mapping analysis and activities.

The NEVI formula funding under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which makes \$5 billion available over five years, will help build a convenient, reliable, and affordable EV charging network across the country. Faster adoption of electric vehicles is a critical part of the nation's climate goals as transportation currently accounts for more than a quarter

of all emissions. Approved Plans are available on the <u>FHWA web</u> <u>site</u> and funding tables for the full five years of the NEVI Formula program can be viewed <u>here</u>.

FHWA is also working on related efforts to establish ground rules for how formula NEVI funds can be spent. FHWA published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on proposed minimum standards and requirements for projects funded under the NEVI Formula Program and plans to finalize that rulemaking expeditiously now that the comment period has closed. FHWA also proposed a Buy America waiver that will allow a short ramp up period for the domestic manufacturing of EV charging; the comment period for the waiver proposal is open

through Sept. 30, 2022.

The Federal Highway Administration and the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation will continue to provide direct technical assistance and support to States as Plans are reviewed and approved, as well as throughout the lifetime of the NEVI Formula Program. For more information on the NEVI Formula program, please visit FHWA's NEVI website and Drive-Electric.gov. For more information on President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and investments in electric vehicles, please visit FHWA's BIL website.

For more information on the TN Electric Vehicle Infrastructure plan, visit https://www.tn.gov/tdot/long-range-planning-home/air-quality-planning/tevi.html.

No loan is too large or too small



Oakland recently closed on a \$5,200,000 PBA fixed rate loan through the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance parks and recreational facilities for the town. Oakland previously used TMBF's alternative loan program last year to issue two capital outlay notes. Pictured are Jay Johnson, Town Manager; Tommy Green, TMBF Marketing Representative; H. Michael Brown, Mayor; and Yvonne Bullard, Town Recorder.

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



The city of Waverly used the TMBF fixed rate PBA loan program to borrow \$5,000,000 to finance necessary projects due to the August 2021 flood disaster. First Federal Bank provided the financing through the TMBF program. The city has used our programs previously. Pictured are Waverly Mayor Buddy Frazier and City Recorder Kayla Thomas.



STATE BRIFFS

The Tennessee State Museum is the recipient of the 2022 Southeastern Museums Conference (SEMC) Silver Award in the over \$100,000 budget category for its current exhibition, Painting the Smokies: Art, Community, and the Making of a National Park. The SEMC Exhibition Competition showcases the best in the profession and provides benchmarks for regional exhibition efforts in southeastern museums. Open now through Jan. 15, 2023, invites visitors to examine the history of the park through the work of five visual artists active around the time of its creation, about 1900 to 1940. Placing art in conversation with artifacts, the exhibition was curated by the Museum's Candice Candeto, Annabeth Dooley, Matthew Gailani, and Debbie Shaw

Tennessee joins California and Connecticut as the three states chosen by Smart Growth American for the 2022 Complete Streets Leadership Academies. The state of Tennessee has partnered with the cities of Chattanooga, Memphis, and Nashville for their academy where they will learn about Complete Street best practices, improve cross-jurisdictional coordination, and plan and implement "quick build" demonstration projects. Tennessee has made great strides to improve their focus on multimodal users and safety in the last few years including the creation of the Multimodal Access Policy requiring every TDOT project to consider multimodal infrastructure and their recent Statewide Active Transportation Plan.

Savage Gulf State Park has become the 57th Tennessee State Park. The park features the 19,000-acre Savage Gulf State Natural Area, which is also a National Natural Landmark. It also includes old-growth forest, waterfalls, the Great Stone Door, and impressive cliff lines. The park will also include land formerly managed by Souther Cumberland State Park and is located in Grundy and Sequatchie counties. The Tennessee General Assembly has provided more than \$30 million for future improvements, including a visitors' center, RV campground, and other infrastructure. The 744acre former Shady Valley nursery will also be added into the park.

The state of Tennessee will receive \$13 million as part of a \$438.5 million settlement between JUUL Labs and 34 states and territories after a two-year bipartisan investigation into the

e-cigarette company's marketing and sales practices. Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti said the settlement terms mean JUUL will also have to comply with a series of strict injunctive terms that severely limit the company's marketing and sales practices. The multistate investigation revealed that JUUL rose to this position by willfully engaging in an advertising campaign that appealed to youth, even though its e-cigarettes are both illegal for minors to purchase and are unhealthy for minors to use.

The Tennessee Department of **Environment and Conservation** (TDEC) named Radnor Lake State Park in Nashville its Park of the Year as part of the Tennessee State Parks Awards of Excellence. The park was also honored with an award for its performance in sustainability. TDEC also announced awards for the best parks in the following categories: Johnsonville State Historic Park in New Johnsonville for the customer engagement category; Sgt. Alvin C. York State Park for innovation; Henry Horton State Park in Chapel Hill for interpretation; and Dunbar Cave State Park in Clarksville and Edgar Evins State Park in a tie for the best resource management.

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development announced six counties selected to participate in the latest round of the Select Tennessee Property Evaluation Program (PEP): Benton, Gibson, McNairy, Pickett, Sullivan and Tipton. PEP evaluates potential industrial properties, advising counties on industrial site improvements and where investments may be most beneficial. Since its inception in 2015, PEP has helped improve the inventory of industrial sites and buildings across the state, with more than 380 sites being reviewed. A new round of communities will be accepted into the program in the spring of 2023. Learn more here.

Tennessee's unemployment rate increased in August after three consecutive months of record-low rates. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development reported a 3.4% increase in unemployment in August, up 0.1% from the state's July rate and up from the state's all-time low rate of 3.2%. The rate is still down 0.6% from where the state stood this time last year. The financial activities sector created the most positions, followed by the manufacturing sector, and then the education and health services sector.

TML Board to meet Nov. 2

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Municipal League will meet in regular public session on Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022, at 12:30 p.m. in the law offices of Bone McAllister Norton, located in the Nashville City Center, Suite 1000 in Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, Oct. 28, at the offices of the Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 710, Nashville. Additional information may be obtained from Jackie Gupton, 615-255-6416.

TN Bond Fund Board to meet Nov. 2

Notice is hereby given that the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund Board of Directors will meet in regular public session on Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022, at 10 a.m., local time, in the TML Board Room located on the first floor at 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard in Nashville, for the purpose of considering and transacting all business that may properly come before said board. Some members of the board may participate in such meeting by telephonic means, which will be audible to any member of the public attending such meeting. If reasonably possible, an agenda will be available on Friday, Oct. 28, at the offices of TMBF, 226 Anne Dallas Dudley Blvd., Suite 502, in Nashville. Additional information may be obtained at 615-255-1561.

Municipal utilities among recipients of \$446M in state broadband grants

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee and Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) Commissioner Stuart McWhorter announced that the state will award \$446,770,282 in grants for the expansion of internet access across the state.

The funds will be split among 27 entities, including 10 municipally owned and operated utilities. In total, the broadband infrastructure grants will provide broadband access to more than 150,000 unserved homes and businesses across 58 counties.

Funds include:

- **Fayetteville** BoardofPublic Utilities, \$8,899,590
- **Bolivar** Energy Authority, \$20,168,743
- **Dickson** Electric Department \$860,236
- **Greeneville** Energy Authority, \$8,262,340
- **Knoxville** Utilities Board, \$15,259,160
- **Lexington** Electric System, \$27,490,416
- Loretto Telecom, \$7,446,068
- Newport Utilities, \$2,457,797
 Pulaski Electric System,
- \$23,161,638
 Spring City Cable TV,
- Spring City Cable 1V, Inc. \$1,925,574

According to the 2020 Broadband Deployment Report published by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), one in six rural Tennesseans lacks access to broadband. Since 2018, TNECD has awarded nearly \$120 million in broadband grants through state and federal funding to serve more than 140,000 Tennessee households.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury previously defined "unserved areas" as lacking access to a wireless connection capable of minimum speeds of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download and 3 Mbps upload. However, due to the increasing demands of the digital age, any connection that provides lower than 100 Mbps download speed and 20 Mbps upload speed is now deemed "unserved." In consideration of this new definition, application priority was still given to those with the lowest internet speeds, but all applications under this new definition of "unserved" were considered.

Funding for these grants comes through the Tennessee Emergency Broadband Fund – American Rescue Plan (TEBF-ARP), which utilizes a portion of the state's federal American Rescue Plan funds to address the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and work toward a strong recovery. Tennes-

see's Fiscal Stimulus Accountability Group (FSAG) dedicated \$500 million to broadband funding from this program, with more than \$446 million going to infrastructure and nearly \$50 million going to broadband adoption and digital literacy efforts.

For this round of funding, TNECD received 218 applications requesting over \$1.2 billion.

The final grants will be distributed across 75 applications submitted by 36 grantees, all of whom will provide broadband to various unserved regions of Tennessee. These grantees are a range of internet service providers, including electrical and telephone cooperatives, local municipalities, private providers and cable companies. These grant recipients were chosen through a rigorous criterion, which included the need of the grant area, the ability to complete the project and strong community support.

Grantees will provide approximately \$331 million in matching funds to complete these projects for a combined investment of \$778 million in new broadband infrastructure projects across the state. These projects must be completed within three years.

To learn more, please visit tn.gov/broadband.

Clarksville, Mountain City to share in \$37M in TDEC administered ARP funds

Clarksville and Mountain City are among the recipients of six grants totaling more than \$37 million from the portion of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds being administered by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC).

Tennessee received \$3.725 billion from the ARP, and the state's Financial Stimulus Accountability Group dedicated \$1.35 billion of those funds to TDEC to support water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure projects in communities throughout Tennessee.

Of the \$1.35 billion, approximately \$1 billion was designated for non-competitive formula-based grants offered to counties and eligible cities. These grants are currently open for application. The

remaining \$269 million will go to state-initiated projects and toward competitive grants.

Clarksville will receive \$15,388,497 to further support the efforts to address issues in the city's federal consent decree. Clarksville will couple its ARP money with existing funds to construct a thermal dryer as part of its current wastewater treatment plant. The dryer will convert biosolids to a pelletized product suitable for land application as a fertilizer.

Mountain City will receive \$935,919 to execute a drinking water and a wastewater planning, design, and construction project. Mountain City will use the funds to modernize its existing wastewater treatment plant and execute a feasibility study focused on the

possibility of installing a new drinking water well for more water supply capacity. Mountain City is also sharing in a collaborative grant being awarded to Johnson County.

Both Clarksville and Mountain City receive grants through the non-collaborative section of the program. Warren County received the only other non-collaborative grant and will receive \$5,596,564 for three utility districts within the county.

Additionally, three collaborative grants were also issued. Greene County and five utility districts will receive \$7,693,909; Johnson County, three utility districts and Mountain City will share in \$4,511,578; and Unicoi County and two utility systems will share in \$3,789,925.

Tennessee August revenues more than \$130M above state budgeted estimates

Tennessee revenues were more than the budgeted estimates for the first month of the state's fiscal year. Finance and Administration Commissioner Jim Bryson reported that August revenues were \$1.5 billion, which is \$100.6 million more than August 2021, and \$130.5 million more than the budgeted estimates.

The growth rate for all taxes in August was 7.12%.

"Monthly tax revenue receipts were substantial for the first month of this fiscal year but were much lower than the 22.11% growth experienced in August of last year," Bryson said. "Sales and use taxes, representing July taxable sales activity, were the largest contributor to monthly growth and fell in-line with the July national retail sales growth reported at 10.3%. There was a decline in motor vehicle registration fees compared to August of last year, due primarily to the newly implemented one-year registration renewal waiver for class A and class

B drivers. Furthermore, a \$1.7 million loss in privilege tax growth can be attributed to a reduction in realty and mortgage tax transactions due to rising interest rates.

"As state tax collections begin to moderate from last year's extraordinary growth, we will continue to carefully monitor the economy and consumer demand to ensure we meet our monthly budgeted estimates."

On an accrual basis, August is the first month in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

General fund revenues were \$117.2 million more than the August estimate. The four other funds that share in state tax revenues were \$13.3 million more than the estimates.

Sales tax revenues were \$118.4 million more than the estimate for August. The August growth rate was 10.01%.

Franchise and excise taxes combined were \$11.3 million more

than the budgeted estimate of \$80.1 million, however the growth rate was negative 3.50%.

Gasoline and motor fuel revenues increased by 1.83 %from August 2021 but were \$0.3 million less than the budgeted estimate of \$109.2 million.

Motor vehicle registration revenues were \$0.6 million more than the August estimate of \$19.9 million.

Tobacco tax revenues for the month were more than budgeted estimates by \$2.4 million.

Privilege tax revenues for Au-

gust were \$5.9 million less than the month's estimate of \$50.3 million.

Business tax revenues were

\$5.7 million more than the August estimate of \$6.6 million.

All other tax revenues were

less than estimates by a net of \$1.7 million.

The budgeted <u>estimates are</u> available on the state's website.



Festival

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TN Building Officials Assn. TN Assn. of Chiefs of Police

TN Assn. Municipal Clerks & Recorders

TN Government Finance Officers Assn.

TN Fire Chiefs Assn. TN Fire Safety Inspectors

TN Assn. of Floodplain Management

TN Assn. Housing & Redevel. Auth.

TN Municipal Attorneys Assn. TN Municipal Judges Conference

TN Chapter, American Public Works

TN Recreation and Parks Assn.

TN Chapter, American Planning

TN Personnel Management Assn. TN Assn. of Public Purchasing

TN Section, Institute of Transport

TN Public Transportation Assoc. Assoc. Independent & Municipal Schools

TN Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council

TN Urban Forestry Council TN Stormwater Assn

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Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund

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ACommunity of Possibilities

BY MATT LEHRMAN Social Prosperity Partners

Generosity is a choice. Whether inviting someone with just a few items to cut ahead of you in the grocery store checkout line or mailing off a check to a worthy charitable organization, every generous decision is a spark of grace in a hardhearted

As a civic leader – whether elected, appointed, or hired - generosity is your personal choice too, but I respectfully suggest that you also recognize it as an essential professional responsibility directly related to the quality of civic engagement in your community.

Let's distinguish generosity from the common vocabulary of civic behavior:

- · Generosity means more than civility, the polite deference people owe each other in a nation that recognizes "...all men are created equal." Civility alone is no guarantee of meaningful discourse.
- Generosity demands more than tolerance. Meaningful dialogue and collaboration require that people do more than simply endure or outlast those with whom they disagree.
- Generosity asks for more than respect of others' opinions, especially when respect is converted to villainization aimed at stoking fear against or delegitimizing a source of disagreement.

Civility, tolerance, and respect aren't supposed to be choices. In American society, they are the minimum standard by which people are expected to govern themselves via vigorous, informed, and rational discourse.

Civility is supposed to be the guardrail that keeps reasonable disagreement from veering into the oncoming lane of being outright disagreeable.

Yet here's our uncomfortable truth: Civility, tolerance, and respect are inadequate. They are failing at the job of sparking the grace of inclusion, dialogue, creativity, and compromise necessary for healthy, vibrant communities.

We need to aim higher. Civility, tolerance, and respect are useful rules where local government is positioned solely as the arena in which opposing interests compete, but the more meaningful work of cities and towns should be about gathering consensus that "grows the pie" rather than "divvying up its slices."

Civility is only the floor. Generosity is the roof.

Civility is necessary for conversations about the present. Generosity is essential for conversations about the future.

And being oriented to the future – that is, being a community of possibilities – is what invites people to best connect with each other, collaborate for mutual benefit, and feel secure in their share of social prosperity. Our best future is built upon generosity.

Let me offer three tactics to help you lead a community of possibilities:

1. Consider and adopt a values statement that makes these (and perhaps other) generous promises:

Welcoming - In our community, we encourage the participation of all residents because we recognize that we can accomplish more by working together than any of us can on our own.

Neighborly - In our community, everyone deserves to emerge from public decision-making feeling respected and heard.

Courageous - In our community, you'll repeatedly hear us say "Tell me more" because we truly want to hear, understand,

and consider others' (different) perspectives.

2. Practice setting a generous

There's no single method to do this. However, as a professional facilitator specializing in conducting public dialogue and gathering community consensus for cities and towns, I'll share one of my most commonly successful (but not foolproof!) techniques to inspire generosity among groups of people of diverse backgrounds and opinions:

Invite the group to reflect on this statement: "The purpose of local government is to enable individuals to join together in recognizing and solving community problems" and stir the conversation gently following this recipe:

- Invite someone's observation that the statement reflects the tugof-war between the sacred rights of individuals and the unchecked expansion of community needs. (Don't back away, there's a lot of flavor in a strong conversation about people's declarations of favoring "freedom & liberty" over "collectivism & socialism.")
- Add in someone else's observation that the statement can alternatively be read to empower all sorts of people to identify problems, injustices, concerns, responsibilities, and/or opportunities—with the hope and expectation that local government (and fellow citizens) will help do something about it.
- Keep welcoming additional observations until everyone has participated.
- Let the discussion simmer; stir gently to help participants realize that difference doesn't necessarily mean opposition. For example, the latter don't want to pay for things they don't consider important while the former recognize some need for mutual cooperation.
- Your conversation is nearly done when someone shares: "Sometimes being part of a community means saying, 'That's not what I would have preferred, but if others see that topic differently, I can be okay with that." Watch carefully for the sweet taste of generosity to spread because you've done it! Generosity means that people agree to deliberate together – are open to the possibility that they might not love the final decision, but may still be okay with it.

3. Reward generosity with accountability.

Never miss an opportunity to collect a name and an email address so that you can include them in an ongoing follow-up dialogue on the topic(s) they care about.

Inviting opinions and seeking advice but failing to offer the means to stay connected is profoundly ungenerous. It's the nature of decision making processes that some people will be disappointed. People are more accepting of such decisions when they know they have been heard and respected - and you accomplish that by being generous with your candid, timely, and proactive follow-up.

Aspire to be a community of

possibilities. I truly and wholeheartedly believe that the single most important function of every city and town is to enable people to come together to recognize and solve community problems.

But, of course, that's not quite how towns and cities are operationally structured. Judged by budget size and the significance of their impact on daily living, you might argue that infrastructure (i.e., roads, water/sewer, power, buildings) and public safety are a town's or city's most important functions. Surely, they are massive, durable, powerful – involving systems that, once constructed, will last for generations. The priority of infrastructure is obvious and universal. As a beloved former Mayor of my



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hometown of Scottsdale, AZ, said, "Potholes are neither Republican nor Democrat. They just need to be fixed."

Infrastructure comprises the physical substance of cities and towns, and I use the word "ideastructure" to describe the enduring intentionality of people in communities. Just like infrastructure must be designed, constructed, and maintained over a long period of time, so too must ideastructure.

A community of possibilities is a city or town willing to commit itself to an ongoing process of visioning, that is, to a continuing exercise of welcoming, evaluation, dialogue, research, partnership, innovation, and communication that enables individuals, organizations, businesses, and government to articulate their highest community aspirations together.

My than 30 years ago, I took part Scottsdale Visioning and still adore this simple but profound declaration in its final report: "Its purpose is to help everyone pull together, in order that we may give our very best to the future, just as all previously involved citizens have done for us."

Giving our very best to the future – now that's generosity!

And whether you're creating a full-bore community endeavor - or personally engaging in generosity-inspiring conversations with fellow civic leaders or constituents, here are 2 wonderful conversation

starters: 1. What is something that you appreciate or value in our community today that exists thanks to the efforts and investments of people

here more than 20 years ago? 2. What is something that we might conceive, create, or preserve today, for which people in this community will be deeply appreciative more than 20 years into the future?

The future is unknowable, but it's incredibly malleable.

A community of possibilities approaches that future with generosity. A community of possibilities offers time and space for people with diverse perspectives, talents, and capabilities to join together to ask both what shouldn't change and what can. A community of generosity invites civic leaders to find areas of common interest (even when they have well-known areas of disagreement) because in the long run the only thing that matters is what we leave to successive generations.

Look, I'm not naïve. I offer no promise that everyone in your town will start singing Kumbaya. Disagreement isn't only natural, it's necessary for a healthy & vibrant society.

But generosity is a choice. And as a civic leader, it's also your responsibility. Go spark the spark the grace of generosity – and commit yourself to leading a community of possibilities.



FESTIVALS Oct. 3-8: Greenfield

34th Annual Fire Prevention

The Greenfield Fire Department hosts an annual October festival dedicated to fire prevention education, including a tie-dye party, live burn demonstration, food, music, fire department open house, blood drive, and more. For more info, visit https://www.facebook.com/ CityofGreenfieldTN/

Oct. 7-9: Jonesborough

International Storytelling Festival Jonesborough's celebrate the 50th anniversary of the International Storytelling Festival, featuring guests from around the world. For more info, visit https://www.storytellingcenter.net/

Oct. 14-15: Crossville

Crossville Oktoberfest Come enjoy authentic German music and food including local polka bands, dancing, and more. For more info, visit https://www.

Oct. 14-15: Mt. Pleasant

crossvilleoktoberfest.com/

Mid-South Barbecue Festival Sample some of the best barbecue in the south with live music, a parade, and more activities. For more info, visit https://www.midsouthbbqtn.com/

Oct. 14-16: Rogersville

Rogersville Heritage Days This festival showcases traditional music, storytellers, and dancers, special activities for children, demonstrations of pioneer skills, antique quilts, cars and farm equipment, a juried craft show, and a food court. For more info, visit https://www.rogersvilleheritage. org/

Oct. 15: Brownsville

Hatchie Fall Fest Brownsville's beautiful historic

court square offers local retailers and more than 100 vendors offering handcrafted items from jewelry to home decor. Listen to live all day music from local and regional entertainers of all genres. Participate in a contest or two, from frozen t-shirt to corn hole, or compete at pie baking. For more info, visit https://www.hatchiefallfest.com/

Oct. 15: Oliver Springs

October Sky Festival Celebrate the history and heritage of Oliver Springs with this festival named after the 1998 movie filmed on location in town. For more info, visit https://octoberskyfestivaltn.

Oct. 22-23: Collegedale

Collegedale Apple Festival Collegedale hosts its third annual Apple Festival featuring fresh apples provided from local orchards, more than 180 craft and food vendors, a petting zoo, pony rides, trackless train rides, inflatables, entertainment, and fun for the whole family. For more information, visit https://www. facebook.com/events/the-commons/collegedale-apple-festival/996163834160739/

Oct. 22: Goodlettsville

Goodfest and Fall Market Goodlettsville's Moss-Wright Park will host a fall market featuring vendors from the Goodlettsville Farmers' Market as well as local artisans, crafters, sponsor, and food vendors from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more info, visit https://www. tnvacation.com/events/goodletts-<u>ville-goodfest-and-fall-market-0</u>

Oct. 22: Tellico Plains

Sixth Annual Cherohala Skyway Festival

Learn about the history and heritage of Tellico Plain at this fun fall festival. For more info, visit https://www.facebook.com/ events/724355718788824

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J. R. Wauford & Company, Consulting Engineers, Inc.

New White House municipal complex serves as heart of the city

By KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Increased growth of their community led municipal officials in the city of White House to spearhead a project that would bring city employees, elected officials, and citizens closer together in a new municipal complex.

The Billy S. Hobbs Municipal Complex and Community Center is a three-story, 26,000-square-foot facility that includes a new senior center, a new municipal board room, and offices for the city's parks, administrative, finance, planning, and human resources offices among numerous other amenities. Like the previous municipal structure, the new complex is named after White House's inaugural mayor who served for 26 years with the city in addition to 26 years as principal of White House High School, 14 years as a Sumner County Commissioner, and four years on the Sumner County School Board.

The city of White House borrowed \$11 million from the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund (TMBF) for the community center project, including \$1.5 million for site prep work and demolition and \$9.5 million for the construction. The city has since borrowed \$24 million for the construction of the new recreation center near the municipal complex and community center.

Kevin Krushenski, TMBF marketing representative, said the bond fund has enjoyed seeing how the city of White House have taken these funds and developed them into not only brick-and-mortar buildings but also into a sense of community.

"White House is a prime example of how great things can happen in a community when shared vision, strong leadership, and fantastic staff work together to make investments that improve the quality of life," Krushenski said. "It's been the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund's honor and a privilege to work with the White House Board and staff to help finance their city center vision. On behalf of the entire Bond Fund, we look forward to seeing White House's wonderful future."

White House Administrative Services Director Derek Watson said the new municipal complex and community center are just part of a campus of city structures in a campus-type setting, which echoes back to the original high school on the site. In 1989, the former high school took on a new role as White House City Hall after the city purchased it from the school board for around \$100,000.

The renovations to the former high school property – as well as the city's partnership with TMBF – go back to a library project in 2013.

"Our city hall was in an old high school campus that was built in the 1940s," Watson said. "It had some open fields. In 2013, we built a brand-new library on the campus with the Bond Fund in 2013. When that finished up around 2015, we added a splash pad, then doubled the size of the splash pad, added a pavilion, restroom facilities, an amphitheater, and we were getting grants along the way. We had a master plan for the whole property that called for building a new rec center and taking the existing facility to modify it into a new community center that would house administrative offices."

However, early due diligence work on the site determined city officials would have to adjust their future vision of the municipal campus.

"When we did sample borings around the building, we found that we were sitting on karst and sinkholes starting in the ground," Watson said. "We realized we had to shift gears a little bit. We went to the Bond Fund for \$11 million to build a new community center on the property. We redesigned it to be a three-story building."

The rate from the Bond Fund was able to provide White House security despite what could have been seen as a major setback in the project.

"The Bond Fund was so pleased that our fixed rate draw loan program and the ability to not pay interest on the entire loan amount up-front was able to save the city and taxpayers a tremendous amount of interest expense during that uncertain construction period," Krushenski said. "White House managed a very difficult sit-



The new, three-story Billy S. Hobbs Community center also serves as the heart of municipal operations for the city of White House. Named after a former mayor and high school principal, the new community center replaces a former high school that had been in use as White House City Hall since the 1980s. The new facility, along with the city's library, a splash pad, amphitheater, and planned recreation facility retain a campus-like atmosphere on the former school grounds.



White House officials celebrate the grand opening of the municipal complex earlier this year. The project was made possible through a \$11 million fixed-rate bond from the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund, who is also financing the \$24 million recreation center.

uation and turned it into a positive outcome."

In addition to serving as home to the city's administrative, finance, human resources, parks and recreation, and planning offices, White House City Administrator Gerald Herman said the new building is a place for local residents to gather.

"The community center has more meeting space for the community with a warming kitchen for catered events, a projector for meetings and presentations, and houses the senior center," Herman said. "The seniors do a weekly Wednesday lunch in the community room. When we built this, we also wanted to make sure we had a facility where our chamber of commerce could hold dinners and events. This community room can hold 190 people. The other day we had a job fair. This was a facility we definitely needed for our community because there was nowhere else with a like-size facility."

The community room has already proven a big hit with major plans for future events including senior dances, family reunions, wedding receptions, baby showers, and other public gatherings on the horizon.

The first-floor of the new facility is focused on more public access with the community center, the parks department offices, and senior center located there. The remaining city offices are located on the second and third floors of the building with the new city boardroom on the second floor.

"It also has a really nice boardroom," Herman said. "Our previous facility could only hold about 45 people and this one can hold 90."

The new boardroom also has safety glass and incorporates new technology with monitors for the audience and individual board members to follow along with presentations and information, a new mic system and camera system that allows for livestreaming of municipal meetings.

In the meantime, they were also building a new recreation center to build on the campus.

In order to build the new recreation center, parts of the former high school needed to be torn down including its cafeteria and auditorium. One of the more complicated pieces of the project involved the former high school gym.

"The gym goes all day long from seniors walking in the morning to open gym for kids to use in the afternoon," Hermann said. "It's where our rec teams play volleyball and basketball, so there is always something going on. We knew we had to figure out a way to keep that going. We obtained a \$24 million loan from the Bond Fund to build a new rec center. Once we finish the new rec center, we will tear down that old gym."

The 72,000-square-foot new recreation center will help accommodate the wide variety of activities White House residents participate in without the crush sometimes caused by limited space in the old facility.

"Our gymnasium can only have one basketball game on at a time, which hurts our rec programs," Herman said. "We have to start early and the kids can be here until 9 or 10 at night finishing up their practices or games. The new facility will have two full-sized courts so we can have multiple practices on half court. There will be a walking trail around the top of the gymnasium. There is also going to be a multipurpose room that will be lined for basketball, volleyball, and two pickleball games. There is also going to be a wellness center with free weights and cardiovascular equipment."

Another amenity in the rec center will give it a unique offering. "We're doing something kind of out of the box for cities, and I'm not sure anyone else is doing it," Watson said. "We are going to have a gaming area for folks with Xbox, Playstation, and those types of games. We know eSports are popular, so we want to have that kind of space. We are also talking about some old-school arcade games and maybe a pool or ping pong table."

The new buildings are still located in an area important to the history and the name of White House. While the city was only incorporated in 1971, White House's history dates back to the 1820s and was named for a white, two-story house built in 1829 that was a popular stop for lodging, food, and changing horses on stage lines.

changing horses on stage lines.

The original house was destroyed in 1951, but a replica stands as a museum and Chamber of Commerce. The historic turnpike that brought so many travelers through White House became U.S. Highway 31 West, and still serves as one of the city's major thoroughfares. In fact, the new White House municipal complex is located on Carmack Drive, just one block down College Street from its

intersection with Highway 31.

While new facilities have replaced the former school building on the site, the complex still retains a campus-like atmosphere and is connected via walking trails to the White House Public Library, the city's splash pad, a playground, and the outdoor Fran Huston Amphitheater.

"We've got all the buildings with similar brickwork and the walkability gives it a feel like a college campus," Watson said. "We don't really have a true town center. We have commerce along the roads that come through our city center, but it's not a traditional downtown. We were told that if you bring moms and babies into a town center, you will get shops. So that is one of our goals. By doing that

with the splash pad, playground, rec center, and senior center, we are starting to bring more people here and we are seeing business growth reflecting that."

Herman said the municipal campus has a positive impact for both residents and municipal employees.

"Our population was 8,000 in 2008 and now we're pushing 16,000 people," he said. "That means a growing demand for city services. It makes it pretty easy for us to go down a flight of steps and be in the finance department. I can go downstairs to the planning department and have a planner bring out plans for me to look at. We have internal hallways to get to each other, which is really nice."

It also gives city employees a chance to be involved in city life.

"The splash pad is always busy, and some of our windows face that," Herman said. "As soon as it opens at 9 in the morning -- it's non-stop with kids there and at the playground. The community room and senior room are just across the hall. Whenever I get stopped by a senior in the hallway, they always want to talk about how much they love the facility. In the evenings sometimes when I leave work, even at seven or eight o'clock at night, there will be a big family gathering in the pavilion area, which is rented out constantly. There could also be an event in the community room like the job fair. It keeps us close to the public and what's happening. I can walk out of the building and hear a band playing in the amphitheater."

Watson said citizen feedback has been positive with many residents saying it is about time the city expanded its rec center.

"When people walk into the building they are always amazed," he said. "People are glad to have such a nice city hall that represents White House."