

## As U.S. economy improves cities may be headed for another downturn in 2017

Cities still haven't recovered from the recession, and a new report concludes that they might instead be sliding into another fiscal contraction.

New National League of Cities (NLC) research indicates a potential slowdown in the municipal finance sector as city fiscal growth contracts for the second consecutive year.

Several major findings from the report, *City Fiscal Conditions 2017*, signal a trend that was last seen in 2006 before the Great Recession, including waning confidence of city finance officers, slowing local revenues and insufficient post-recession revenue recovery.

"City leaders know that at the end of the day, they must balance their budgets to continue delivering the services their communities rely on," said Clarence E. Anthony, NLC CEO and executive director of "Cities are the engines of innovation and economic growth. It's critical that Congress and the administration work closely with local officials to ensure American cities continue to grow our economy and lead our nation forward."

### Key findings:

- General Fund revenues are slowing. General Fund revenues grew by 2.61 percent in 2016, and revenues are projected to stagnate with just 0.9 percent growth in

2017.

- Property tax revenue growth is budgeted much lower than 2016. Finance officers have budgeted for 1.6 percent growth in property tax revenues in 2017, compared to 4.3 percent in 2016.
- Finance officers project a decline in sales and income tax revenues for 2017. Both sales and income tax revenues grew in 2016 (by 3.7 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively), but finance officers project a decline in 2017 (by 0.2 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively).
- Confidence of municipal finance officers has waned. Although the majority of finance officers (69 percent) are confident in the fiscal position of their cities, widespread optimism hit its peak in 2015.

"Our findings raise cautionary flags, despite improvements in economic indicators, like productivity and unemployment," said Christiana McFarland, NLC Research director. "These countervailing trends point to the imperative to expand the fiscal tools available to cities."

Access the full report at: [NLC.org/CFC](http://NLC.org/CFC)

## Tennessee joins national emergency communications network, FirstNet

BY CAROLE GRAVES  
TML Communications Director

Tennessee has opted-in to the nationwide network to help first responders communicate better during emergencies. The new network, called "FirstNet," will improve the way Tennessee's fire, police, EMS, and other public safety personnel communicate and share information.

Once builtout and implemented, the new system is designed to give police, fire and emergency personnel a seamless, state-of-the-art, high-speed voice and data communications system that will link public safety agencies across the state.

And by using broadband technology, it will go beyond voice-only connections. For instance, firefighters will be able to send and receive photos in real-time, or download blueprints of a burning building. A police officer might receive the



The new system will give police, fire and emergency personnel a seamless, state-of-the-art, high-speed voice and data communications system that will link public safety agencies across the state.

audio recording of a 911 call or floor plans of the building where a crime is taking place. An EMT will be able to access a patient's medical records from an ambulance.

Gov. Bill Haslam opted into the system in August, making him one of 18 states and two U.S. territo-

ries who have said yes to FirstNet. The governor's action now opens the door for AT&T to start work on FirstNet in Tennessee, with all construction, operating and maintenance costs borne by the company and the federal government.

See **FIRSTNET** on Page 3

## Education, quality of life essential for municipalities wanting to grow local jobs

BY KATE COIL  
TML Communications Specialist

At any given day in downtown Kingsport, between 3,000 and 3,500 students are working to earn degrees ranging from teaching to nursing to welding and accounting. But Kingsport isn't exactly your traditional college town.

The Kingsport Center for Higher Education downtown is part of a larger institution known as the Kingsport Academic Village, a joint venture between the city and five institutions of higher learning: East Tennessee State University, King University, Lincoln Memorial University, Milligan College, and Northeast State Community College.

With an estimated \$87.5 million economic impact between 2008 and 2015, the Academic Village may seem like a unique way to invest in the city's downtown, but bringing more money into the city coffers wasn't the main goal of the Academic Village. The main thing Kingsport is investing in is its people.

Kingsport City Manager Jeff Fleming said the Academic Village concept began in 1994 when the city's largest employer spun-off from its parent company.

"Most of the original industries had either changed hands, downsized or closed. It was a critical point in the planned city's history," Fleming said. "Mayor Jeanette Blazier called for an economic summit. The top idea was that 'higher education equals hired.' This reflected a deeply engrained local culture that a degree was not important be-



A group of eighth-grade students from Kingsport visit the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing (RCAM) at the city's Academic Village. Companies are becoming more involved with education, working with students as early as middle school to begin thinking about the skills they will need for future careers.

cause industrial jobs were plentiful historically. It was time to change the culture. What if we provided free community college to all local high school graduates? What if it was convenient and accessible in downtown Kingsport? So, the idea for the Academic Village began."

The success of the project inspired other cities to take a closer look at what educational opportunities were available for their workforce.

"Later, Knox Achieves patterned its program after Kingsport's. Knoxville Mayor Bill Haslam became Tennessee's governor and the concept became Tennessee Achieves, which led to Tennessee Promise. It's a testament to the power of vision," Fleming said.

Across Tennessee, municipalities are showing one of the best ways to recruit and expand job offerings in their areas is by investing in the needs of the local workforce.

### EXPANSION VS. NEW RECRUITMENT

Allen Borden, deputy commissioner of business, community and rural development with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, said around three-quarters of all new jobs created in the state are created by companies already located in Tennessee.

"There is an old saying that the best customer you'll ever have is the customer you already have. We definitely believe in that here in Tennessee," he said. "There is a good reason for that: each year roughly 70 to 75 percent of the jobs we touch at ECD are expansions of existing Tennessee companies. Only about 25 to 30 percent are coming on a year-to-year basis from the recruitment of new companies to Tennessee."

Between 2012 and 2016, 79 percent of all the jobs created by companies receiving FastTrack grants and located within the corporate limits of Tennessee cities were the result of expanding companies. Between those years, 84 percent of the jobs created in 2012 were the result of expansions – the highest in the five-year period – while 2014 saw the lowest percentage of jobs created by expanding companies at 74 percent.

A 75-25 split between expanding and new companies is what most states hope for, according to Borden. While the bulk of the new jobs in the state come from companies already located in Tennessee, he said it is important to remember all of those expansion jobs come from companies that were once just getting their start in Tennessee as well.

Between 2012 and 2016, companies receiving FastTrack grants and located within the corporate limits of Tennessee municipalities created 71,837 jobs. Of this total, 2015 saw the highest amount of job creation with 18,778 jobs announced in the state. Borden said the state's yearly average for job creation is between 20,000 and 25,000.

One of the reasons Tennessee has been so successful in recruiting new companies and helping others to expand is because Tennessee cities are becoming more and more involved in the economic development process.

"We could not be as successful as we have been these past few years without a tremendous amount of support, help and work from our local communities," Borden said. "What we have seen is that the communities that invest the most in themselves are the ones that are the most successful. The communities that are most aligned with their local See **JOBS** on Page 8

## Online sales tax debate clears another hurdle

### Next Stop, SCOTUS

BY LIZ FARMER  
Governing Magazine

A ruling in South Dakota could have nationwide implications.

The state's Supreme Court ruled on recently that a law requiring retailers to collect a sales tax for all online purchases by South Dakotans is unconstitutional. The rejection means the case will likely be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

South Dakota's law, passed a year ago, is part of a national effort among states to push the online sales tax debate into the courts after more than a decade of waiting for Congress to let them collect online sales taxes.

Alabama and Tennessee have both passed similar laws.

By some estimates, states are collectively missing out on more than \$23 billion a year in potential online sales tax revenue.

The takeaway: If the high court takes the case, it would give

the justices a chance to reconsider a 1992 Supreme Court decision that barred states from collecting sales taxes from retailers without a physical presence in the state. Many, including Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, believe that the 1992 case concerning catalogue retailers is out of date in today's online shopping world.

"A case questionable even when decided," Kennedy wrote in 2015, "Quill now harms states to a degree far greater than could have been anticipated earlier."

But now that the South Dakota case has reached the last stop in the U.S. appellate system, some are urging Congress to take action. The National Retail Federation called upon Congress to pass the Remote Transactions Parity Act, an online sales tax bill in the House that provides protection for small businesses from any potential compliance burden.

Given the current political climate, and that tax reform is the next big agenda item on Capitol Hill, it just might have a chance.

## Transportation grants available to cities

BY BRITTNEY KOHLER  
National League of Cities

Infrastructure discussions are heating up in Washington, and there's good news for cities, especially those in rural areas. Two transportation grant programs with a focus on direct funding to cities, as well as rural cities' participation, are now accepting applications: the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program and the Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) program.

### TIGER

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced that the popular TIGER program will be accepting proposals through Oct. 16. TIGER has proven to be a tremendously effective program for cities to invest in regionally and nationally significant projects in road, rail, transit and ports. USDOT has indicated the Fiscal Year 2017 TIGER program will "give special consideration to projects which emphasize improved

access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation for communities in rural areas, such as projects that improve infrastructure condition, address public health and safety, promote regional connectivity, or facilitate economic growth or competitiveness."

The need for applicants to demonstrate significant non-federal commitment has differentiated this program from other past USDOT grant programs, and USDOT notes that through the TIGER program, projects on average use 3.6 matching dollars for every one TIGER grant dollar. Cities are well positioned to explain the shared responsibility for funding infrastructure to leverage local dollars, and the focus on rural projects will certainly bring awards to cities of all sizes.

USDOT is hosting a series of webinars to explain the application process and how to present a benefit-cost analysis in September, the first being hosted on Sept. 13. To learn more and register for the webinars, go to: <https://www.transportation.gov/tiger/outreach>.

### INFRA

USDOT is also accepting proposals for INFRA, a \$1.5 billion competitive freight-focused program. INFRA is a continuation of previously titled FASTLANE program, but with updated criteria to ensure projects "are aligned with national and regional economic vitality goals."

Two levels of funding are available: at least \$25 million for large scale projects and at least \$5 million for small scale projects. The INFRA program is required by law to award at least 25 percent of funding for rural projects, which will ensure cities of all sizes benefit from this program. USDOT states it "will give full consideration to the unique needs of rural areas." USDOT has indicated that prior FASTLANE applications are welcome with minor realignment to the updated INFRA criteria. Applications for the INFRA grant program due by 8 p.m. (EST), Nov. 2. To learn how to apply, go to: <https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/infragrants/how-to-apply>.

# NEWS ACROSS TENNESSEE



## ATHENS

The new disc golf course at Athens Regional Park was officially opened with a ribbon cutting and a disc golf tournament after the completion of the course's back nine. Tournament players, both amateurs and professionals, as well as the first 100 citizens in attendance received commemorative mini discs. The park was designed by H.B. Clark of Bluegrass Disc Golf. The course has 36 baskets and is to the standards of Professional Disc Golf Association championship courses. The park's unique landscape provides natural obstacles such as hills, open fields, wooded areas, and water features. The disc golf course project began in 2010 in partnership with the Athens Parks Foundation.

## BRISTOL

The city of Bristol has recently made a new online map-based survey tool available to engage and involve the community with the creation of the city's new comprehensive plan. Residents can use the tool to share their thoughts and ideas about planning for the city. Residents can also see other feedback that has been provided to the city. Available through online program Map Social, the goal for the project is to allow the city to receive feedback in real time as it plans the next 15, 20 and 30 years of growth.

## CLEVELAND

The city of Cleveland will be adding 12 new employees to both its police and fire departments during the next two years. The increase in staff was made possible due to a property tax increase and will use established applicant pools. The need for staff in the fire department comes as Cleveland recently opened Fire Station No. 6 on Westland Drive, which will serve the Spring Branch Industrial Park. The new employees will bring the fire department's total to 103 employees. The city's police department will also be increasing its department to a total of 103 officers with the first two new hires expected in October. Upgrades and improvements will also include vehicles and equipment for the 12 new officers.

## COLLEGEDALE

Officials from Collegedale and the Tennessee Department of Transportation cut the ribbon on the completion of a widening project of State Route 317-Apison Pike. The \$24.2 million project was constructed by Charleston-based Wright Brothers Construction Company, Inc. The project began in January 2015 with the widening of 2.25-miles of the road from the Old Lee Highway to State Route 321, also known as Ooltewah-Ringgold Road. The road was widened from two lanes to five lanes featuring a central turn lane. Additionally, bike lanes and sidewalks were added on both sides of the road with a new traffic signal at the intersection at Swinyar Drive. The project provides safer access to the Collegedale Municipal Building and the Collegedale Public Library.

## COLLIERVILLE

The town of Collierville will soon start work on some street drainage improvement projects funded through a \$2,215,743 grant from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. The grant is part of leftover monies from the 2011 Disaster Relief Fund that was given to Shelby County after severe flooding. This is the third and final round of money from the fund. The money comes

to Collierville through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. In the next 18 months, the town will be using the funds to work on flooding issues in the Alcorn Village, Harris Estates and Friendship Cove area as well as the second phase of a downtown drainage project extending from Sycamore Road to Center Street.

## DICKSON

The city of Dickson will be giving its website the first major upgrade in 20 years. The Dickson City Council recently approved \$9,950 for the upgrades to be made by local company Logical Computer Solutions. The company will build and host the site, but city officials will be allowed to make additions and changes to it. The host of the current city website makes changes after they are submitted by city officials.

## ERWIN

The city of Erwin has begun demolition on the 15-acre Morgan Insulation industrial site to prepare the town-owned parcel for industrial development. The town removed metal buildings and other structures on the site that could be salvaged and auctioned them off at [Govdeals.com](http://Govdeals.com) before beginning the demolition, netting the town \$24,000. The funds from the auction as well as a \$350,000 grant from the Tennessee Valley Authority's InvestPrep program will finance the demolition and redevelopment of the site. Located at the corner of Second Street and Main Avenue, Erwin purchased the Morgan Insulation site in 2013 using a \$375,000 loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as \$75,000 of its own funds.

## HUNTINGDON

Gränges will invest \$110 million and create approximately 100 new jobs to expand its aluminum rolling operations in Huntingdon. A global leader in aluminum engineering and manufacturing, Gränges' expansion meets growing demand for light gauge foil, automotive heat exchanger materials as well as heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) applications. The expansion includes investment in buildings, casters, cold-rolling mills, annealing furnaces and slitters. The investment further positions Huntingdon as one of the most modern and efficient aluminum rolling mills in North America. The project is estimated to take approximately two years to complete. When completed, the capacity in Huntingdon will increase from about 160 metric kilotons to nearly 200 metric kilotons per year. This is the second major investment in the Huntingdon facility since 2000, strengthening Gränges' focus on foil and automotive heat exchanger products. Headquartered in Stockholm, Gränges has an American headquarters in Franklin.

## JOHNSON CITY

Moody's Investor's Service has reaffirmed Johnson City's AA@ bond rating, listing the city's credit position as "very good" and above the national average. Key credit factors positively impacting the rating include a substantial tax base, an acceptable socioeconomic profile, and moderate debt and pension liabilities. In addition to the local economy, unemployment rate, and the city's tax base, the review evaluated the city's cash balance and reserve, fund balance, pension liability, and long-term debt. The report noted the Johnson City economy and tax base are "quite healthy" and that the property tax base is growing. The full value of the tax base – which includes residential, commercial, and industrial properties – is above the U.S. median at \$6 billion. The city's tax base increased 3.5 percent between 2012 and 2016.

## MURFREESBORO

The city of Murfreesboro has launched its new city government website after a year-long redesign process. The new, user-friendly site includes better access to information about city services, neighborhood projects, and decision-making. The website can be viewed on both desktop and mobile devices and provides shortcut buttons to the most frequently requested city information. The city has also

added a video playlist showcasing department activities and stories covered by CityTV's multimedia producers. Social media buttons help citizens to better connect with the municipality via Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and CityTV. Updates to the website will continue over the next several months as the city looks to enhance content with the new design and integrate solutions to serve residents and businesses.

## NASHVILLE

The city of Nashville has launched a grant program as part of a private-public partnership model for land conservation. Nashville Mayor Megan Barry said the Conservation Assistance Fund (CAF) will help accelerate the preservation of open and green space in the Metro-Nashville area. A key recommendation of the Natural Resources subcommittee for Mayor Barry's Livable Nashville effort, the fund begins with an initial Metro investment of \$500,000 to help leverage partnerships with successful conservation NGOs. The fund will help to more effectively protect public or private lands with documented merits for natural-resource conservation or open-space preservation. Environmental nonprofits are encouraged to work with both landowners and Metro on targeted acquisitions and protective easements. CAF grants can help defray the typical expenses associated with conservation easements, such as surveys and appraisals—making easement acquisition more achievable for some landowners.

## SPRING HILL

The city of Spring Hill will now be broadcasting its Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Municipal Planning Commission meetings live through live-streaming and on-demand video services. The city's website will provide both live streaming as well as recorded video of meetings at [springhilltn.org/video](http://springhilltn.org/video). Viewers can also view videos by topic by clicking on various agenda items to select which topics they are interested in. A fixed, three-camera video system was installed in the city hall courtroom to record and stream the meetings and will livestream all public meetings conducted in the courtroom. The video streaming/archiving system is operated by the City of Spring Hill Communications Department, and powered by Nashville-based Champion Data Systems (CHAMP) through an exciting pilot program with the city.

## SPRING HILL

Spring Hill residents can now renew their vehicle license plate registration in both counties where the city is located. Residents on the Williamson County side can register at the recently installed kiosk at the Longview Recreation Center after emissions testing. Renewal can be conducted at the kiosk two hours after passing emissions testing. Renewal is conducted by scanning the bar code on the registration renewal notice, swiping a debit or credit card, and then waiting for the kiosk to print the new registration decal. Tags can be renewed 90 days before expiration so long as they are already registered within the county. Residents on the Maury County side of Spring Hill have been able to renew their license plate registration via a kiosk at Spring Hill City Hall since April. Maury County does not require emissions testing for vehicle tags.

## TULLAHOMA

The city of Tullahoma has recently switched 800 streetlights on his most highly traveled roads to new LED units as part of a citywide project to retrofit light fixtures. The energy-saving changeover project will eventually replace all of the 2,900 streetlights in Tullahoma to LED lights by June of next year. The switch was approved by the city board in March and is being completed in cooperation with the Tullahoma Utilities Authority. The changeover is expected to bring the city significantly lower electrical and maintenance costs. The LED lamps will consume about 46 percent less electricity than existing bulbs, but residents have reported the LED bulbs are still brighter than the current HPS lamps.

## Morristown unveils greenspace for Downtown Farmers' Market



In August, the city of Morristown officially opened their new greenspace/park at the Downtown Farmers' Market. This greenspace was the second phase of a complete remodeling of the farmers market. Phase I included the construction of a permanent covered pavilion last year. This new greenspace adds reconfigured parking and a lawn that can be used for market events, leisure and recreation. The city worked with the downtown association and the local rotary club to add park benches, drinking fountains, and a kiosk.

## Harriman adds playground to David Webb Riverfront Park



The city of Harriman is working to install new playground equipment at David Webb Riverfront Park, which will replace older playground facilities at the park. In addition to the playground, David Webb Riverfront park is home to walking trails, pavilions, and a memorial fountain all located along the banks of the Emory River. The park also hosts the city's seasonal farmers' market.

## Electrical upgrades coming to Union City's Graham Park



Union City Turf Management Director Chris Crockett oversees some of the electrical upgrades being done at Graham Park. The upgrades were requested by Union City Electric after it was discovered much of the park's infrastructure is more than 30 years old and too shallow by modern standards. The city council also recently accepted a bid from Searcy Construction Builder Contractor for work on the ballfields, lighting, the road, and parking at the park.

## Four Tennessee cities listed among Money magazine's Best Places to Live in 2017

The list of 100 cities across the nation included Franklin in the fourth spot, Brentwood at 21, Smyrna at 31 and Lebanon at 34.

Franklin received high marks for its median household income, population, high school graduation rate, projected job growth, as well as its ability to blend both the past and modern culture. Its proximity to Nashville, venues like the Franklin Theatre, and events like the Pilgrimage Music Festival also earned the city high marks for culture.

Brentwood also took high marks for its high school graduation rate, median household income, low crime, and attractions like the local library, 13 parks, and proximity to the Nashville International Airport. Smyrna's location as the home of Nissan's manufacturing plant, the city's sunny job forecast, and high school graduation rates all contributed to it being ranked No. 31 on the list. The city also earned praise for its parks and recreation offerings including baseball and soccer fields, fishing, golfing, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and outdoor

summer movies.

Lebanon was the fourth Tennessee city on the list thanks to its large retail base, location near Cedars of Lebanon State Park, and its modest unemployment rate. The home base of restaurant chain Cracker Barrel, Lebanon's location on the Music City star helped lower its average commute time when compared to other, similar cities.

The list ranks cities with populations between 10,000 and 100,000 and on criteria including crime risk, median household income and ethnic diversity. Cost of living, public education, ease of living, economic health, and other amenities were also among the factors that weighed into the list, which was compiled using 170,000 different data points from 70 separate data sets.

The top 10 cities according to the list are Fishers, Ind.; Allen, Texas; Monterey Park, Calif.; Franklin, Tenn.; Olive Branch, Miss.; Dickinson, N.D.; Lone Tree, Colo.; North Arlington, N.J.; Schaumburg, Ill.; and Bozeman, Mont.

**TENNESSEE TOWN & CITY**  
Tennessee Town & City (ISSN 00403415, USPS 539420) is published semi-monthly except in the months of June and December 19 times per year by Tennessee Municipal League, 226 Capitol Blvd, Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219-1894. Subscription rates: \$6 per year to members, \$15 to nonmembers, \$1 a copy. Periodicals Postage Paid at Nashville TN. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Tennessee Town & City, 226 Capitol Blvd, Suite 710, Nashville TN 37219-1894.

Official publication of the Tennessee Municipal League. Publisher: Margaret Mahery (mmahery@TML1.org); Editor: Carole Graves (cgraves@TML1.org); Phone: 615-255-6416. Advertising: Publisher reserves the right to reject any advertising deemed unacceptable. Fax classified ads to 77&C: Attention Carole Graves at 615-255-4752, or e-mail cgraves@TML1.org. Fax advertising copy to 77&C: Attention Debbie Kluth at 615-255-4752, or e-mail to dkluth@TML1.org. Opinions expressed by non League officials or staff do not necessarily reflect policies of TML.

# Johnson City builds stronger downtown through grant program

BY KATE COIL

TML Communications Specialist

Johnson City has taken a new step toward making its downtown strong by offering the first round in a series of grants aimed at helping small businesses wanting to locate there.

A panel of four judges awarded \$15,000 in grants from the Downtown Strong program to four recently opened or soon-to-be-opened businesses located in Johnson City's downtown area. The grants are administered through the Johnson City Development Authority's (JCDA) Economic Vitality Team.

The grand prize of \$5,000 went to the owners of Skillville, a community shop and maker space that will allow customers to take classes as well as rent equipment and shop space for woodworking, metalwork, refinishing and more. Three other companies received \$3,300 grants including T-shirt company Boomtown and Co.; Blowtique, the area's first blow dry bar and boutique; and Barley Waters, a craft beer market opening in the former Tennessee National Bank/Jones-Vance building.

Dianna Cantler, the JCDA's liaison and downtown development director for the Northeast Tennessee Regional Economic Partnership, said many of the owners of buildings in downtown Johnson City have been investing and remodeling their properties. A nice selection of restaurants and breweries have been opening up in the area, but Cantler said there is a need to fill some of the ground floors and other vacant spaces with retail.

"We are looking for ways to fill those spaces, so we thought let's do something that will encourage development," she said. "We thought if people saw multiple businesses opening at the same time they will see there is activity going on



Left to right, Skillville's Shane Evans, Seth Thomas, Deborah Savage, and Adam Gratz accept their Downtown Strong grant.

downtown. We wanted to support the type of businesses we have on a wish list, the type of businesses we think will do well and fulfill a need in Johnson City."

JCDA has been partnering with AccelNow, an organization that mentors entrepreneurs, to offer a nine-week class called Co.Starters. Participants in the most recent cohort of the class were given the opportunity to apply for grants that would help them open up a business in Johnson City's downtown area.

"We have offered the Co.Starters class before, and we knew that to be an entrepreneur-friendly area we want to offer these classes regularly," Cantler said. "We put together the grant and one of the requirements is going through the Co.Starters class. We asked them to take it a step further and submit a written business plan. They also have to open their business downtown within the next six months."

Cantler said the Co.Starter class is not just for those who want

to open a storefront but for anyone in the area with a business idea. The program allows prospective business owners to address their market, design products, address challenges to opening their business, and identify whether or not their business will work before they invest money in the idea. The class features speakers with backgrounds in law, accounting, and marketing to share their experience.

"This class really delves down into the challenges you might have, things you might not have considered beyond just making a business plan," she said. "Plus, it really builds a sense of community. We had nine people in the last class, four of which were already looking at leasable space downtown. They have really become a great support system for each other."

JCDA wanted to award the grants to businesses that had graduated from the program in the summer so their businesses would open in the fall, historically one of the



Skillville co-founder Seth Thomas cuts out a sign for the company using metal working equipment that will soon be available to the public. A center for makers and creation, Skillville will offer classes and workshop rentals for residents interested in woodworking, metalworking, and refinishing.

better times for businesses to open. Cantler said the next Co.Starters class will begin in January with a second round of grants offered for those businesses, which will open in the late spring and early summer, another historically good time for

new business openings.

"The goal for this program is that the businesses we open fit into the community well, that they fill a need we feel we have," Cantler said. "We want these businesses to start out strong."

## Road to 2020 Census: local governments encouraged to participate in LUCA

Starting in July, the U.S. Census Bureau began mailing invitation letters and registration forms to approximately 39,000 tribal, state, and local governments across the nation to encourage them to participate in LUCA.

LUCA is a voluntary, once-a-decade opportunity for governments to add, correct or delete addresses on the lists and maps used to conduct the decennial census. An accurate and complete census helps governments plan for future infrastructure, program and service needs. This operation is the only opportunity governments have to review and improve the Census Bureau's residential address list before the 2020 Census.

The Census Bureau relies on a complete and accurate address list to reach every living quarter and associated population for inclusion

in the 2020 Census. Participation in LUCA helps ensure an accurate decennial census count in communities across the nation.

### LUCA Participation

All LUCA participants receive:

- A complete census address list for their jurisdiction to review and update.
- A list that contains the Census Bureau's count of residential addresses for each census block within their government for reference.
- Census Bureau maps.

Promotional workshops are underway, and starting in October, training workshops will offer "hands-on" experience using the LUCA materials. Self-training aids and webinars will also be available through the LUCA website, [www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca.html](http://www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca.html).

[census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca.html](http://www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca.html).

Beginning in February 2018, registered participants will receive materials to review the Census Bureau's address list for their jurisdiction, and they will have 120 days to return their updates to the Census Bureau.

### Road to the 2020 Census

The goal of the 2020 Census is to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place. The Census Bureau is using expert resources and experience in and out of the government to make the 2020 Census a success. As census operations and testing move forward, the Census Bureau will continue to improve its innovations using mobile and geospatial technology, administrative records and self-response via the internet.



Begun as a kiosk at the local mall, Boomtown and Co. is a popular local T-shirt company that opened a storefront in downtown Johnson City after receiving one of the Downtown Strong grants. Two other companies received \$3,300 grants: blow-dry bar Blowtique and craft beer market Barley Waters.

## Tennessee joins FirstNet

FIRSTNET from Page 1

Had Tennessee not joined the new network, federal law would have required the state to build and pay for its own network that would be compatible with a national system.

Under the law that established FirstNet, governors in all 50 states and six territories have the choice of making an "opt-in" decision—accepting the FirstNet deployment plan and allowing AT&T to build the radio access network (RAN) within the state's borders at no cost to the state—or pursuing the "opt-out" alternative, which would require the state to be responsible for building and maintaining the RAN for the next 25 years.

"Reliable communications are vital to public safety's life-saving mission," said FirstNet CEO Mike Poth said in a prepared statement. "Gov. Haslam's decision will help deliver innovation and interoperability to emergency personnel across Tennessee's diverse landscape—including its rural, mountainous and remote areas, as well as federal lands. FirstNet looks forward to continuing our partnership with Tennessee to ensure the network meets public safety's needs—now and in the future."

Other jurisdictions that have opted in to FirstNet thus far are:

Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

Governors have until December to decide whether or not their state will participate.

Some states, however, have signaled they may not join and have issued RFPs for alternative networks. Among some of their concerns are coverage in rural areas, the timeline for implementation, and the ability for first responders to communicate outside coverage areas. But the law is clear — those states who do decide to opt-out will need to prove that their individual solutions meet the compatibility standards of the national network, plus be able to provide a financially-sound solution for the next 25 years.

Congress created the network in 2012 as one of the last recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to create a nationwide broadband network for first responders. Since that time, the FirstNet team has spent the past five years planning, meeting with public safety personnel, and providing educational outreach to each state and their agencies that will be a part of the new system.

**LUCA** Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA)

**LUCA Invitation Begins**  
39,000 Governments Invited to Participate

123 Main St.

Registration forms sent to eligible governments to prepare for the 2020 Census: **July-August 2017**

Registration deadline: **December 15, 2017**

December 15

United States Census 2020 | U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration | U.S. CENSUS BUREAU | [census.gov](http://census.gov)

Source: 2020 Census Local Update of Census Addresses Operation | [www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca](http://www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca)



# PEOPLE

**Hortense Hayes Powell Cooper**, wife of Tennessee Gov. Prentice Cooper, died Sept. 18 at the age of 98. Born in 1919 in Johnson City, Hortense was the daughter of noted suffragette Margaret Hayes Powell. She graduated from Sweet Briar College and completed graduate studies at Peabody. Cooper trained to fly airplanes during World War II and then worked for the United Nations following the war as one of the first employees of the newly created organization. She married Tennessee Gov. Prentice Cooper in 1950 after his stint as the U.S. Ambassador to Peru. The couple then moved to Shelbyville where they raised three children: Nashville attorney William Cooper, U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper, and Metro Nashville Councilman John Cooper.



Hortense Cooper

**John Bruce Saltsman**, former commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Transportation, died of cancer at his home on Sept. 1 at the age of 87. Saltsman served as the state's commissioner of transportation for eight years from 1995 to 2003 under Gov. Don Sundquist. Born in Loretta, Ky., Saltsman was a contractor with McDowell-Saltsman Construction, Saltsman Construction, and Rodgers and Saltsman Construction before his appointment as TDOT Commissioner. He is survived by his wife Edna Elaine, four children and five grandchildren.



Bruce Saltsman

**Virginia Smelser**, emergency services and communications director for the city of Bristol, was one of 32 first responders recently honored with a Governor's Certificate Award at a reception held in Nashville on Sept. 11. Smelser has served for 23 years as the department's communication manager and 911 director. She has an associate's degree from Northeast State Community College and a degree in emergency management studies from Jackson State University. She is a member of the Tennessee Emergency Number Association (TENA), Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO), and was inducted into the Tennessee 911 Hall of Honor in 2013.



Virginia Smelser

**Antoinette Lee** has been elected to the Metro Nashville Council District 33 seat in a special election. Lee will replace former Councilman Sam Coleman, who was appointed in May to serve as a general sessions judge for Davidson County. Lee is a field organizer and coordinator with the Tennessee Education Association. Lee has a bachelor's in teacher education from Norfolk State University and a master's in organizational management from the University of Phoenix.



Antoinette Lee

## UT Naifeh Center launching Certified Manager Program

The Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership is excited to launch the Tennessee Certified Public Manager (CPM) program in January 2018. The CPM is a comprehensive management development program specifically designed to prepare managers for careers in federal, state, and local government and in other organizations with a public purpose.

CPM is a nationally accredited management program and certification in which participants develop and strengthen their management skills through competency based curriculum and activities. The program can fill a training gap for staff with significant technical expertise who seek to further their knowledge of current management practices.

Program participants will be able to sharpen their personal and professional leadership styles and expand the knowledge and skills needed to manage and inspire positive change in their workplaces and communities. Participants will meet for a total of twelve days over a period of 12 months.

The competency-based instruction comprised of four modules will take place with instructor-led class sessions as well as online

coursework. During the modules, students will complete a capstone project for their organization or agency before obtaining the public manager certification at the end of the 12-month program.

The National Certified Public Manager Consortium and its accreditation body have awarded the University of Tennessee's Naifeh Center for Effective Leadership and active status in becoming the sole provider of the certification for the State of Tennessee. The University of Tennessee will now join the ranks of other universities across the country including University of Georgia, Florida State, and Rutgers University.

The Naifeh Center is experiencing much excitement from federal, state and local government agencies and their leaders in anticipation for its newest program. Seats are filling fast and the curriculum promises to be an excellent growth opportunity for those wishing to excel in their public service careers.

For more information or to enroll in the program's first Tennessee cohort, contact Naifeh Center Training Specialist Trent Clagg, trent.clagg@tennessee.edu or simply visit [leadership.tennessee.edu/cpm](http://leadership.tennessee.edu/cpm).

## Chattanooga firefighters honored with Governor's Certificate at First Responder Recognition Ceremony



Members of the Chattanooga Fire Department who responded to the Nov. 21, 2016, Woodmore bus crash were honored at the state's annual First Responder Recognition Ceremony with the Governor's Certificate Award. Homeland Security Commissioner David Purkey presented the award to Captain Keith Liles and eight other firefighters who were able to make the trip to the state capitol. Typically, the recognition is reserved for a single first responder but an exception was made for the Chattanooga department. Members of the Chattanooga Fire Department who responded to the crash include Capt. Keith Liles, Capt. David Tallent, Capt. Al Walker, Lt. Ronnie Goss, FFE Keith Edgemon, FF Brandon Fryar, FF Charles Zinzer, FF Jeffery Bonner, Capt. John Lehman, Capt. Richie Taylor, Capt. Michael Montieth, Lt. Justin Vice, Lt. Jonathan Higgins, FFS Terrance Watkins, FF William Crackel, FF Edgar Patton, FF Jeffery Bonner, Capt. Will Andrews, Capt. Travis Williams, B/C Nate Middlebrooks, FFS Avery Hubbard, Capt. Dusty Rose, B/C Chris Willmore, Lt. Jason Rains, B/C Chris Warren, FF Charles Zinzer, Lt. Fred Edgemon, FFS Jack Thompson, and FFE Engineer Andrew Womac.




Join other city leaders in Charlotte this November!

Expect great things at City Summit Charlotte:

Join more than **3,500** of your peers in Charlotte this November at the conference for city leaders!

REGISTER TODAY AT

CITYSUMMIT.NLC.ORG

# MEMBER FOCUSED



THE POOL

Tennessee's Leader in Risk Management Services

www.thepool-tn.org • 800-624-9698

## STATE BRIEFS



Tennessee has added more funding to higher education than most states for 2016, yet the state's per-student funding still remains at the same levels as before the recession, according to a new report. The Washington, D.C.-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities said growing enrollments coupled with lower levels of state funding have contributed to tuition increases with a 53 percent increase at public four-year schools since 2008. The per-student funding levels from the state for 2016-17 were almost 14 percent below what they were in 2008. Tennessee has grown recurring state appropriations for community colleges and undergraduate education by almost \$27 million and for all of higher education by \$113 million since 2008, according to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. However, that amount is small considering that the 2017-18 budget for the UT system alone is \$2.3 billion. At the same time, the state saw a 9 percent increase in student enrollment at two- and four-year colleges and universities from 2006 to 2016.

The Hiwassee River Blueway is coming to the state of Tennessee with new signage and designations promoting tourism, recreation, environmental awareness, history and culture of the river. Communities along the blueway include Reliance, Delano, Charleston and Calhoun with interpretive markers coming to various spots along the blueway highlighting its heritage and important local sites. At more than 50-miles in the state, the Hiwassee stretches Appalachian Mountains to the Tennessee River on the McMinn-Meigs county line through the Cherokee National Forest, Tennessee State Parks, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. The term "blueway" describes a water trail that links land and water routes with local resources, historic sites, camping and recreation. The blueway will include 20 public access points in the state. For more information, visit [www.hiwassee-blueway.com](http://www.hiwassee-blueway.com).

More than 1,000 acres have been added to the Tennessee side of the Cherokee National Forest just north of Mountain City. The Conservation Fund recently announced the addition of 1,684 acres of public lands in Tennessee and North Carolina – including 1,098 acres in Tennessee. The \$4.6 million parcel holds the 4,325-foot Bald Knob, which offers views of three states and peaks like Mount Rogers and Grandfather Mountain. The parcel is known as Cut Laurel Gap and features some of the best remaining stream habitat for Southern Appalachian brook trout and in Tennessee will eventually be open to the public for fishing as well as hunting for ruffed grouse, turkey, white-tailed deer and black bear. It also holds the headwaters for South Holston Lake, which is a major

## National Civic League accepting applications for 2018 All-America City Award

The National Civic League is accepting applications from communities that have included diverse voices in problem-solving or promoted equitable practices and solutions to apply for the 2018 All-America City Award.

The 2018 focus was chosen, in part, to bring attention to the 50th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act as well as the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (more commonly known as the Kerner Commission).

With this framing in mind, the National Civic League is particularly interested in learning about community projects that: promote positive community-police relations; promote racial healing and dialogues on race; expand government and institutional representation and access; further educational equity in the community; create affordable and safe housing; reduce poverty; increase job readiness and employment; focus on restorative justice; seek equitable transportation access; promote or ensure access to healthy food and/or to safe and healthy natural environments.

watershed for the Bristol area and provides water-based recreation for some 4 million visitors annually.

The state of Tennessee has recorded an all-time low statewide unemployment rate, the third month in a row for historically-low rates. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development reported a preliminary unemployment rate of 3.3 percent for August, declining one-tenth of a percentage over the previous month. The department also reported that unemployment in the state has been on the decline for seven consecutive months. The greatest employment gains were seen in industries including mining, logging, construction, trade, transportation, utilities, and the leisure/hospitality sectors. Manufacturing, financial activities, and governments posted declines over the previous month while educational services was the only sector to post declines over the previous year.

## Tennessee high school graduation rate reaches highest rate on record for 2016-17 school year

Graduation rates increased in more than half of all districts

Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Education Commissioner Candice McQueen announced that the 2016-17 graduation rate of 89.1 percent is the highest on record for Tennessee. The statewide graduation rate is up more than half a percentage point since last year, and overall it has increased 3.6 percent since the 2010-11 school year. This year, graduation rates increased in nearly 56 percent of districts with high schools.

"Teachers and educators in Tennessee have worked tirelessly to support students and these record graduation rates show their hard work is making a difference," Haslam said. "As more students graduate from high school, we are committed to helping them go to college, succeed and become skilled members of Tennessee's workforce. The graduation rate is reflective of the many gains we are making in education in our state."

Under the Haslam administration, Tennessee has set high expectations for both students and educators, and students have made significant gains as a result. The state transitioned to a more rigorous calculation for graduation rates in 2011, and even under the new criteria, rates have continued to rise. This year, the most notable gains and overall achievements include:

- 13 districts improved graduation rates by 5 percentage points or more. The district with the most significant gains was Lake County, up 23.1 percentage points.
- 43 districts—about one-quarter of the districts in the state—have graduation rates at

## It's harvest time at Tennessee wineries

Tennessee's grape harvest is underway and will continue through mid-October.

The 70 wineries in Tennessee purchase nearly 99 percent of all grapes grown in the state, which means the wine making process will be in full swing through fall. That makes the season the perfect time to plan a winery visit.

Tennessee wineries provide educational tours of their facilities throughout the year, but during harvest season visitors are more likely to see the season's farm-to-bottle activities, including grapes being harvested, delivered, and crushed.

Participating in a tasting at the winery allows amateur connoisseurs to gain a distinct understanding of varietal flavors and then purchase wines exclusive to that winery. Experts are on hand to educate tasters about their products. Tasting rooms help customers decide which wines are personally appealing and even talk to the vintner about ways to serve and enjoy.

An obvious bonus of fall winery visits in Tennessee is that



crisp weather and fall colors make the grounds especially enticing. Every winery in Tennessee has a picnic area and offer local and artisan foods, cheeses and breads for sale. Wineries also host special events throughout the week and on weekends, ranging from live music and themed dinners to walks and

traces benefiting local organizations. Check winery websites for specifics.

Find Tennessee wineries and wine trails with Pick Tennessee, a service of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to connect customers to local farm products. Visit Pick Tennessee online at [www.PickTnProducts.org](http://www.PickTnProducts.org).

### Tennessee's 2016-17 High School Graduation Rate

89.1%

A record-high for graduation rates in Tennessee

56% of districts

with a high school saw their graduation rates increase.

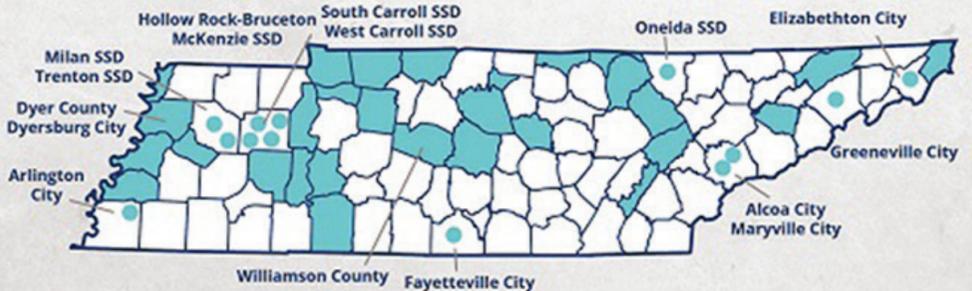
13 districts

improved graduation rates by 5 percentage points or more.

83%

graduation rate for students who identify as Black, Hispanic, or Native American, a three-year high.

43 districts have graduation rates at or above 95 percent (up from 36 districts in 2015-16)



Lake County Schools

Lake County saw the largest jump in graduation rates, increasing 23.1 percentage points in one year.

TN

The Achievement School District

saw a 12.8 percentage point increase in graduation rates, the third largest gain among districts.

or above 95 percent, up from 36 districts last year.

- The group of students who identify as Black, Hispanic or Native American increased its graduation rate by 0.4 percentage points to 83 percent, which is a three-year high.

Additionally, the Achievement School District (ASD) had the third largest gain of any district, up 12.8 percentage points. This historic growth for the district furthers the goals of the ASD as it creates urgency on improving education for all students, particularly those in

schools in the bottom 5 percent of the state for academic performance.

"Teachers and students across the state should be proud of their hard work, and it is always encouraging to see that more students than ever are earning high school diplomas," McQueen said. "Now we must focus on ensuring students are fully prepared for the academic and professional opportunities that come after high school graduation, so graduates can truly use their diplomas to seamlessly move into their next step."

As part of the state plan for the Every Student Succeeds Act

(ESSA), the Department of Education has created an accountability metric known as the Ready Graduate indicator. This new tool will measure the percentage of graduates who have met benchmarks proven to increase their probability of seamlessly enrolling in postsecondary education and entering the workforce or military.

More information on graduation rates for individual districts and schools is available on the Tennessee Department of Education's website, <https://www.tn.gov/education/>.

## Application process now open for Broadband Accessibility Grants

Grant applications accepted until Nov. 17.

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) is now accepting Broadband Accessibility Grant applications until Nov. 17, 2017.

Established by the recently enacted Tennessee Broadband Accessibility Act (TBAA), this program aims to spread broadband access to more Tennesseans while promoting practices that increase deployment and encourage adoption. In total, \$10 million is available in the first round of grants.

"Rural economic development is a top priority for TNECD and reliable broadband is a lynchpin of our efforts to encourage job growth in Tennessee's rural communities," TNECD Commissioner Bob Rolfe

said. "About one-in-three residents in rural Tennessee do not have broadband access at recognized minimum standards. It is critical that we address this gap and ensure all Tennesseans have reliable internet access. Thanks to Gov. Bill Haslam's leadership and the overwhelming support of the Tennessee General Assembly, TNECD will now be able to provide grants to help make broadband available to residents and businesses that currently go without it."

The Broadband Accessibility Grants are meant to help offset the capital expenses of deploying broadband in currently unserved areas. Projects must serve locations without access to download speeds of at least 10 megabits per second (10 Mbps) and upload speeds of

at least one megabit per second (1 Mbps). Preference will be given to areas that are unlikely to receive broadband service without grant funding. Applicants must be authorized to provide retail broadband in the proposed service area.

Following the close of the application period, TNECD will hold a three-week online public comment period to receive additional input and information regarding submitted applications.

TNECD anticipates announcing grantees in January 2018 with projects underway in early in 2018. More information on Broadband Accessibility Grants and TNECD's broadband initiatives can be found here, <http://tn.gov/ecd/topic/tn-ecd-broadband-initiative>.



## CLASSIFIED ADS

Advertising: \$9.25 per column inch. No charge to TML members. Send advertising to: Carole Graves: cgraves@TML1.org.

**ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER SPRINGFIELD.** The city of Springfield (population 16,700) is accepting applications for assistant city manager. The assistant city manager will perform highly responsible and complex professional assistance to the city manager, board of mayor and aldermen, department heads, employees and the general public. The individual will assist the city manager with the overall day-to-day operation of the city and will assume the duties of the city manager in the city manager's absence. Springfield is a full-service city, offering electric, gas, water, sewer, sanitation and stormwater utilities, as well as The Legacy Golf Course, two cemeteries and the typical general fund departments. The annual budget is approximately \$83 million with 250 budgeted employee positions. The ideal candidate will have knowledge and experience overseeing human resources, risk management and information technology, as well as the ability to handle budgeting, legal issues, real estate transactions, building and grounds maintenance, contract administration and general administrative tasks. Bachelor's degree in public administration, business management or related field required – master's degree preferred. Must have at least five years of progressively responsible management experience in local government. Applications (along with a letter of intent and three work-related references) must be received by no later than Oct. 13, at the following address: Human Resources Department, City of Springfield, P.O. Box 788, Springfield, Tennessee, 37172, or apply online at [www.springfield-tn.org](http://www.springfield-tn.org). Applications may also be sent by electronic mail to Carolyn Scott, Personnel Coordinator, at [cscott@springfield-tn.org](mailto:cscott@springfield-tn.org). Hiring range: \$77,272 - \$88,670 DOQ. Salary range: \$77,272 - \$106,350. Springfield is an historic, economically and racially diverse community located 30 minutes north of downtown Nashville. Springfield is the county seat of Robertson County, one of the largest agricultural producing counties in the state of Tennessee. For more information on Springfield, please go to the city's website at: [www.springfield-tn.org](http://www.springfield-tn.org). EOE.

### BUDGET TECHNICIAN

**COLLIERVILLE.** This position performs a variety of responsible and technical budgeting, accounting and other related support duties involving the town's budget including the planning, development, adoption and adjustment processes. Requires an associate's degree with major course work in finance, economics, accounting, or a closely related field; supplemented by two years' previous experience in the preparation and development of departmental budgets; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Valid driver's license required. Excel spreadsheet experience including pivot tables highly preferred. Must be able to pass a work-related physical and drug test. The work of this job is primarily sedentary. Full job description available upon request. Call (901) 457-2296. Salary range: \$29,375 - \$35,106 annually DOQ with excellent benefits package. Selection process may include: examinations, interviews, assessment centers, practical skills, etc. Drug testing may be required. Submit an original town of Collierville application to the following address: Human Resources, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN 38017. Applications are available to download at [www.collierville.com](http://www.collierville.com) under Employment Opportunities, or you may obtain one from our Human Resources Office. Applications must be submitted either by mail or in person to the above address. The Human Resources Office is open Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. We are unable to accept faxed or emailed applications. EOE/ DRUG FREE WORK PLACE.

### BUILDING OFFICIAL

**FARRAGUT.** Performs difficult skilled technical work planning, organizing, supervising, performing and managing the operation and activities of the codes inspection division which includes reviewing plans, issuing permits, manages scheduling process, maintaining records and files, preparing reports, and related work as apparent or assigned. Work is performed under the general direction of the community development director. Departmental supervision is exercised over codes staff members. Associates/technical degree with coursework in a related field and 5 years experience in the building construction industry, engineering, and code enforcement, or equivalent combination of education and experience. State of TN Certified Building Inspector certification required. ICC Master Codes Professional [MCP] certification preferred. Supervisory experience preferred. Complete job description and required job application are available at [www.townoffarragut.com](http://www.townoffarragut.com). Resumes may be uploaded. SALARY: \$49,620-\$63,266 DOQ annually with excellent benefits package. Open until filled. EOE

### DEPUTY CLERK

**GALLATIN.** The city of Gallatin Recorder's office seeks to fill the deputy clerk position. The purpose of this position is to perform difficult skilled clerical, technical and administration work coordinating with the city recorder. Supervision is exercised over the court clerk, customer service clerks,

and recorder service specialist of office operations, duties and policies. Work is performed under the regular supervision of the city recorder. This is a 40 hours per week, day shift position. The starting salary is \$43,908 + excellent benefits. The successful applicant should have advanced skills in Excel, Word, Power Point and other software, equipment and thorough knowledge of business English, spelling and arithmetic. Ability to keep office records and prepare accurate reports. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with mayor, city council members, other department heads, employees, staff and the public. Essential duties include assisting the city recorder with computer, clerical and administrative support, preparing and maintaining detailed records and files; receiving calls for the city recorder and ascertains nature of business. Minimum qualifications: any combination of education and experience equivalent to graduation from high school and extensive experience in administrative supervision in the office of an executive. Three to five years of experience with Microsoft Office products. To apply, please visit our website at [www.gallatin-tn.gov](http://www.gallatin-tn.gov). Open until filled. EOE.

### ENGINEER DIRECTOR

**LA VERGNE.** The city of La Vergne is accepting employment applications for a director of engineering. Performs complex and professional engineering work for the city's varied projects and programs. Ensuring technical competence and compliance with all current codes and criteria. Supervises GIS/mapping coordinator, construction inspectors, project engineer, stormwater inspectors/employees and other staff as assigned. May serve as project manager. Qualifications include graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in civil engineering or a closely related field required. Minimum of five years previous professional civil engineering experience required. Any equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered. P. E. Certification is preferred. Local government experience is preferred. Full-time position with a salary of \$78,222 annually. Open until filled. To review the job posting and complete an online employment application for consideration for this position, go to [www.lavergnetn.gov](http://www.lavergnetn.gov). The city of La Vergne is a drug-free workplace. All candidates selected for any job opening must pass a physical exam and a drug screen before starting the job. EOE

### ELECTRIC SUPERINTENDENT

**LEBANON.** The city of Lebanon is currently accepting applications and résumés for an electric superintendent. This position leads, plans, directs, coordinates, and manages the operation, maintenance, and routine construction activities for the electric transmission and distribution systems within the electric division; supervises, plans, and coordinates the activities of the electric division staff; coordinates activities with other divisions and departments, outside agencies, and the general public; and provides highly complex staff assistance to the public works director. Minimum qualifications include graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in one of the following fields: electrical engineering, civil engineering, or related degree preferred. Candidate must have at least six years managerial, administrative, and professional experience directly related to various aspects of electric distribution. This is a full-time regular position with an annual starting salary of \$63,475 - \$65,398 and includes an excellent benefit package. Placement within range depends on experience, education, and training. Pre-employment drug testing and completion of a successful background check are required as a condition of employment. Interested candidates must submit a letter of interest, résumé, completed employment application, and a list of references to the following: Stevie Patterson, Human Resource Generalist at PO Box 111, Lebanon, MO 65536. This position will remain open until filled. The first review of applications will be Oct. 27. EOE. To view the complete job description, minimum qualifications, and salary range, visit [www.lebanonmissouri.org](http://www.lebanonmissouri.org).

### MUNICIPAL MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

**KNOXVILLE.** MTAS: The University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) is accepting applications for a management consultant in its Knoxville office. The position provides professional advice and assistance in the area of municipal management primarily to an assigned set of cities in Tennessee, regardless of size, on a broad range of issues and problems. In addition to providing direct client assistance, the management consultant researches, develops and maintains timely reports on critical issues; teaches municipal training courses within the context of a well-defined training curriculum; and assists other consultants in the agency in the performance of individual and team projects. This position performs other special project work as assigned. Requires a master's degree or equivalent in public administration. Requires at least five years employment in local government, including three years as a city manager or six years as an assistant city manager. Preference is given to experience as a city manager or assistant city manager in a city with a minimum 10,000 in population. Extra consideration will be given for additional experience city management or Tennessee specific experience. Requires knowledge and understanding of the problems faced by city officials. Also, requires independent planning and

processing of projects, questions, training, etc. The work is performed both in the field and the office and as such, requires constant scheduling and updating of work activities. The consultant must provide advice and assistance to city officials in the operation of their respective offices. In doing so, the consultant must also possess the following skills: 1) managerial, 2) analytical, 3) conceptual, and 4) interpersonal. These skills are used on a daily basis in identifying a specific city's problem and providing the advice and assistance to solve the problem. A high level of cognitive or intuitive skills are necessary to fully understand, design, and implement successful solutions to municipal problems. Each employee that drives a vehicle for work related business must have and maintain a valid driver license and insurance. This position requires extensive travel. Applicants are encouraged to review all job requirements prior to applying. Salary is based on a combination of professional experience and qualifications. Applicants must apply electronically to <http://humanresources.tennessee.edu/recruitment> and at the time of applying must submit a cover letter, resume with the contact details of three references. Position is open until filled. EEO.

### POLICE CHIEF

**ALGOOD.** The city of Algood is seeking applicants for a police chief. The ideal candidate will be a solution oriented, experienced law enforcement professional who is dedicated to providing exceptional service to our city through excellence in performance, teamwork, innovation, training, and dedication to our community and its residents. The chief of police is responsible for delivering safe professional police services to our community, collaborating with community organizations to promote department activities, and fostering positive community relations to ensure the best quality of life for our citizens and visitors. The chief of police is responsible for the protection of life and property in the city while being a strong fiscal administrator. The chief assists in developing and overseeing the department budget and controls and monitors expenses within the budget parameters. The police department is normally staffed with 13-full time POST certified positions and two-part time crossing guards. The successful candidate will be a Tennessee POST certified officer and have at least seven years of experience in police operations with higher levels of supervisor experience preferred. Qualified candidates should be a legal resident of Tennessee with a valid TN driver's license, achieved a command staff rank of lieutenant or greater; or its equivalent in a municipal, county, or state law enforcement agency in Tennessee; preference given to a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university. The ideal candidate will have excellent written and verbal communication skills. The candidate will convey a sense of stability, inspire confidence, respect, trust and a sense of mission, and maintain a good working relationship with other area law enforcement agencies. The chief of police is an at-will, exempt employee reporting directly to the city administrator. Salary in \$50K range. DOE with full time benefits. Interested candidates must submit a resume and cover letter to: MTAS – ATTN: Warren Nevad, 1610 University Ave., Knoxville, TN 37921 – 6741. Email: [warren.nevad@tennessee.edu](mailto:warren.nevad@tennessee.edu). Fax: 865.974.0423 Deadline for applications Oct. 16, at 5:00 pm. EOE

### POLICE OFFICER

**WESTMORELAND.** The Westmoreland Police Department is currently accepting applications for a POST Certified Police Officer. Must be able to meet the minimum standard law requirements (TCA 38-8-106). Be at least 18 years of age. Be a U.S. citizen. Be a high school graduate or possess equivalence. No waivers will be granted for minimum education requirements. Must not have been convicted of or pleaded guilty to or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge or to any violation of any federal or state laws or city ordinances relating to force, violence, theft, dishonesty, gambling, liquor and other alcoholic beverages or controlled substances. Must not have been discharged from the military under other than honorable discharge. Meet the physical, psychological, criminal records requirements, and other standards for the assignment established by the Westmoreland Police Department. Have an excellent work and attendance record. Possess a valid Tennessee driver's license. Must be POST certified or have completed a POST recognized law enforcement academy and be able to become POST certified. Must be willing to work nights, weekends, and holidays. Applicants must complete an application and submit it to: City of Westmoreland, P.O. Box 8, 1001 Park Street, Westmoreland, TN 37186. EOE.

### STORMWATER CREW LEADER

**WHITE HOUSE.** The city of White House is currently accepting applications for stormwater crew leader. This person is responsible for supervising and participating in the work of a crew

performing stormwater construction and maintenance, landscaping, R-O-W maintenance, and public facility and infrastructure maintenance and repair. An application may be obtained by visiting [www.cityofwhitehouse.com](http://www.cityofwhitehouse.com) or at the Human Resources office located at 105 College Street, White House, TN 37188. Applications should be returned to the Human Resources office or faxed to 615-616-1058 or emailed to [humanresources@cityofwhitehouse.com](mailto:humanresources@cityofwhitehouse.com). Starting Compensation range: \$16.29 - \$19.85 hourly DOE Open until filled. EOE.

### SANITATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES. DIRECTOR

**FRANKLIN.** The city of Franklin is soliciting applications for a director of Sanitation and Environmental Services. The director is responsible for planning and directing the establishment of refuse collection routes and the assignment of personnel and equipment to serve residential and commercial customers. The director organizes overall management of transfer station operations, landfill and hauling contract, household hazardous waste (HHW) drop-off and additional environmental services provided by the Department of Sanitation and Environmental Services. The director researches and implements additional environmental services to be provided by the Department of Sanitation and Environmental Services, or in partnership with other organizations/businesses. The position reports to the assistant city administrator of Finance and Administration. The required knowledge, skill, and abilities to satisfactorily perform job duties are normally acquired through obtaining a bachelor's degree from four-year college or university, plus six to eight years of solid waste management experience or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Required Certifications/Licenses: Solid Waste Association of America (SWANA) Certified, 40 hours of Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response training and Required DOT Manifesting and Labeling training. All resumes must be submitted to: City of Franklin, Director of Sanitation and Environment Services Vacancy, 109 Third Ave. South, Franklin, TN 37064

### WATER PLANT OPERATOR

**COLLIERVILLE.** The position performs skilled trades work in the installation, operation, maintenance, and repair of town water system facilities including wells, pump stations, water towers, the distribution system, water hydrants, and water meters. Qualifications include: high school diploma or GED with concentration in a vocational program; supplemented by three years' previous experience and/or training involving water system maintenance, at least one year of which must have been operating experience in a Grade II Water Treatment Plant; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for this job. Must be in compliance with TDEC Rule 0400-49-01 and remain in compliance throughout employment. Must possess and maintain a valid driver's license. The work of this job requires sufficient physical strength, stamina, and ability to pass a work related physical proficiency test and pre-employment examination. The work is physically demanding, may require lifting heavy objects, and may require working in inclement weather. Work environment at times could involve toxic or caustic chemicals, risk of electrical shock or work around moving parts. For full job description call (901) 457-2296. SALARY: \$32,425 - \$55,584 DOQ annually with excellent benefits package. Selection process may include: examinations, interviews, assessment centers, practical skills, etc. Drug testing may be required. Submit an original town of Collierville application to the following address: Human Resources, 500 Poplar View Parkway, Collierville, TN 38017. Applications are available to download at [www.collierville.com](http://www.collierville.com) under Employment Opportunities, or you may obtain one from our Human Resources Office. Applications must be submitted either by mail or in person to the above address. The Human Resources Office is open Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. EOE/Drug-free workplace.

### WASTEWATER UTILITY MECHANIC

**WHITE HOUSE.** The city of White House is currently accepting applications for wastewater utility mechanic. This position is responsible for skilled wastewater lift station work, collection system work; and performs related work as required. An application may be obtained by visiting [www.cityofwhitehouse.com](http://www.cityofwhitehouse.com) or at the Human Resources office located at 105 College Street, White House, TN 37188. Applications should be returned to the Human Resources office or faxed to 615-616-1058 or emailed to [humanresources@cityofwhitehouse.com](mailto:humanresources@cityofwhitehouse.com). Starting compensation range: \$16.29 - \$19.85 hourly. DOE. Open until filled. EOE.



### Sept. 29-30: Columbia

**Muletown MusicFest**  
Held on the square in downtown Columbia, the lineup features Brandy Clark, the Long Players and many other performers. For more information, visit: [www.muletown-musicfest.com](http://www.muletown-musicfest.com).

### Sept. 30: Dandridge

**Dandridge Scots-Irish Festival**  
Experience Scottish and Irish music, bagpipe and drum band playoff challenge, Highland dancing, Irish step dancing and more. For more information, visit: [www.scots-irish.com](http://www.scots-irish.com).

### Oct. 6-7: Erwin

**Unicoi County Apple Festival**  
Don't miss this fun festival in downtown Erwin with vendors, apple dishes, crafts, children's area and entertainment on three stages. Contact: 423-743-3000, [www.unicoicounty.org](http://www.unicoicounty.org).

### Oct. 6-8: Jonesborough

**National Storytelling Festival**  
A three-day event featuring compelling performances by internationally-known professional storytellers. Contact: 423-753-2171, [www.storytellingcenter.net](http://www.storytellingcenter.net).

### Oct. 7-8: Centerville

**National Banana Pudding Festival**  
This national cook-off determines the best banana pudding in the U.S. and hosts two entertainment stages, a children's area, craft booths, lots of pudding samples and more. Contact: 931-994-6273 or [www.bananapuddingfest.org](http://www.bananapuddingfest.org).

### Oct. 13-14: Lewisburg

**Goats and More Fest**  
The 15th annual festival at Rock Creek Park features fainting goat shows, arts and crafts, music, kids games, rides and more. Contact: 931-359-1544 or [www.goatsmusicandmore.com](http://www.goatsmusicandmore.com).

### Oct. 13-15: Hohenwald

**Oktober Heritage Festival**  
This festival celebrates the founding of one of three German/Swiss towns in Tennessee and the Meriwether Lewis National Monument. Contact: 931-796-4084 or [www.hohenwald-lewischamber.com](http://www.hohenwald-lewischamber.com).

### Oct. 13-15: Nashville

**Southern Festival of Books**  
The 29th annual festival at Legislative Plaza in downtown Nashville, features author talks, readings, panels, signings, children's story times and a book sale. For more information, visit [www.humanities-tennessee.org](http://www.humanities-tennessee.org)

### Oct. 13-15: Rogersville

**Heritage Days**  
Enjoy music, storytellers, dancers, kid's activities, demonstrations of pioneer skills, antique quilts, cars and farm equipment, and a juried craft show. Contact: 423-921-1961 or [www.rogersvilleheritage.org](http://www.rogersvilleheritage.org)

### Oct. 14: Athens

**14th Annual Pumpkintown Festival**  
Celebrate history, heritage, and harvest in downtown Athens from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pumpkintown is among East Tennessee's premier fall festivals and is one of the largest annually attended events in McMinn County. Returning favorites include the Scott Crisp Memorial PowWow, the Mutt Strutt and Doggie Costume Contest, and "Pumpkin Plinko." New this year is Christ Legacy Academy's 5k Run and Fun Walk as well as a showcase of 40 East Tennessee Corvettes. Live entertainment on two stages. Visit [www.willsonthropic.org/Pumpkintown](http://www.willsonthropic.org/Pumpkintown) to learn more.

### Oct. 14: Sparta

**Liberty Square Celebration and Lester Flatt Memorial Bluegrass Day.**  
The celebration welcomes visitors from around the U.S. that come to pay tribute to the bluegrass legend with a full day of music, crafts, food, games, car shows and much more. Contact: 931-836-3552 or [www.sparta-chamber.net](http://www.sparta-chamber.net).

### Oct. 20 - 22: Bean Station

**21st Annual Harvest Pride Festival**  
The event features the Night Owl Run, tricycle race, music, foods, arts and crafts vendors, Sunday morning worship service. For more information email [sfennell@townofbeanstation.com](mailto:sfennell@townofbeanstation.com) or call 865-993-5155.

For more information about the Tennessee Drug Card, visit TML's website at [www.TML1.org](http://www.TML1.org)

**Tennessee Municipal League**  
 2017-2018 Officers and Directors
**PRESIDENT**
**Bo Perkinson**  
 Councilmember, Athens
**VICE PRESIDENTS**
**Wallace Cartwright**  
 Mayor, Shelbyville

**Jill Holland**  
 Mayor, McKenzie

**Mike Werner**  
 Mayor, Gatlinburg
**DIRECTORS**
**Jimmy Alexander**  
 Mayor, Nolensville

**Megan Barry**  
 Mayor, Metro Nashville

**Andy Berke**  
 Mayor, Chattanooga

**Daniel Brown**  
 City Council, Knoxville (District 2)

**John Clark**  
 Mayor, Kingsport

**Vance Coleman**  
 Mayor, Medina

**Betsy Crossley**  
 Commissioner, Brentwood (District 6)

**Richard Driver**  
 Mayor, Lafayette (District 5)

**Bill Graham**  
 Councilman, Dayton (District 3)

**Avery Johnson**  
 Vice Mayor, Cleveland

**Hoyt Jones**  
 Alderman, Sparta (District 4)

**Bobby King**  
 Mayor, Henderson

**Christa Martin**  
 Vice Mayor, Columbia

**Lonnie Norman**  
 Mayor, Manchester

**Madeline Rogero**  
 Mayor, Knoxville

**Paula Sedgwick**  
 Alderman, Bartlett (District 8)

**Charles "Bones" Seivers**  
 President-CEO, TN Municipal Bond Fund

**Todd Smith**  
 City Manager, Greeneville (District 1)

**Jim Strickland**  
 Mayor, Memphis

**Mary Ann Tremblay**  
 Vice Mayor, Three Way

**Garry Welch**  
 City Manager, Savannah (District 7)
**PAST PRESIDENTS**
**John Holden** (2016) Mayor, Dyersburg

**Curtis Hayes** (2015) Mayor, Livingston

**Tom Rowland** (2014) Mayor, Cleveland

**Dale Kelley** (2013) Mayor, Huntingdon

**Ken Wilber** (2012) Mayor, Portland

**Kay Senter** (2011) Morristown Vice Mayor

**Sam Tharpe** (2010) Commissioner, Paris

**Tommy Pedigo** (2009) Council, Morristown

**Bob Kirk** (2004) Alderman, Dyersburg
**AFFILIATE DIRECTORS**
**Karen Johnson**, Councilwoman, Nashville (NLC)

**C. Seth Sumner**, Athens (TCMA)
**TML AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS**

(Ex-Officio Directors)

Tennessee Assn. of Air Carrier Airports

Tennessee Building Officials Assn.

Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police

TN Assn. Municipal Clerks &amp; Records

TN Government Finance Officers Assn.

Tennessee Fire Chiefs Assn.

Tennessee Fire Safety Inspectors

Tennessee Association of Floodplain

Management

Tenn. Assn. Housing &amp; Redevel. Auth.

Tennessee Municipal Attorneys Assn.

Tennessee Municipal Judges Conference

Tenn. Chapter, American Public Works

Tennessee Recreation and Parks Assn.

Tennessee Chapter, American Planning

Tennessee Personnel Management Assn.

Tennessee Assn. of Public Purchasing

TN Section, Institute of Transport

Tennessee Public Transportation Assoc.

Assn. of Independent and Municipal

Schools

Tennessee Renewable Energy &amp; Economic

Development Council

Tennessee Urban Forestry Council

Tennessee Stormwater Association

**TML SPONSORS****3 STAR SPONSOR**

Bank of New York Mellon, Co.

Civil &amp; Environmental Consultants

First Tennessee Bank

**2 STAR SPONSOR**

Alexander, Thompson, Arnold, CRA's

Alliance Water Resources

Barge Waggoner Sumner &amp; Cannon, Inc.

Carr, Riggs &amp; Ingram LLC

Master Meter, Inc.

VC3

Voya Financial Advisors

Waste Management Inc. of Tennessee

**1 STAR SPONSOR**

Charter Communications

Employee Benefit Specialists, Inc.

J.R. Wauford &amp; Co. Consulting Engineers

Local Govt. Corporation

Mattern &amp; Craig, Inc.

NORESO

McGill Associates, P.A.

Pavement Restorations, Inc.

Republic Services

Smith Seckman Reid

Tennessee 811

TLM Associates, Inc.

Utility Service Co., Inc.

Waste Connections of Tennessee Inc.

Waste Industries USA, Inc.

**TML STAFF**

Margaret Mahery, Executive Director

Chad Jenkins, Deputy Director

Mark Barrett, Legislative Research Analyst

Kate Coil, Communications Specialist

Jackie Gupton, Administrative Assistant

Carole Graves, Communications Director

& Editor, *Tennessee Town & City*

Sylvia Harris, Conference Planning Director

John Holloway, Government Relations

Debbie Kluth, Marketing Director /

Member Services

Kevin Krushenski, Legislative Research

Analyst

Denise Paige, Government Relations

**NATIONAL BRIEFS**

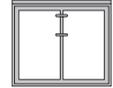
**While the average income is improving for Americans, the inequality between the richest and poorest has not.** New U.S. Census Bureau estimates found that median household incomes increased 2.4 percent nationwide – after adjusting for inflation. Real incomes rose in 46 states last year, with increases in 30 states considered statistically significant. However, the Census Bureau found these increases have done little to improve inequality. The Census Bureau reported income inequality increasing across every state, save Alaska, with a 3.9 percent increase in the past decade.

**Construction of new homes**

**across the U.S. was steady in August**, though new government figures estimate Hurricanes Harvey and Irma will give a temporary hit to the final numbers. Residential housing starts fell by 0.8 percent with single-family home starts rising 6.5 percent while construction of apartments and condominium properties fell 6.5 percent. Data collection was below normal in Texas, Florida and other areas affected by recent hurricanes. Higher prices for construction materials following the storms may also impact housing moving forward. The industry is already dealing with a shortage of workers and ready-to-build lots.

**Municipalities across the U.S. are struggling to deal with the financial toll of the national opioid ep-**

**idemic**, according to a new report by Reuters. Local governments are seeing rising costs for dealing with higher emergency call volumes, medical examiner and coroner bills, overcrowded jails and courtrooms, social services for children of opioid addicts, and other associated costs. Prescription painkillers, heroin and fentanyl - a drug 50 to 100 times more powerful than morphine - are fueling the crisis. Those charged with opioid-related crimes often must be assigned a public defender, and the cost of autopsies and toxicology reports on overdose victims has nearly doubled in the past six years. The total financial cost of addiction to local governments is largely unknown as there is no central database collecting information.

**COMING UP****Oct 5 - 6****Urban Forestry Conference**

**Knoxville UT Conference Center**  
 Learn innovative techniques to do your job. Workshops on tree boards and tree selection/pollination. Keynote Paul Ries, director of the Graduate Certificate in Urban Forestry program at Oregon State University. For more information: [www.tufc.com/conference/conference\\_2017/schedule\\_2017.html](http://www.tufc.com/conference/conference_2017/schedule_2017.html)

**Oct. 26 - 27****Governor's Conference 2017**

**Gatlinburg Convention Center**  
 Come learn more about Tennessee's strides in recruiting jobs and the programs helping to build strong local communities. To register or for more information, visit: <http://govcon.tnecd.com/>

**Nov. 7-9****TCAPWA /SWANA Joint Annual Conference****Knoxville Holiday Inn World's Fair Park**

To access the conference agenda or to register go to <http://tennesseeapwa.net/EventDetails/11741>. For more information, contact Mark Miller at [MarkMiller@charter.net](mailto:MarkMiller@charter.net) or (865) 850-1534

**Nov. 15-18****2017 NLC City Summit**

**Charlotte, N.C.**  
 Four days of networking, knowledge sharing, and working to make cities and towns even better places to live, work, and play. For more information or to register, go to: <http://citysummit.nlc.org/>

**UT-MTAS OCTOBER MAP CLASSES****STRATEGIC PLANNING – FOR YOUR CITY, YOUR WORKLIFE AND YOU**

This course explains the process of strategic planning. Participants will learn the correlation between a strategic plan and mission, vision and values, in addition to learning about measuring success towards goals

Credits: 4 CPE/CMFO (Other) (LM)

**Dates/Locations/Times:**

Oct. 10 Memphis  
 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CDT  
 Oct. 11 Jackson  
 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CDT  
 Oct. 12 Nashville  
 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CDT  
 Oct. 16 Knoxville  
 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. EDT  
 Oct. 17 Johnson City  
 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. EDT  
 Oct. 18 Collegedale  
 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. EDT

To register for a course, go to [www.mtas.tennessee.edu](http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu), or fax to 865-974-0423. Credit card payments must register online with the Solution Point System: <http://www.solutionpoint.tennessee.edu/MTAS> or by invoice. For registration assistance, call 865-974-0413. Or for more information, contact Kurt Frederick, training consultant, at 615-253-6385.

**No loan is too large or too small**

The city of Clinton and the Clinton Utilities Board recently closed a \$7 million fixed rate draw loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to be used on electric system improvements. Pictured are: bottom row (L to R) Gail Cook, Clinton finance director; Scott Burton, Clinton mayor; and Gina Ridenour, Clinton city recorder. Back row: Dudley Fagan, Clinton Utilities finance director; Greg Fay, Clinton Utilities general manager; and Steve Queener, TMBF marketing representative.



The city of Three Way recently closed a \$2 million fixed rate loan with the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund to finance various projects, including a new city hall, street and road improvements, and equipment. Pictured are Mayor Larry Sanders and City Recorder Susan Rogers.

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

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

**Home Office:**  
 2835 Lebanon Pike  
 P.O. Box 140350  
 Nashville, TN 37214  
 615/883-3243

**Branch Office (West):**  
 Jackson  
 529 Old Hickory Blvd, Ste. A  
 Jackson, TN 38305  
 731/668-1953

**Branch Office (East):**  
 Maryville  
 908 W Broadway Ave.  
 Maryville, TN 37801  
 865/984-9638

[www.jrwauford.com](http://www.jrwauford.com)
**Water and Wastewater Systems**

# Education, quality of life essential for municipalities wanting to grow jobs

## JOBS from Page 1

cal leadership and look at economic development from a regional standpoint, not just focused within their city limits but on a regional basis and partner with other municipalities and stakeholders in their region are the ones that reap the most success and benefits.”

In order to successfully recruit and retain companies, Borden said communities need three major ingredients: a ready-to-go site able to meet a company's needs, a workforce in the numbers and skillsets the company needs, and a good quality of life for that workforce.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

Before making a major investment in a community, like creating new jobs, business owners and operators want to make sure that the community is a place they and their employees will want to live.

“Obviously, people want to have a life outside of their work and outside of their job,” Borden said. “They want to have things they can do on the weekends. We are a very low-cost state. We are not only a low-cost state for companies to locate in from an operations standpoint, but also a low-cost state to live in. We offer a great quality of life at a very low cost.”

When Saturn decided to open up a new automotive plant in Spring Hill in the early 1990s, the municipality had a population of just around 1,500 people. As of 2016, the city's population is now at 37,731. Sold to General Motors in 2004, the Spring Hill Manufacturing plant not only changed the face of the city's economy but also that of neighboring communities.

Spring Hill officials soon found themselves juggling the needs of their booming population and their desire to provide quality city services, like parks and recreation. Kayce Williams, economic development coordinator for the city of Spring Hill, said city leaders had to learn that meeting those needs are an ongoing process.

“The lessons are too many to list, but each one has had significant value,” she said. “If we aren't learning from our mistakes, we aren't growing into a better community. We have definitely had to play catch up from the unexpected growth rate we have experienced since the early 90s, but we are so much better equipped for the demands of today's employers as well as the future requirements for tomorrow's businesses. We are always improving our current status and constantly putting plans in place to prepare for the future.”

One thing Spring Hill has seen change in the past 20 years is what companies are looking for.

“At one time incentives, land price, and proximity to large services such as a major airport ranked above the amenities a community had to offer. That has shifted,” Williams said. “While those things are still very important, employers are now much more concerned with those quality-of-life items. What was once a conversation that took place well into the negotiating process now takes place in the initial conversations. Companies are very mindful of the happiness of their employees and their families.”

To meet the needs of both companies and the employees they will bring to the community, Williams said Spring Hill tries to create a sense of place within the community.

“Spring Hill has made big strides to improve its infrastructure and offerings. Our newest park, Port Royal Park, is a great example,” Williams said. “We spent two years and \$5 million to create a very special place for Spring Hill residents to spend their down-time. We take pride in creating spaces, experiences, and events for people to enjoy life, not just survive it. Parks and recreation is vital to business recruitment. Companies want to see that their employees and their families have amenities available to them when they are not at work.”

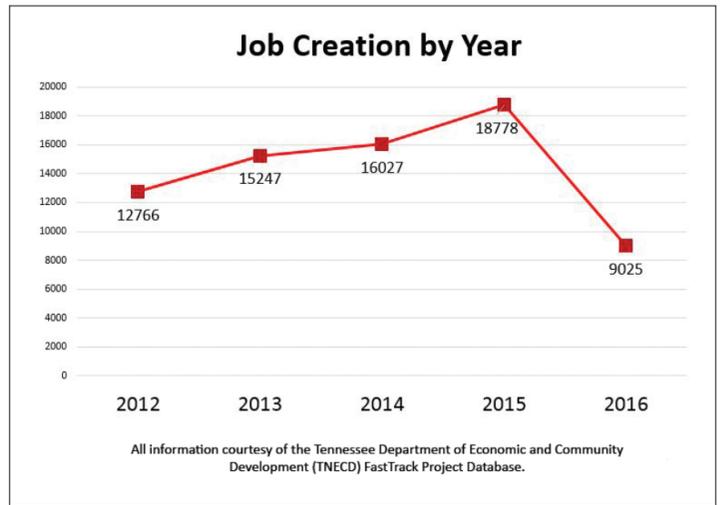
Parks and recreation have also proven an important recruitment tool for Kingsport.

“Kingsport has invested millions (past and future) into exceptional regional facilities,” Fleming said. “Bays Mountain Park is the city's crown jewel. It's a 3,500 nature preserve, lake, park, planetarium and native wildlife habitats. The Greenbelt is a 9-mile walking/biking path that traverses the city and provides pedestrian access to many neighborhoods, schools, historic sites, shops, medical facilities – all without a motorized vehicle.”

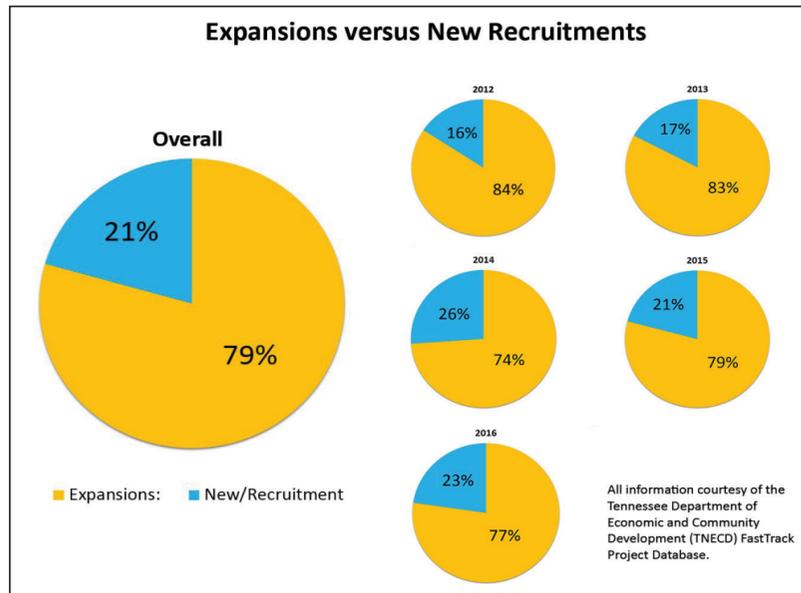
While there may be generational gaps in the groups Kingsport hopes to attract, Fleming said a lot of different generations really want the same



A splash pad, playground with accessibility for children of all abilities, and numerous ballfields are all features of Spring Hill's Port Royal Park. Businesses are looking for places their employees will want to live as well as work.



In the past five years, 2015 saw the highest amount of job creation among FastTrack grant recipients in municipalities with more than 18,700 jobs added. The bulk of these jobs were added by already established companies.



Between 2012 and 2016, approximately 79 percent of all jobs created within the corporate limits of Tennessee municipalities by companies receiving FastTrack grants from the state were created by already existing companies.

from their communities.

“We concluded that millennials and retirees are interested in many of the same things,” he said. “They want an urban experience and strong downtown. It doesn't have to be a big city, but they want lofts, breweries, outdoor dining, live entertainment options. They want a work-life balance with quick access to parks, walking/biking trails, swimming, wellness, sports, canoeing/kayaking. They want public art, music, murals, sculptures, and theatre.”

Planning ahead for future growth is also an important part of ensuring that already-established quality of life will remain top notch.

“We have also been working hard over the past 10 years to put very specific plans in place to shape the future of Spring Hill,” Williams said. “Whether it's planning for future greenways and trails to building capital for major road projects, we put things in motion then to be ready for tomorrow.”

Healthcare and its availability can also be an important factor when businesses determine what sort of quality of life a municipality can give their employees.

“Access to good healthcare, top notch first responders, and a proactive approach to public safety within our city are huge benefits when presenting Spring Hill to potential businesses, and minutes count,” William said. “We fought hard to bring Tri-Star ER to our city along with Maury Regional, Vanderbilt Health, and Centennial. They all have a very solid presence here and they give back constantly. No matter what the event or cause, our healthcare businesses are there to support it.”

Fleming said Kingsport has taken a role as a pilot community for several health and safety initiatives.

“Healthy Kingsport is a non-profit organization dedicated to creating a community that actively embraces healthy living by promoting wellness, enhancing infrastructure, and influencing policy,” he said. “Our work is accomplished by virtue of the Collective Impact Model—a best practice for solving complex, pressing social issues. This model is designed around a backbone organization – Healthy Kingsport – which serves as the convener of many organizations working toward a common agenda with shared measurements, mutually reinforcing activities, and continuous communication.”

More and more, Borden said companies are also starting to realize they also play a role in ensuring a good quality of life for their workforce.

“Companies have realized they are competing for this workforce as well,” he said. “Each one of the

premiere companies wants to be that employer of choice within their community. There is a correlation to the companies that invest in the communities they locate in and the ones that are good corporate citizens are also the ones that are the most successful themselves.”

## EDUCATION

As jobs become more high-tech and companies more diverse, education is playing a bigger role than ever in why companies choose certain areas. Having an educated workforce as well as knowing future generations of employees will be trained with the skill sets they need is essential for economic success.

To make sure they have a well-educated workforce, Borden said the state of Tennessee has also realized the power of education as economic development.

“Education has really become an important link with economic development, and the reason for that is workforce development has become such a major driver for successful economic development,” Borden said. “Very early on, Gov. Bill Haslam recognized for us to be successful with economic development in the long-term we needed to have a very strong relationship between education, workforce development and economic development. Out of this thought and philosophy first came the Tennessee Promise. To strengthen that, the Legislature last year passed Tennessee Reconnect which also provided up to two years of free tuition for any adult who would like to go back to school to a TCAT or community college to enhance their skill set.”

From its very beginning, Fleming said Kingsport had to play against some of the stereotypes outsiders had about its region.

“Kingsport is a modern case study in economic development. The city was literally carved out of rural Appalachia,” he said. The town founders knew that in order to attract companies from New York and New England, they had to convince the decision-makers that their families could access quality educational opportunities. So, they hired Columbia University to develop an educational master plan. Today, it's no different, but now companies are competing for global talent.”

The city runs its own school system, and Fleming said schools can sometimes help decide whether or not employees and company owners decide to live in the area.

“Top employees can work anywhere. So, it is imperative that they can visualize living in a place where their children can access a world class education,” he said. “Many times,

the track record and rigorous curriculum offered by Kingsport City Schools is the deciding factor. KCS is collocated with the Chamber of Commerce, which captures the strong linkage between business and education.”

Having a good foundation and good school systems can be another quality of life factor businesses are looking for. Williams said the school systems in Spring Hill are one of the area's major sources of pride.

“Spring Hill is located in two counties, Williamson and Maury. Williamson County has one of the best school systems

in the country, and Maury County schools are right there with them,” she said. “Neither school system ever settles for ‘good enough.’ They are always striving to be better, be more involved, more innovative, and more resourceful. The focus they have put on our children is remarkable. It's personal. It shows in everything they do. That testimony speaks volumes to potential business and those looking for a new place to raise their family.”

Borden said many companies are getting directly involved in education.

“We are at a point nowadays were companies are getting more involved in education, in workforce training and workforce development, because it is such an important ingredient for their success,” he said. “Now, they know it is so important to have the workers they need to put out their product or their service. They are working with communities, with the state, and local governments. This is a great thing to see, and it's turning into a full-blown partnership on all levels, which is what it will take to meet the workforce challenges of the future.”

Some companies have even helped design curriculum and donated learning materials to local schools so that prospective employees in their area receive on-the-job-style training before they even graduate.

“One of the great advantages we feel we have with both our TCATs and our community colleges is being very nimble,” he said. “We want to be able to do a lot of listening to our customers, which are these companies who will be employing these students. We want to make sure we are designing curriculum that meets their needs and the types of jobs they have in these different facilities. They aren't learning some curriculum from 10 years ago that isn't going to help anyone.”

Kingsport's downtown campus of its Academic Village has 3,000 students in five buildings that focus on educational opportunities in higher education, applied technology, health professions, manufacturing, and automotive programs.

“The city of Kingsport invested more than \$17 million of its own money – beyond state and federal grants,” Fleming said. “Northeast State CC is the managing partner. Curricula are chosen based on interaction with local companies' needs. The idea is to graduate as near to debt-free as possible and enter the local workforce with a well-paying job. Local residents with an associate's degree or higher has doubled – and so has median family income.”

Williams said many of Spring Hill's secondary schools have strong relationships with local companies

wanting to grow the local workforce.

“We have several post-high school and secondary education opportunities offered at the Northfield Workforce Development Center from Columbia State Community College, Martin Methodist College, and the Tennessee College of Applied Technology, but they don't just educate,” Williams said. “Through their partnership with so many major employers in the region, they train and place students directly with those employers needing those special skills. Students enter the programs knowing that we will do everything in our power to help them succeed not just as a student, but as a skilled equipped member of the workforce. Companies looking at Spring Hill know that they can find the employees they need right here.”

Companies aren't just waiting until students graduate high school before getting involved in their education, and many students aren't waiting for high school graduation to begin learning the skills they will need for a future career.

“Some of the high schools in our state offer dual enrollment, which is a program that allows high school students to continue with their high school education but at the same time take courses at one of our TCATs or community colleges,” Borden said. “In some cases and depending on how aggressive the student can be, they can end up graduating from four years of high school with a high school degree and TCAT certificate or even a two-year associate's degree. In high school, they have programs for students and parents to give them an idea of what a manufacturing job is like in today's times and what the different positions pay, which can be very well-paid positions.”

Borden said manufacturers are even reaching out to pre-teens and tweens to get them thinking about future careers and the education they will need.

“One of the things we are trying to do is get our students more familiar with and involved with manufacturing at an early age,” he said. “There are familiarization tours that are beginning now in a lot of our communities at a very early age, even later years of grammar school on into middle school and high school. Students are taken and given plant tours. There are programs where companies come into the schools to provide programs.”

Fleming said that cities who want to provide a better quality of life for both employees and prospective companies have to be willing to try new things on their own.

“If you believe in your city then be willing to invest in yourself, don't expect the state or federal government to do everything for you,” he said. “Take calculated risks. Ask your local companies what they hear from the hiring/recruiting process. What are the candidate's perception of the community? What can you do to change the perception? What is beyond your control?”

Williams also agreed that the best thing a city can do it's invest in itself.

“Don't limit that to roads or parks; it's everything,” she said. “It's quality and variety of housing, public safety, good planning practices, a well-written code, workforce development, education, retail options, and city services. It's a lot and it all takes money and time, but it is achievable. Ask for input from your citizens, reach out to other cities for ideas, and put plans in place to prepare, but don't follow everyone else's map. Find out what makes your city unique and use that as your northern star. Then, no matter how long it takes, execute that vision. We don't all have to get there the same way, but we all can get there.”