

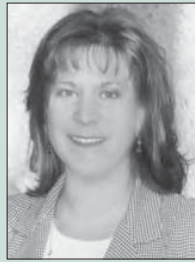
**KNOXVILLE • KNOX COUNTY
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**



ANNUAL REPORT FY 04-05

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

The Planning Commission is an advisory board made up of 15 citizens—seven appointed by the city mayor and eight appointed by the county mayor. These volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds and represent a broad spectrum of community interests and concerns. They serve staggered four-year terms and can be reappointed. The commission meets on the second Thursday of the month.



Susan Brown
Chair
1999-2007



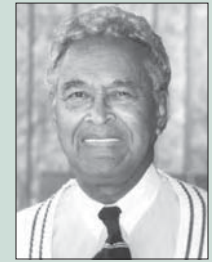
C. Randy Massey
Vice Chair
2002-2006



Trey Benefield
2002-2006



Art Clancy III
2004-2008



Herbert Donaldson Sr.
1998-2008



E. Ray Evans
2003-2007



Philip French
1998-2006



Richard Graf
2001-2009



Mark Jendrek
2003-2005



Stan Johnson
2004-2008



Chester Kilgore
2003-2007



Robert Lobetti
2004-2008



Jack C. Sharp
2004-2007



Mary Parker Slack
2001-2009



R. Larry Smith
1997-2005

Newly Appointed
Commissioners:



Robert Anders
2005-2009



Kim Henry
2005-2009

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Mark Donaldson
Executive Director

For the third year in a row, transition is a theme for the director's letter fronting the MPC Annual Report. In the 2002-03 report, this space documented the end of Norman Whitaker's 10-plus years as MPC Executive Director. In the 2003-04 report, the emphasis was on the transition of the MPC organization instituted by then Interim Executive Director Dave Hill, now Chief Operating Officer of the City of Knoxville. The transition term is still applicable for this year's report, but the focus is on a transition to stability; during the 2004-05 fiscal year MPC has reorganized and grown into an agency capable of meeting the challenges of a changing city, county, and region. Hopefully, we can stop talking about changes at the helm for a while and proceed ahead on a steady course.

Already we have begun to establish and expand working relationships. In 2004-05 MPC partnered with more people than ever before. Joint planning and service initiatives went far beyond our traditional financial partners—the City of Knoxville, Knox County, Tennessee Department of Transportation, and Federal Highway Administration—to include many more organizations and entities:

- Knox County Schools were provided:
 - An analysis of elementary, middle, and high school attendance zones based on building permit and subdivision approvals
 - School enrollment projections for 2006-2015 for each school facility
 - An inventory of sites suitable for new schools
 - Quarterly reports of development activity data
- The Transportation Planning Organization's sphere of influence for regional transportation planning was broadened to include Anderson, Blount, Jefferson, Loudon, Sevier, and Cocke counties
- MPC staff members had integral roles in projects for the Knox County Development Corporation and the Knoxville Area Chamber Partnership relating to economic development planning
- Knoxville's Community Development Corporation was provided support in the preparation of redevelopment plans within the Empowerment Zone and the Heart of Knoxville neighborhoods
- MPC staff organized a joint annual conference in Knoxville that brought together in a single venue the memberships of the Tennessee chapters of the American Planning Association, the American Society of Landscape Architects and the Institute of Transportation Engineers
- Multi-organizational task forces relating to the natural and built environment such as the French Broad Preservation Association, the Beaver Creek Watershed, and Active Living by Design utilized the efforts of MPC staff
- The Citizens Planning Academy exposed the language and processes of planning and development to a large number of participants

These efforts are important links in creating a network of partners for delivering quality planning and development services, transportation planning, and information to the community. As we continue to enhance and expand such partnerships, we remain committed to a single goal: working toward a better future.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Development Activity

Each year MPC tracks construction and development activity in Knoxville and Knox County. Highlights are published in the Development Activity Report. Major new commercial projects recently



St. Mary's North in Powell

completed include a \$15.8 million renovation of the downtown historic Tennessee Theatre, the 18-screen Regal Theater at Turkey Creek, Fort Sanders Parkwest Medical Center, a 219-unit student apartment building called Knoxville Place near the University of Tennessee, the Cumberland House Hotel on White Avenue in the Central City, and St. Mary's Ambulatory Care Center in Powell.

Building Permits

More than 4,600 building permits were approved in 2004, up 22 percent from the previous year. Total building activity during the year was valued at over \$767 million, compared to \$687 million in 2003. Residential

construction surpassed the \$411 million mark—breaking single-year investment records for the second year in a row and reaching an all-time high that topped 2003's record by more than \$35 million. Commercial construction was valued at approximately \$155 million, and commercial renovations were almost \$145 million.

Rezoning

There were 216 rezonings covering 2,820 acres approved in 2004. These numbers were down slightly from last year's counts. Thirteen rezonings were due to annexation, and added 169 acres of land to the city's jurisdiction. Annexation requests were down 64 percent from 2003 levels. The Northwest County Sector retained the top spot for the amount of acreage rezoned this past year, while the Northeast County Sector surpassed the usual frontrunner, Southwest County Sector, by rezoning almost 200 more acres.

Subdivisions

More than 2,500 acres were subdivided in 2004, up 16 percent from the previous year. The number of new lots created for building projects increased 20 percent. Top achievers for subdivision activity were the Southwest and Northwest County sectors. The latter grew 160 percent in subdivided acreage and 344 percent in the number of lots from 2003.

**AGRICULTURAL LAND
CONVERSION**
More than 1,600
acres of county land
were rezoned out of
agricultural designation
and slated for
commercial or residential
use, a 54 percent
increase over 2003
conversions. Residential
rezoning claimed 1,404
acres of rural land, while
commercial rezoning
accounted for 198 acres.



Construction in the Southwest County Sector at the Turnberry Subdivision



Construction continues at the Turkey Creek mixed-use development.

Office Market Analysis

Knoxville’s office property market continued to show moderate growth in 2004, with rentable inventory up 4 percent over the previous year. As usual, nearly all new square footage was located in the county rather than the city. Roles reversed on vacancy rates, however, with the suburban market reporting slightly higher vacancies (9.5 percent) than downtown’s 8.8 percent.

Two sizable local projects were completed: the 246,725-square-foot Callahan Office/Warehouse Building III in north county and the 98,639-square-foot Three Lakeside Centre in southwest county. In south Knoxville, First Tennessee Bank is transforming an old Wal-Mart into a modern call center. Also completed were the Century Park I Building in the Pellissippi area and the AmSouth Building in Bearden. Plans remain uncertain for two downtown sites: TVA’s vacant East Tower and the old News Sentinel location.

Shopping Center Market Analysis

Knoxville’s retail market improved since the last survey, reporting a vacancy rate of 6.9 percent in 2004 compared to 8.3 percent in 2002. During this same time period, more than 500,000 square feet of new space was added, and there was

a net gain of six new shopping centers, four of which were built in the Farragut/Pellissippi area.

A new Super Wal-Mart opened on Chapman Highway in south Knoxville, and plans are underway in northeast Knoxville for the Wal-Mart on Millertown Pike to supersize. Meanwhile, Target purchased 30 acres of the Knox County Farmers Market property in north Knoxville, announcing plans to relocate its Fountain City store there in 2006. The county’s three Kmart stores remained opened; changes resulting from the merger with Sears, Roebuck & Company are still being worked out.

Total sales numbers showed a 9.6 percent increase, up from \$6.5 billion in 2002 to \$7.1 billion in 2003, with 20.3 percent growth since 2000. As usual, automobile and boat sellers captured the largest share of local retail dollars, followed by food stores, general merchandise, and eating places.

MARKET REPORTS

In addition to an annual Development Activity Report, MPC researches and publishes various market reports. The 2004 Office Market Analysis and the 2004 Shopping Center Market Analysis are useful references that compare national and local trends, and include building-by-building property listings.



Three Lakeside Centre office building

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Development Partners

Advisory Group

In January 2005, MPC and City of Knoxville staff began meeting with a committee of public and private sector representatives to improve the development process. Their goal was to create better working relationships, cost savings, and greater efficiencies as development proposals moved through the review system. The committee, called the Development Partners Advisory Group, issued an action plan in August that recommends ways to streamline and more consistently handle processes for zoning, subdivisions, building permits, and inspections. Some of the recommendations involve several agencies, and others are specific to MPC, City Engineering, and Plans Reviews & Inspections.

Strategies include:

- a computerized permit tracking system to be shared by all involved agencies
- customer service training for all staff
- an interagency troubleshooting team to address stalled projects
- a graduated fee schedule to replace the double fee schedule
- a review of standards (such as MPC subdivision regulations and storm water regulations) to reduce inconsistencies
- an update of city and county zoning codes

Some of these recommendations, such as a new fee schedule for rezoning and other MPC applications, already are accomplished or underway; others will require City Council or County Commission approval.

Zoning Ordinance Changes

New sections were added to both the city and county zoning ordinances for default minimum building setbacks in cases where approved residential development plans do not specify setbacks. Also added to both ordinances were additional uses (banks, credit unions, and order processing services) for the Business and Technology Park (BP) zone.

New in the city were amendments regulating portable storage containers, electronic message boards, and Town Center drive-through facilities. Another amendment prohibits demolition permits for a period of time within proposed historic overlay (H-1) and neighborhood conservation (NC-1) districts.

TOWN CENTER ZONING

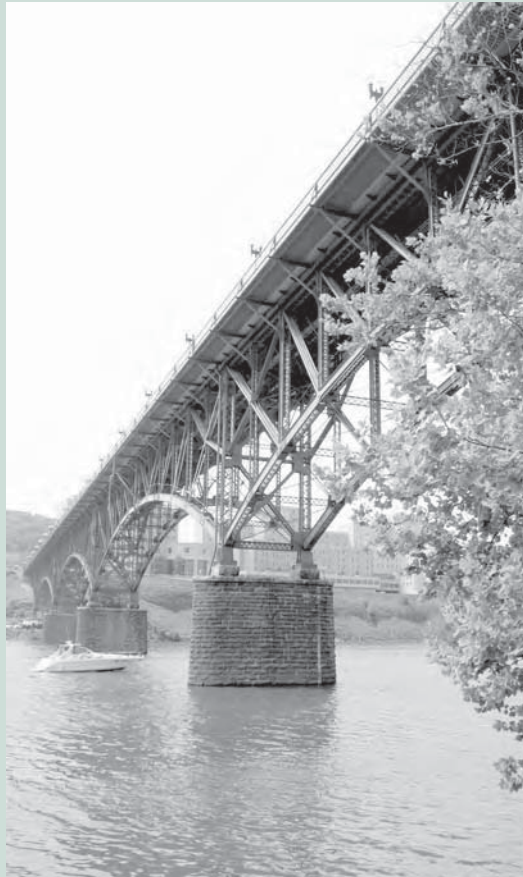
A town center project is underway at Northshore Drive and Pellissippi Parkway, and an application has been filed for one near Heiskell and West Emory roads. A third tract of land at Valley View Drive and Washington Pike has been approved for town center zoning. This zoning allows commercial development oriented along a main street or town square called the "core area." Beyond this area can be a variety of residential structures and certain types of offices.

Town center zoning requires 10 percent of the parcel to be open space in the form of parks, commons, or plazas. It also requires a two-step process before a building permit is issued. At the time of rezoning, a conceptual site plan is submitted outlining the location and intensity of land uses, including the location of open spaces and streets. Once the rezoning is approved, the developer must return to the Planning Commission with a more detailed second-stage plan to outline architectural guidelines, lighting and signage, landscaping, and operational details like the timing of deliveries and garbage pickup.

Historic Preservation

The year 2004 marked the completion of several spectacular downtown preservation projects, beginning with dedication ceremonies for the historic Gay Street Bridge and U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, and concluding with the gala opening of the grand Tennessee Theatre. Also notable was the rehabilitation of the Phoenix Building into offices and lofts, and successful neighborhood tours held by Fourth & Gill, Parkridge, and Old North Knoxville.

The past year saw rehabilitation work begin on two additional downtown projects, the James Park House on Cumberland Avenue and the YMCA on West Clinch Avenue. Several other buildings were either placed or nominated for the National Register of Historic Places, while efforts by preservationists to save the J.Allen Smith House on Lyons View Pike came to an end when the building was destroyed.



The Gay Street Bridge (above); The Tennessee Theatre (below)



*PRESERVATION
2004: A REPORT TO
KNOXVILLE MAYOR
BILL HASLAM
The MPC report includes
suggestions collected
from polls at various
neighborhood meetings
on priorities for future
preservation and
redevelopment activities.
Respondents also
suggested incentives
that would benefit
historic neighborhoods,
and recommended
measures specific to
the downtown area. The
report features a list of
more than 80 historically
significant properties
and their status, as well
as a map of the city that
depicts historic zoning
overlays, neighborhood
conservation zoning,
and structures listed on
the National Register of
Historic Places.*

EXCELLENCE AWARDS

MPC's 24th Annual Excellence Awards attracted 130 attendees. This program recognizes developers, designers, and neighborhood activists who have made our community a better place in which to live. Following a trend which has been growing in the last few years, historic restoration was the biggest category and had multiple winners. The 2005 awards went to:



Plantation Springs Subdivision

Residential:
Plantation Springs, a subdivision at Westland and Ebenezer roads centered around a restored plantation house that serves as a

community center, developed by Oliver Smith Realty and Sentinel Builders.



Knoxville News Sentinel

Commercial:
The **Knoxville News Sentinel Building**, housing the paper's newsroom and production facility in the Central City Business District, developed by the E.W. Scripps Company.

Historic Restoration:
The **Boyd-Harvey House** in west Knox County, owned and restored by Robert Bedwell; two historic homes, one in the Fourth and Gill neighborhood (**1302 Luttrell Street**) and one in Parkridge (**1712 Washington Avenue**) restored by



Boyd-Harvey House

neighborhood partnerships; the **Phoenix Building** at 418 S. Gay Street, restored to offices and lofts by InSite Property Associates; the **East Tennessee History Center** at 601 S. Gay Street and



1302 Luttrell Street



1712 Washington Avenue



The Phoenix

600 Market Street restored and expanded by the Knox County Public Library System and the East Tennessee Historical Society; and



Young-Williams Animal Center

at Stanton and Essary roads and the **Young-Williams Animal Center** at John Tarleton Park off Sutherland Avenue, both developed by Knox County.



East Tennessee History Center

Neighborhood Achievement:

The Fountain City Art Guild for their work in opening a new Fountain City Art Center in an old library building on Hotel Avenue, and the **James Agee Park Steering Committee** for their efforts in building a new park at Laurel Avenue and James Agee (formerly 15th) Street in the Fort Sanders neighborhood.



Tennessee Theatre

the **Tennessee Theatre** at 604 S. Gay Street restored by the Tennessee Theatre Foundation.

Special Use:

The **Fountain City Branch Library**



Fountain City Branch Library

Volunteer Achievement:

Faris Eid, owner of Design Innovations, an architectural firm, a member of the Historic Zoning Commission, and a long-time preservationist known for his work with the 500 block of Gay Street; **Walter Ghosten**, pastor of Roseberry Church, who is involved with the Oakwood-Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association, the Emerald Youth Foundation, Empowerment Zone planning, East Tennessee Community Design Center, and efforts to create jobs for minorities; and **Frank Sparkman**, an architect and past president of the East Community Design Center who has helped with various downtown and inner city revitalization efforts and served as an advisor to University of Tennessee interns.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

MPC's long range planning during the past year included many partnerships, both with existing community groups and with city and county departments. MPC planners took the lead in spearheading certain efforts, while they served as support staff for others.

James White Parkway/Chapman Highway Corridor Study Task Force

A 30-member task force met from March 2003 to November 2004 to evaluate the James White Parkway extension project, which was put on hold pending further local review. Stakeholders from the City of Knoxville, Knox County, and Seymour served on the task force, with staff support provided by MPC and TPO. More than 400 people attended open house meetings, and thousands more participated through MPC's website, neighborhood and civic groups, and newspaper coverage.

The task force recommended that James White Parkway be built as a parkway to Governor John Sevier Highway, with a full environmental impact statement

for the length of new construction. Improvements to Chapman Highway to address safety and operational problems also were requested. Knoxville City Council, Knox County Commission, and TPO's Executive Board all passed resolutions in support of the recommendation, and it was officially transmitted to the Tennessee Department of Transportation in spring 2005.

Knox County Business Park Inventory

MPC did research and field work on a joint project with the Development Corporation of Knox County to evaluate potential business park sites throughout the county. Staff looked at 44 sites which fit the parameters for acreage, highway access, zoning, utility access, and both existing and surrounding land use. Six sites were identified as high priority possibilities, while others were defined as "promising" or "hurdles." Recommendations on transportation improvements and land-banking sites are underway.



The James White Parkway Bridge over the Tennessee River



Heart of Knoxville

This past year, a team from MPC, the city’s Community Development Division, Knoxville’s Community Development Corporation, and the Development Corporation of Knox County worked together on improvement strategies for inner city neighborhoods, corridors, and industrial districts. A list of 107 strategies identified in the past was whittled down to about 45 strategies that could be implemented during the next two years. These include:

• **I-275 Corridor Plan**

The team looked at several hundred acres of vacant and underutilized land on the stretch from the I-275 Business Park (Coster Shop) south to I-40. Transportation improvements, such as a series of frontage roads and a continuous road system from the 17th Street exit to Woodland Avenue, were among the recommendations. The team also addressed environmental and utility issues.

• **Lonsdale Redevelopment and Urban Renewal Plan**

MPC staff helped draft a plan to eliminate blight and inappropriate land use. The plan proposes restrictions on truck traffic, buffers between neighborhoods and industrial areas, traffic calming, and improved sidewalks. Refurbishment of the Lonsdale public housing project already is underway. Federal Empowerment Zone funds are earmarked for some of these projects.

• **South Knoxville Waterfront**

MPC staff are serving on an oversight committee to guide the preparation of a master plan for new development along the city’s south waterfront. MPC’s South City Sector Plan is being used as a resource. The city arranged a feasibility study, and has contracted with a team of consultants headed by Hargreaves Associates to devise a vision and action plan.



Five Points Village Plaza construction

• **Burlington/Five Points**

A new retail center is underway in the Five Points neighborhood, as well as several infill housing projects. Renovation of the Walter Taylor Housing Project is proposed.

• **Oakwood-Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan**

MPC worked with University of Tennessee graduate students to identify community concerns. The plan recommends down-zoning and/or neighborhood conservation districts in various areas combined with traffic calming, a re-established playground, and a mixed use redevelopment program along Central Avenue.

CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

MPC staff and Planning Commission Chair Susan Brown worked on another interagency task force—the Joint Mayors’ 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness. Members divided into working groups to address mental health and social services, housing, education and employment, and community concerns. The plan was presented in October 2005.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

FRENCH BROAD RIVER CORRIDOR

MPC continues to assist with efforts to preserve 400 acres of land along the French Broad River, and was part of a group given awards by both the Tennessee Preservation Trust and Knox Heritage Inc. in November 2004 for collaboration and civic leadership.



• Infill Housing Guidelines

Guidelines have been created to preserve the historical character of neighborhoods built in the late 1800s to 1950s. In addition to establishing architectural compatibility, such guidelines help foster neighborhood stability and pedestrian-oriented streets. They can be used for a wide range of residences, including affordable housing.

• Downtown Redevelopment

The mayor's Downtown Advisory Committee met November 2004 through March 2005 to recommend a long-term civic vision and a short-term action plan. Several MPC planners served as committee members and resource staff, and will continue to be involved in one of the committee's recommendations: the creation of downtown urban design guidelines in collaboration with neighborhood stakeholders.

• Sector Plans and Small Area Studies

The city and county are divided into 12 sectors for planning purposes, and the sector plans are updated on a five-year rotating basis, serving as guides for future zoning decisions. The Southwest County Sector Plan was completed during the past year.

• Southwest County Sector Plan

By many measures, this area is the fastest growing sector in Knox County. Between 1990-2000 total population in the sector grew by 41 percent, and school-age population grew nearly 50 percent.

Much of the sector, which wraps around the Town of Farragut, has been developed as low density subdivisions, parks, and retail or office space. Some of the land is constrained by steep slopes and flood zones, and the remainder is designated as planned growth and rural.



Development at the Westland Drive and I-140 (Pellissippi Parkway) interchange

Areas with significant potential for future development are identified. The south side of Kingston Pike near Cedar Bluff Road is proposed for mixed use. Staff recommend that the site be master planned so various uses enhance each other and the surrounding properties. A mixed-use designation would encourage development using Town Center zoning.

As the pattern of low density and rural residential development continues south of Farragut on the Choto peninsula, population growth will eventually require some level of small-scale neighborhood retail services and other amenities. While the sector plan does not designate a site for neighborhood-scale retail, it establishes criteria to be used for determining when and where to locate such facilities.

Urban Forestry

A new Tree Conservation and Planting Plan for Knox County has been developed by MPC staff. The plan discusses ways to protect natural resources such as ridges and stream areas, and suggests programs for tree planting and

conservation on public grounds (such as schools, parks, and libraries) and for specific types of development.

Associated with the plan—and key to its implementation—are a series of draft ordinances, some still being fine-tuned.

Highlights include:

- A proposed change in residential land use regulations to give developers the option of building conservation subdivisions, where houses are put on smaller lots (usually in a natural setting) in order to conserve forests or other open space that is protected in perpetuity by a conservation easement.
- Parking lot design standards that specify minimum landscaping provisions, such as a ratio of the number of trees that should be planted to the size of a parking area.
- Provisions for tree protection during site development and measures to protect ridges and stream corridors.
- A list of appropriate trees for various settings, including parking lots, roadsides, buffer zones, and along sidewalks.

TREE CONSERVATION AND PLANTING PLAN FOR KNOX COUNTY

Key to the plan is the call for a Knox Tree Foundation and a joint City-County Tree Board to protect the environment and foster more beautiful communities. In order to be most effective, the MPC plan calls for volunteers working through such local foundations and boards to help set up, administer, and raise funds for tree planting programs.

Adoption of the plan was postponed by the Planning Commission in June 2005 with the interest of developing a broader base of community support. Since that time, MPC staff have been working with different community groups on the plan's implications and ways to make its adoption and implementation successful.



Virtually every section of Knox County has scenic roads that should be protected.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

TPO

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization or TPO is staffed by MPC planners and serves as a transportation planning board for Knox County, most of Blount County, and parts of Loudon and Sevier counties.



Traffic on Interstate 40: Looking west toward the Cedar Bluff area

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM 2006-2008
TPO updated its Transportation Improvement Program for 2006-2008. This program documents how federal and state funds will be spent on projects within TPO's official planning boundaries, and includes a detailed list of road projects and other priorities.

Because of poor air quality ratings concerning ozone and particulate levels, however, TPO recently was charged with preparing a long range transportation plan for year 2030 for a larger seven-county area. This past year TPO released a regional plan that calls for a \$3.8 billion investment in 187 projects through year 2030. The plan includes \$328 million for non-highway projects such as public transit, bicycling, sidewalks, and greenways, as well as proposals for congestion mitigation management.

TPO took an active role in serving on the resource team for the Knoxville Regional Parkway—a proposed Knoxville bypass for a portion of Interstate 40—with staff presenting traffic forecasts for various interchange scenarios under consideration.

TPO works closely with Knoxville Area Transit, and this past year staff oversaw the Intelligent Transportation Systems Needs Assessment for KAT. This technology can be used to track buses, aid in fare collection and management, and provide route information to passengers. Information can be made available at bus stops or through the Internet, cell phones, and other electronic devices. A consultant was hired to assist in reviewing operations, recommending appropriate and compatible technology, and setting priorities. In the next step KAT will prepare a detailed network plan and bid specifications for the technology.

TPO also has been involved in planning transportation improvements for seniors. Projections show that in 25 years, one in every five persons will be a senior, and at least 20 percent of this group will have stopped driving. Staff are working closely on this matter with Knoxville County Mayor Ragsdale's office through a Senior Summit Transportation Task Force. TPO also participated in the East Tennessee Pre-White House Conference on Aging, which will lead to transportation policy recommendations to the President and Congress.



Smart Trips Program

The TPO Smart Trips program, which promotes alternatives to driving alone, continues efforts to expand not only in the downtown area, but throughout the entire Knoxville Air Quality Non-Attainment Region. The goal of Smart Trips is to improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion by increasing car-pooling, transit use, biking, and walking. Through several events and media campaigns, public awareness of these alternative transportation modes has grown. In the past year, Smart Trips has increased its partners to 19 local companies which are providing Smart Trips commute trip reduction programs for their employees. These employer programs reach a potential 36,500 commuters throughout the Knoxville region.

Smart Trips recently received the Bronze Level Award for EPA’s Best Workplaces for Commuters Race to Excellence. This recognition was awarded at the Association for Commuter Transportation International Conference, where Smart Trips was one of 17 programs in the nation to receive a Race to Excellence Award in the Network Member Category.

Bicycle Program

The Bicycle Program made great strides this past year.

- The Bicycle Advisory Committee continues to meet regularly and address bicycle transportation issues. The committee was expanded from 11 members to 12. Several subcommittees have been established to work on specific projects and issues.
- A Bicycle Comfort Level Map was produced for the Knoxville central city area and is being distributed for free at bike shops, libraries, and other locations.



Knoxville’s greenways offer a great route for the Neighborhood Bike Ride.

- Phase I network projects have been prioritized and work is being done with the city to make some of the improvements.
- An issue of the Pedal Press newsletter was produced, as well as a brochure on road rules for bicyclists.
- The Bicycle Parking Program installed bike racks along Cumberland Avenue, at Maryville College, in Farragut, and other locations. Additional bike racks are planned at various city parks and the University of Tennessee, amounting to a total of 300 bike racks installed through this program. Matching funds are provided by local businesses, organizations, agencies, and individuals. A full list of locations and sponsors is listed at www.knoxtrans.org/plans/bikeparking/index.htm.
- The fourth annual Neighborhood Bike Ride was held in October 2004; more than 140 riders participated.

CADES COVE PLANNING

A planning process to improve congestion in the Cades Cove area of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is in the second phase of a multi-year effort. The plan was undertaken to develop a long-range management vision to protect the cove’s natural and cultural resources and ensure that visitors continue to have a quality experience. Five alternatives have been developed to accomplish this, including a “no action” option and a reservation system and/or transit system during peak season.

TPO manages this contract in conjunction with the National Park Service. TPO maintains the project website, www.cadescoveplanning.org, and the mailing list, with more than 3,000 people currently listed. This phase of the project will further develop the alternatives and assess their impacts in preparation for a draft environmental impact statement.



At the Citizens Planning Academy, participants worked in small discussion groups to summarize their opinions about how Knox County should grow.

Citizens Planning Academy

From September-October 2004 MPC held a Citizens Planning Academy. The goal was to explain community plans and land use regulations, and offer participants an opportunity to hear guest speakers and share diverse viewpoints. Eighty people signed up for the four evening sessions, with about 25 more on a waiting list.

During the sessions, participants heard how Knox County has grown in the last 50 years, how MPC is organized, and how an actual rezoning case goes through a complicated review and permitting process. A developer discussed costs and financing, and a panel of engineers talked about utilities, grading, and traffic impacts. Later, neighborhood association leaders and attorneys spoke on land use issues and strategies for compromise. The final session explored new trends in planning, and suggestions for change.

Comments from the class were generally favorable, and many thanked MPC for this first-time effort. Many also agreed

that it is time to update our ordinances, which sometimes lead to adversarial relationships rather than compromise between developers and residents.

GIS

The Geographic Information Systems staff continually strive to make more current and accurate mapping and analysis available to support MPC's three planning divisions. As in past years, the focus has been on delivering GIS data to all local government employees over the local intranet and to the public through the Internet. This year's work included developing an orderly intake process to map the nearly 7,000 building permits issued annually by the City of Knoxville, Knox County, and the Town of Farragut, greatly enhancing MPC's ability to monitor development activity. Staff also have been working with Knox County Schools and the Development Corporation of Knox County to develop site suitability models to identify locations for future schools and business parks. Sophisticated site selection models also were used to test

new ordinances regulating the location of adult-oriented businesses in both the city and the county.

MPC continues to rely upon GIS staff to produce high quality cartographic products for numerous public meetings, documents, and studies. An award received at a regional GIS conference and two more presented at a statewide GIS conference demonstrate that the maps MPC makes are among the finest produced by any government agency in the state.

In addition to routinely updating various layers of data—including zoning, existing and proposed land use, and the city’s One Year Plan—GIS supported many of the planning efforts already listed in this document. Highlights included a large global positioning system data collection project (especially Civil War-era trenches) and ongoing support of the sector planning process.

Addressing

In FY 2004-05, addressing staff handled 5,250 addresses for new construction and newly assigned housing units as well as 20,949 modified addresses. In addition, the staff maintains the GIS base map of Knox County. In this capacity, they created 473 new road segments and modified 1,238 segments. Staff reviewed all subdivisions for correct street names and closed the boundaries on 2,127 subdivisions—part of the mapping process for creating interior lot lines. Weekly and monthly reports that detail all new streets, street name changes, and addresses were sent to the Post Office, utility districts, Knoxville Utilities Board, Knox County Schools, telephone and cable companies, and various city and county departments.

Census Analysis

MPC continues to serve as a state data center affiliate of the U.S. Census Bureau. A new analysis, Status of the Senior Population in Knox County, was published in March 2005, adding to the agency’s collection of in-house reports based on the 2000 Census. Preparation for the 2010 Census has begun as staff compare MPC/KGIS addresses with those in the Census Bureau database.



Partnership in Planning with Knox County Schools

For a little over a year, MPC has been working with Knox County Public Schools on how to better anticipate and prevent overcrowding.

Staff recently completed a study that contains four major components:

1. A ranking of elementary, middle, and high school zones based on building permit and subdivision lot approvals
2. School enrollment projections for 2006-2015
3. An inventory of sites suitable for new schools
4. Quarterly submissions of development activity data

School officials have been pleased with the partnership, and MPC has entered into a new five-year contract with the school system to continue this same type of work. One goal is to create a computer model that will be updated to do school enrollment forecasting annually. Another goal is to develop a system to measure and track subdivision build-out.

SENIOR POPULATION

In the next 20 years in Knox County, the number of recent retirees (ages 65-74) is predicted to more than double, while the elderly (ages 75 and older) will increase by almost 70 percent. The growth among these groups is expected to greatly impact specialized transportation, housing, and age-related social services. The MPC report includes a list of 39 senior housing facilities with supportive services, along with information about seniors as homeowners and renters.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community Outreach

Staff provide technical support and/or serve on committees for the Empowerment Zone, Hope VI, Hastie Park, and Danny Mayfield Park. MPC also assists many boards and commissions, including:

- Knoxville Board of Zoning Appeals
- Knoxville and Knox County Historical Zoning Commissions
- County Parks and Recreation Commission
- TDOT Long Range Transportation Plan Steering Committee
- Mayor Ragsdale's Senior Summit Transportation Task Force Report
- Central Business Improvement District Parking and Transportation Committee
- Cumberland Avenue Design Review Board
- Knoxville Tree Board
- Knoxville Greenways Commission
- Beaver Creek Task Force
- Knox County Site Planning Roundtable
- Friends of Quality Growth
- East Tennessee Two-Step Healthy Weight Loss Initiative
- Active Living by Design Planning Committee
- Tennessee Department of Transportation Title VI Advisory Board
- City of Knoxville Central Station Transit Center Executive Advisory Committee
- Regional Mass Transit Initiative
- Community Action Committee's Advisory Transportation Program
- Knoxville Transportation Authority Public Advocacy Subcommittee



Large specimen trees are part of Knox County's natural heritage.

Leadership and Educational Roles

MPC takes on both leadership and educational roles. Staff attended the following meetings, sometimes to make presentations and at other times to keep current on issues and methodology.

- TDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions Training Workshop
- Practical Applications for New Urbanists by the Seaside Institute
- UT lecture by Andres Duany on Reconciling the Natural and the Urban
- State and local chapter meetings of the American Planning Association
- ArcGIS Software Training
- Leadership Knoxville 21st Century Leadership Facilitation Skills Training
- AICP Project Management Training
- Dialogue Training: Working Together to Build Healthier Communities
- Decentralized Wastewater Systems Seminar by TVA
- Tennessee Urban Forestry Conference
- Tennessee Geographic Information Consortium Annual Conference
- Association for Commuter Transportation International Conference and Transportation Management Summit
- Social Behavior Seminar
- Presenting Data and Information: A One-Day Course by Edward Tufte
- UT Geography Department: Geographers Working in the Planning Field
- U.S. Census Bureau Economic Census Workshop
- East Tennessee White House Conference on Aging
- Tennessee Public Transportation Association Annual Meeting
- Mayor Ragsdale's Third Annual Senior Summit
- TDOT Transit Grantee Workshop
- National Highway Institute & National Transit Institute Metropolitan Transportation Planning Workshop
- Knoxville-Knox County Annual Neighborhood Conference
- Knoxville Knox County Community Action Committee, Community Leadership Class
- Knox Heritage Inc.'s Preservation Network Series



Participants at the Citizens Planning Academy included University of Tennessee students and their teacher.

MPC Online

MPC's website (www.knoxmpc.org) continues to grow. Many topics are updated on a regular basis, including:

New Sites:

- Historic Preservation
- Smart Trips Week 2005
- Tennessee Conference of Planning, Landscape Architecture, and Transportation Engineering
- Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association

MPC Website

Additions/Improvements:

- Design Guidelines for Broadway and Central Avenue Facade Improvements, Fairmont Park, Fort Sanders, Fourth and Gill, Lyons View, Market Square, Old North Knoxville, Tazewell Pike, and Village of Concord
- Online review and comment for Lonsdale Neighborhood Plan, James White Parkway Task Force, Knox County Tree Conservation and Planting Plan, Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Design Guidelines, Southwest County Sector Plan, and MPC Excellence Awards
- MPC Agenda now printable and searchable by keyword
- 2005 Excellence Awards
- MPC Commissioners Resource Page
- MPC Administrative Rules and Procedures
- MPC meeting minutes archived to June 2001
- South Knoxville Waterfront process updates
- Addressing and street naming ordinances and guidelines

TPO Website

Additions/Improvements:

- Live TDOT photos of traffic conditions on the interstate system
- Online review and comment for TPO Long-Range Transportation Plan 2005-2030 and the Transportation Improvement Plan 2006-2008
- Contact information and bylaws for the new Regional Transportation Planning Council

TTCDA Website

Additions/Improvements:

- Online agenda available

Cades Cove Planning Website

Additions/Improvements:

- Site redesigned for Phase II

MPC INTERNET QUICK REFERENCE

MPC

www.knoxmpc.org

TPO

www.knoxtrans.org

Smart Trips

<http://smartrips.knoxtrans.org>

Regional Clean Air Coalition

www.entrcac.org

Cades Cove Opportunities Plan

www.cadescopeplanning.com

MPC Library

The MPC Library is unusually well furnished with thousands of reports, journals, and books, including publications researched and produced by MPC staff. The library is open to the public, and users can search 8,000 publications, CD-ROMs, U.S. Census material, and some journals. Business people, journalists, students, and realtors use the facility on a regular basis. Recently published topics include:



A view from the Gettysvue development, looking south across Westland Drive

- Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Design Guidelines
- Development Activity Report
- Directory of Neighborhood Organizations
- Shopping Center Market Analysis
- Knoxville Area Facts and Figures
- Office Market Analysis
- One Year Plan for the City of Knoxville
- Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority Annual Report
- Partnership in Planning: Development Activity in Knox County-Residential Growth in Public School Zones 2000-2004
- Impacts of Land Development and Population Growth on West Knox County Schools
- Residential Development Activity in Knox County: Listings of the Fastest Growing School Zones
- Knoxville Regional Long Range Transportation Plan 2005-2030
- Bicycling Comfort Level for Knoxville Center City: Bike Map and Resources
- Status of the Senior Population in Knox County
- Tennessee's Metropolitan and Micropolitan Population

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF

The Executive Director manages the agency and is responsible for developing and administering a work program and budget. A seven-person management team reports to the executive director.

The Planning Commission is supported by a staff of some 40 people who work in one of four divisions: Development Services, Comprehensive Planning, Transportation, and Information Services. While each group has unique abilities and responsibilities, it's common for staff to work across division lines as a team to accomplish tasks.

Every workday dozens of citizens walk up to MPC's Development Services counter to obtain application forms or file permits, or to receive guidance on specific projects. This division processes and reviews requests for rezoning, subdivisions, and development plans, and prepares a recommendation on each case for consideration by the Planning Commission.

Comprehensive Planning focuses on long-range planning. Updating city and county sector plans and the general plan fall under this division's responsibilities, as well as special projects such as park inventories, downtown plans, corridor studies, and guidelines for neighborhood overlays.

The Transportation Division staffs the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization or TPO, a federally-required planning board that coordinates road improvements, bicycling plans, freight movement, and transit.

Information Services includes the addressing staff, the geographic information systems staff, a graphic design team, a public relations specialist, and a research team. This division manages MPC's library, website, computer network, and various community outreach activities, including publications and market studies.

MPC Staff

Allen Alderman	Planning Technician
Jeff Archer	Senior Planner
Gretchen Beal.....	Information Services Manager
Ann Bennett.....	Senior Planner
Bryan Berry.....	Research Associate
Tom Brechko, AICP	Principal Planner
Michael Brusseau, AICP.....	Planner II
Doug Burton, AICP	Principal Planner
Mike Carberry, AICP ..	Comprehensive Planning Manager
Michael Conger, PE.....	Senior Transportation Engineer
Renee Davis, AICP	Senior Planner
Emily Dills	Planning Technician
Mark Donaldson	Executive Director
Jill Draper	Communications Specialist
Fred Frank	Transportation Planner II
Terry Gilhula, Ph.D.	Senior Research Associate
Katie Habgood.....	Transportation Planner I
Donna Hill	GIS Operator
Ewing (Buz) Johnson, AICP ..	Deputy Executive Director
Johnetta Johnson	GIS Operator
Dan Kelly	Development Services Manager
Tim Kuhn	GIS Administrator
Betty Jo Mahan.....	Administrative Assistant II
Shirley Mase.....	GIS Specialist
Sherry Michienzi.....	Receptionist
Debbie Mitchell	Office Assistant I
Marc Payne	Planning Technician
Patricia Ann Phillips	GIS Operator
Sarah Powell	Webmaster/Senior Graphic Designer
Ken Pruitt, AICP.....	Assistant Manager Development Services
Dee Anne Reynolds.....	Finance Manager
John Roberts	GIS Operator
Kelley Segars, AICP	Senior Transportation Planner
Susan Taylor.....	Administrative Assistant II
Shannon Tolliver, AICP	Transportation Planner I
Anne Wallace	Community Planner I
Jo Ella Washburn	Graphic Designer
Jeff Welch, AICP	TPO Director
Charlotte West.....	Administrative Assistant I
Jill Wolverton	Smart Trips Employer Outreach Coordinator
Ellen Zavisca	Transportation Planner I
Alex Zendel.....	GIS Analyst

UNAUDITED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

FY Ending June 30, 2005

	FY 04/05	Actual
	Budget	Unaudited
Fees and Charges	\$434,168	\$469,690
Federal Government.....	1,014,121	666,690
State of Tennessee.....	213,279	204,778
City of Knoxville.....	692,650	692,650
City of Knoxville - contracts ¹	45,000	45,000
Knox County	724,738	724,738
Knox County - contracts ²	59,484	29,484
In-Kind Contributions ³	164,004	164,004
Withdrawal/(Addition) to Fund Balance ⁴	208,344	207,426
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES	\$3,555,788	\$3,204,460
Salaries and Employee Benefits.....	\$2,268,334	\$2,209,725
Contracted Services	790,154	547,510
Supplies and Materials	112,696	79,200
Other Charges	184,450	185,450
Capital Outlay	200,154	183,575
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$3,555,788	\$3,204,460

Notes:

1. Empowerment Zone: Partnership for Neighborhood Improvement
2. TTCDA Master Plan, School Assessment Program
3. Office space increased \$4/square from last year
4. Replaced large capacity and map copiers; purchased color copier

KNOXVILLE • KNOX COUNTY

M P C

**METROPOLITAN
P L A N N I N G
C O M M I S S I O N**

T E N N E S S E E

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