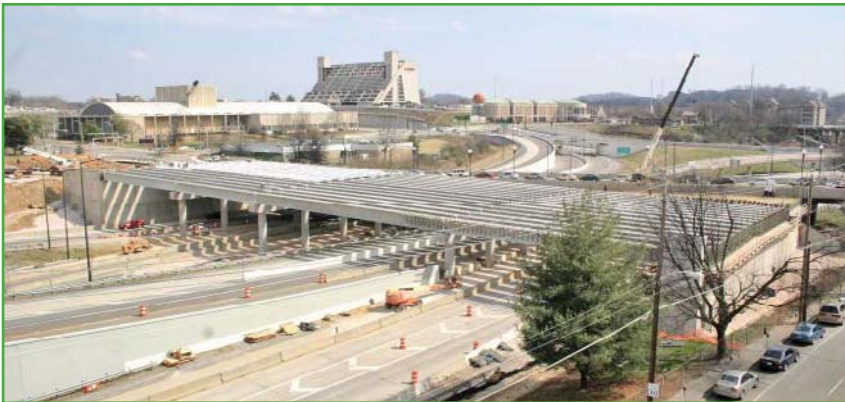


KNOXVILLE KNOX COUNTY • TENNESSEE  
**Metropolitan Planning Commission**



**ANNUAL REPORT  
FY 2008-2009**

## 2008-2009 PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

The 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 re-appointed. The commission meets on the second Thursday of the month.



**TREY BENEFIELD**  
Chair  
2002-2010



**ROBERT ANDERS**  
Vice Chair  
2005-2013



**URSULA BAILEY**  
2009-2012



**BART CAREY**  
2007-2011



**ART CLANCY III**  
2004-2012



**LAURA COLE**  
2008-2010



**RACHEL CRAIG**  
2009-2011



**GEORGE EWART**  
2008-2013



**RICHARD GRAF**  
2001-2009



**STAN JOHNSON**  
2004-2012



**MICHAEL KANE**  
2007-2011



**ROBERT LOBETTI**  
2004-2012



**REBECCA LONGMIRE**  
2006-2010



**JACK SHARP**  
2004-2011



**WES STOWERS, JR.**  
2008-2013

The Planning Commission is supported by a staff of more than 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.



**MARK DONALDSON**  
Executive Director

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.

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 two researchers. This division manages MPC's library, website, computer network and various community outreach activities, including publications and market studies.

## PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF

Liz Albertson .....	Community Planner II
Allen Alderman .....	Planning Technician
Jeff Archer, AICP .....	Senior Planner
Gretchen Beal .....	Information Services Manager
Nathan Benditz, EIT .....	Transportation Engineer
Ann Bennett .....	Senior Planner
Bryan Berry, AICP .....	Research Associate
Tom Brechko, AICP .....	Principal Planner
Amy Brooks .....	Transportation Planner II
Michael Brusseau, AICP .....	Senior Planner
Doug Burton, AICP .....	Principal Planner
Mike Carberry, AICP .....	Comprehensive Planning Manager
Michael Conger, PE .....	Senior Transportation Engineer
Emily Dills .....	Planning Technician
Terry Gilhula, Ph.D. ....	Information Services Assistant Manager - Research
Katie Habgood .....	Transportation Planner I
Donna Hill .....	GIS Operator
Ewing (Buz) Johnson, AICP .....	Deputy Executive Director
Ryan Justice .....	GIS Specialist
Dan Kelly .....	Development Services Manager
Tim Kuhn .....	Information Services Assistant Manager - GIS
Betty Jo Mahan .....	Administrative Assistant II
Shirley Mase .....	GIS Specialist
Sherry Michienzi .....	Receptionist
Debbie Mitchell .....	Administrative Assistant I
Marc Payne .....	Planning Technician
Pat Phillips .....	GIS Operator
Sarah Powell .....	Webmaster/Senior Graphic Designer
Ken Pruitt, AICP .....	Development Services Assistant Manager
Dee Anne Reynolds .....	Finance Manager
Mike Reynolds .....	Community Planner II
John Roberts .....	GIS Operator
Kelley Schlitz .....	Planner I
Kelley Segars, AICP .....	Senior Transportation Planner
Laura Stout .....	Communications Specialist
Susan Taylor .....	Administrative Assistant II
Jo Ella Washburn .....	Graphic Designer
Jeff Welch, AICP .....	Knoxville Area Transportation Planning Organization Director
Charlotte West .....	Administrative Assistant II
Elizabeth Wright .....	Smart Trips Employer Outreach Coordinator
Ellen Zavisca .....	Transportation Planner II
Alex Zendel .....	GIS Analyst



# EXCELLENCE AWARDS



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY  
*Park City Infill Housing*



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY  
*Bearden Village Greenway*

NEIGHBORHOOD/CIVIC ACHIEVEMENT  
*City of Knoxville Façade Improvement Program*



COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE  
*Cherokee Plaza*



COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE  
*PIPS Technology*

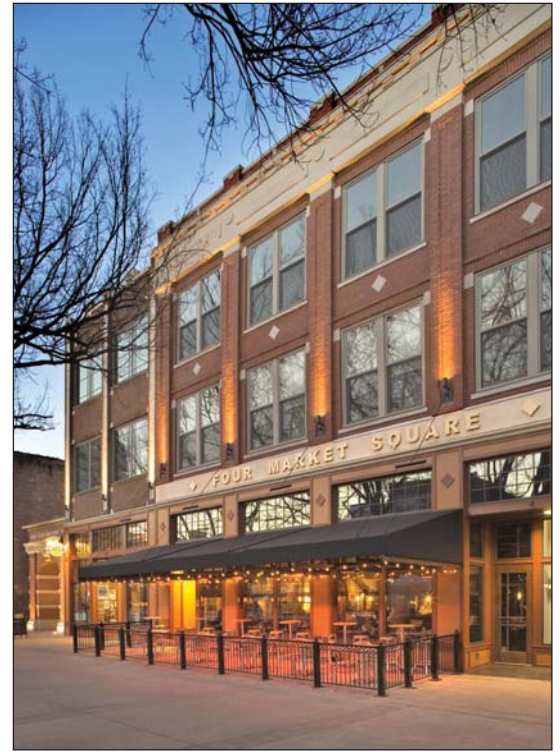




# EXCELLENCE AWARDS



SPECIAL USE  
*East Tennessee Veterans Memorial*



HISTORIC RESTORATION  
*4 Market Square*



RENOVATION  
*The Crown & Goose*



RESIDENTIAL  
*Gratz Street Infill Houses*





## 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 or nearly completed include the \$9.2 million Pinnacle III at Turkey Creek, a \$6.4 million JC Penney and Tennessee State Bank, all on Parkside Drive. The medical sector saw the additions of East County Healthcare and Knoxville Orthopedic Clinic on Old Weisgarber Road. Lake Plaza Condos added 69 residential units in the Center City sector while Greystone Summit Apartments added 218 units in the Northwest County sector. Other notable projects include the Country Inn and Suites on Cross Park Drive, Holiday Inn Express on Campbell Station Road, Knoxville Area Transit Facility and the student center at First Baptist Church Concord.

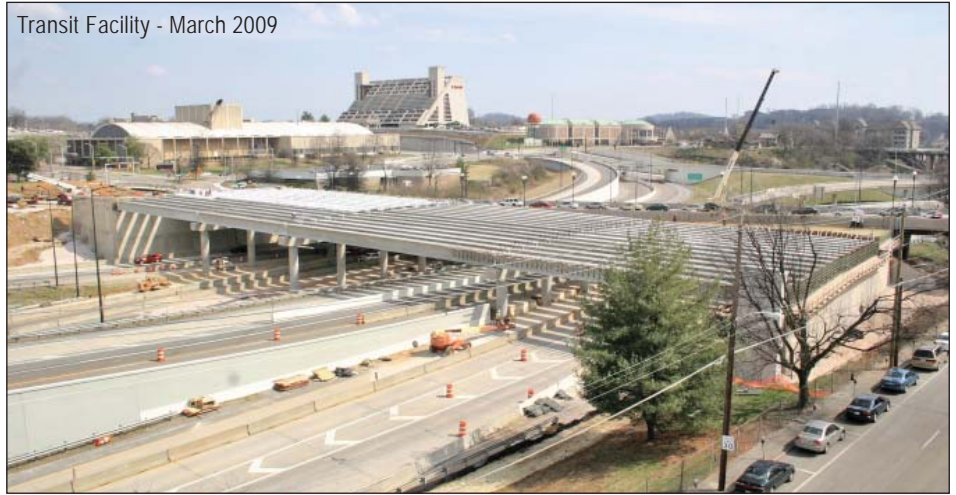
### Building Permits

More than 2,300 building permits were approved in 2008, down 46 percent from 2007. The total investment in residential construction declined 41 percent to \$247 million although per unit investment increased. The total value of non-residential construction for 2008 was 42 percent lower than last year. The North, Northwest and Southwest County sectors combined for almost 69 percent of all building activity in 2008.

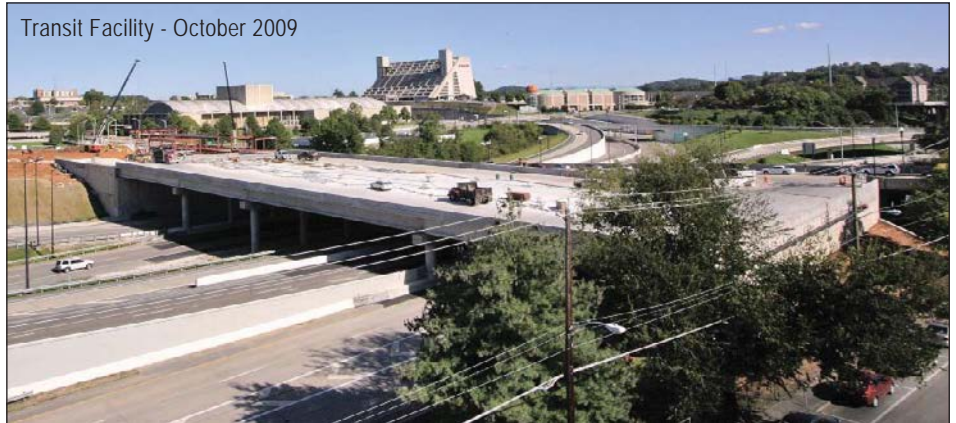
### Subdivisions

The number of subdivisions approved in 2008 was 228, up slightly from last year. However, acreage for all subdivisions declined 23 percent to 1,912 acres. Residential subdivisions dropped 12 percent from 2007 with 150 approvals this year. The Northwest County sector registered the most subdivision activity

Transit Facility - March 2009



Transit Facility - October 2009



with 42 subdivisions affecting 661.5 acres including the highest number of non-residential subdivisions.

### Rezoning

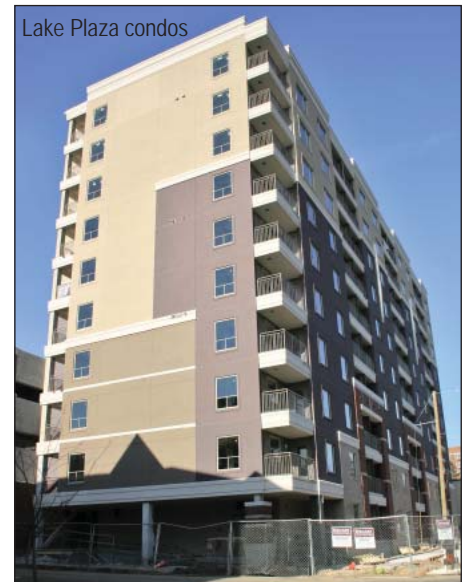
The number of rezonings, excluding annexations, dropped 45 percent to 96 this year, with the total land affected decreasing 50 percent to 1,070 acres in 2008. County sectors outpaced city sectors in rezoned property with 75 percent of affected residential acreage and 78 percent of non-residential acreage. The East County sector accounted for the largest amount of

land rezoned for residential use, with 253 acres in one approval, while the Northwest County sector saw the largest amount of non-residential rezoning activity with 103 acres. Fewer rezonings due to annexation were requested this year with total affected acreage down 57 percent to 109 acres.

JC Penney at Turkey Creek



Lake Plaza condos





## 2008 OFFICE MARKET ANALYSIS

Performance indicators in Knoxville and Knox County's office property market were mixed for 2008. While rentable supply was down this year, demand remained positive resulting in modest improvements in local vacancy rates. Knoxville fared well in 2008 when compared to national and regional performance numbers, which indicate a struggling office market segment overall.

Slowed construction and continued absorption helped the office vacancy rate drop to 10.5 percent this year, down from 12.6 percent in 2007. Knoxville's downtown and suburban markets vacancy rates improved to 11.9 and 9.7 percent, respectively, marking the lowest vacancies in four years.

The supply of Knoxville's office market began to show signs of slowdown from the economic turmoil that has impacted markets across the country. Although rentable supply grew 1.4 percent in 2008, this rate was well below this decade's annual average of 4.5 percent.

Downtown currently has the most office space of Knox County's six office sub-markets accounting for 26 percent of all rentable square footage. However, Downtown continues to experience the loss of rentable office space to residential conversion. The Pellissippi sub-market remains the fastest growing area increasing 4.3 percent with nine new office buildings in 2008. The highest vacancy rate was in the

West City sub-market, which reported 13.2 percent availability.



## 2008 SHOPPING CENTER MARKET ANALYSIS

Knoxville's shopping center market saw varied market indicators between 2006 and 2008 with a 4.8 percent increase in gross leasable space while vacancies reached 9.2 percent areawide. Since 2006, the local market added 744,406 square feet of gross leasable area, an increase of 4.8 percent. However, during this period, vacancies climbed from 6.5 percent in 2006 to 9.2 percent in 2008.

Performance among Knoxville's sub-markets varied widely. Farragut/Pellissippi was the fastest growing sub-market, up 13 percent in leasable retail space since 2006, while no new retail space was added in the East sub-market. The Farragut/Pellissippi sub-market has continued to garner most of the new retail since 2006.

Vacancies ranged from a high of 12.3 percent in the Chapman/Alcoa area to 1.9 percent in the East. The closing of many national department stores including Goody's, Linen's and Things, Steve and Barry's and Circuit City had a direct affect on vacancies in the Knoxville market.

Construction continued on several projects that were already in development, however, with local vacancies on the rise, many new projects have been postponed until economic conditions improve.



## MULTI-DWELLING HOUSING TRENDS



The Enclave at Hardin Valley

Apartments and other multi-dwellings represent nearly a quarter of the housing stock in Knox County. Of the 195,701 dwelling units found in Knox County in 2007, 46,570 units were apartments. Within the city, 40 percent of all residential units are multi-dwelling while only 10 percent of residential units in the remainder of Knox County are apartments.

Between 2000 and 2007 the multi-dwelling inventory gained 4,760 units for an 11 percent increase. Even with construction on the rise, the local multi-dwelling share of total housing stock decreased slightly from 26 percent in 1980 to 24 percent in 2007.

The Central City and Northwest County sectors added 1,575 and 1,000 new multi-dwellings respectively, the most of any sectors between 2000 and 2007. Alternately, the

The Multi-Dwelling Housing Trends technical report gauges local market conditions by comparing multi-dwellings with other housing options. While turmoil in the financial markets caused sharp declines in the housing industry in 2008, high occupancy rates and strong rent rates indicate a stable apartment property market in Knox County.

Northeast County and West City sectors netted only 13 units combined, the lowest among any planning sectors.

Average apartment rents in Knox County increased 35 percent between 2000 and 2007 from \$490 to \$662 per month. The all-units average reached \$1,046 per month in 2007. Occupancy rates rose slightly in the all units category in Knox County from 91.5 percent occupied in 2000 to 94.4 percent in 2007. During 2006 and 2007, all categories showed occupancy rates above 90 percent for the first time this decade.

The first 10 months of 2008 saw the addition of 625 multi-dwellings in Knox County. However, the current economic uncertainty will most likely contribute to a slowdown in construction activity this year.

## EMPLOYMENT IN KNOX COUNTY

MPC's technical report, "Employment in Knox County," portrays the strengths and weaknesses of Knox County's employment base by analyzing its past and present conditions while comparing it to national and state levels.

Knox County's expanding labor force and low unemployment rates signaled a healthy labor market this decade, consistently outperforming state and national trends. In 2007, Knox County's civilian labor force consisted of 225,940 workers, an increase of 11.6 percent since 2000. Unemployment rates in Knox County averaged 3.7 percent from 2000 to 2007.

Manufacturing employment saw the greatest declines among all economic sectors, both nationally and locally as many manufacturing jobs moved overseas. Meanwhile, the service sector recorded the highest gains marking a shift from a production based economy to one tied heavily to service industries.

In 2007, 40 percent of the Knox County's labor force was employed in retail trade, health care/social assistance, and accommodation/food services. The retail trade accounted for the greatest share with 14.7 percent of the total labor force. Wal-Mart is Knox County's largest retail employer while Kroger and Food City round out the top three employers. Health care/social assistance holds 14.4 percent of the areawide labor force while the accommodation/food services industry has a 10.5 percent share. Notably under-represented in Knox County were agriculture/forestry, mining, manufacturing, management of companies, and educational services, each with participation rates below U.S. averages.

### KNOX COUNTY'S THREE MAJOR EMPLOYMENT SECTORS, 2007

Company	Employees	Description
<b>RETAIL TRADE</b>		
Wal-Mart	4,575	Discount stores/wholesale clubs
Kroger	3,282	Grocery stores/pharmacies
Food City	2,833	Grocery stores/pharmacies
Goody's Family Clothing	910	Family clothing stores
Home Depot	888	Building supplies
Sears/Kmart	803	Department stores
Lowe's Home Improvement	814	Building supplies
Target	811	Discount stores
CVS	505	Drug stores/pharmaceutical distribution
Pilot Travel Centers	450	Service stations/convenience centers
<b>HEALTH CARE/SOCIAL ASSISTANCE</b>		
Covenant Health	5,269	Local health care system
Mercy Health Partners	4,000	Local health care system
University of Tennessee Medical Center	3,500	Local health care system
East Tennessee Children's Hospital	1,375	Regional specialty health care
Rural/Metro Corporation of Tennessee	645	Emergency ambulance/firefighting
Hillcrest Healthcare	625	Health care services for aging
Lakeshore Mental Health Institute	500	Local mental health hospital
Summit Medical Group	348	Local health care providers
<b>ACCOMMODATION/FOOD SERVICES</b>		
McDonald's	1,909	Fast food restaurants
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store	1,459	Restaurants/general stores
Shoney's	1,389	Full-service restaurants
Ruby Tuesday	1,051	Full-service restaurants
Wendy's	834	Fast food restaurants
Copper Cellar	655	Full-service restaurants
Burger King	602	Fast food restaurants
Taco Bell	543	Fast food restaurants
Krystal	536	Fast food restaurants

Note: Corporate employees were not included for Pilot Travel Centers, Goody's Family Clothing, and Ruby Tuesday.  
Source: InfoUSA, 2007.



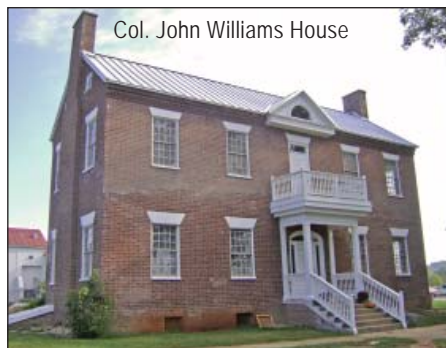
## PRESERVATION IN 2008

Rehabilitation activity remained steady in downtown Knoxville in 2008.

Preservation considerations were involved in the rehabilitation of buildings on Market Square and Gay Street as well as in the Old City. Many are anticipating the 2009 re-opening of the S&W Cafeteria, a preservation victory made possible by the city and Knox Heritage. The updated Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines have adopted historic preservation standards to guide the exterior rehabilitation of downtown buildings that are eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but may not be zoned as part of an H-1 Historic Overlay.



The neighborhoods along Sherrod Road and Millers Avenue, which were known as Gobbler's Knob before the Civil War, are the most recent additions to the list of Neighborhood Conservation Overlays. In conjunction with the overlay, design guidelines were developed for this section of South Knoxville, which combines a unique typography, mature trees and distinctive architecture.



One of the most significant preservation projects of 2008 was the Col. John Williams House. Listed on the National Register, the Williams House had been vacant and abandoned after decades of ownership by the state of Tennessee. Alex Brandau, a descendant of Williams, purchased the property and completed the house's rehabilitation last year.

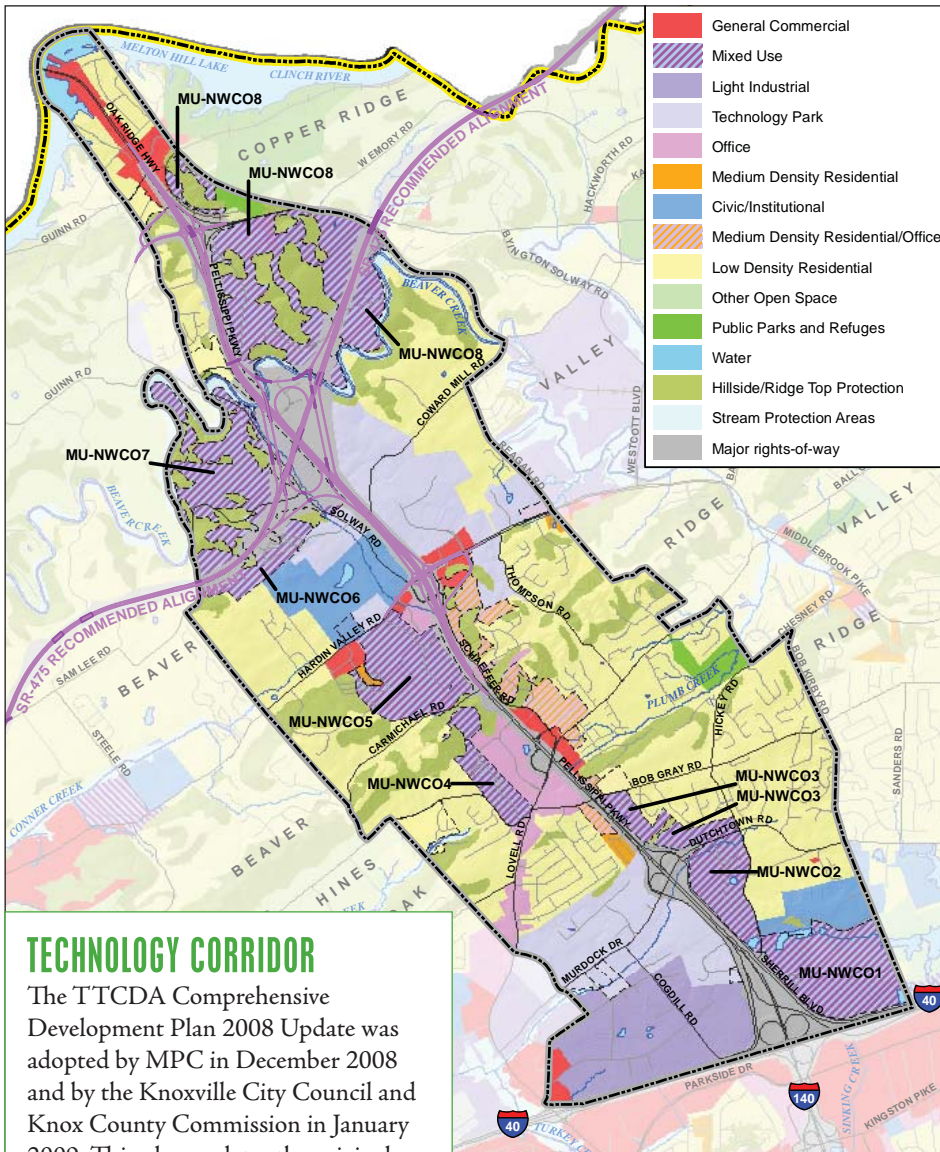


The Baker-Walker-Sherrill House, located at 9320 Kingston Pike, received the protection of an H-1 designation in 2008. Although still vacant, the significant house is a likely candidate for an adaptive reuse in keeping with the commercial zoning that will front the remainder of the site. Last year also saw extensive improvements to the Lones-Dowell House, 3641 Middlebrook Pike, which received an exterior and interior rehabilitation while it awaits a new use. Several other properties received a National Register listing in 2008 including the North Hills Historic District and Church Street United Methodist Church.



In 2008, the Knoxville Historic Zoning Commission processed 131 applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, showing a continued increase in rehabilitation in designated historic buildings. A measure of their strength, most of the local historic residential districts have no available vacant lots for new development. The exception is Mechanicsville, where there is continued interest in acquiring the few remaining vacant lots and constructing new homes.





## INFILL HOUSING OVERLAY DISTRICT

The Infill Housing Overlay District celebrated its second anniversary in January 2009. During its first two years, the Infill Housing Review Board issued Certificates of Appropriateness for 45 new houses. This zoning overlay ensures that new, infill houses are built to be consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and has been influential in the Lonsdale, Oakwood/Lincoln Park and Edgewood Park neighborhoods.



Infill Housing in the Lonsdale Neighborhood



## TECHNOLOGY CORRIDOR

The TTCDA Comprehensive Development Plan 2008 Update was adopted by MPC in December 2008 and by the Knoxville City Council and Knoxville County Commission in January 2009. This plan updates the original development plan adopted for the corridor in 1984. It takes into account the current conditions and challenges of the area and provides several suggestions to foster the high quality development that has transpired in the Technology Corridor. This year, staff have been working to overhaul the TTCDA Design Guidelines, one of the implementation steps recommended by the updated plan.

## DOWNTOWN KNOXVILLE DESIGN GUIDELINES

At the TAPA annual conference in September 2008, MPC was honored with the *Outstanding Planning Award for Implementation* for the Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines.

## TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

In October 2008, the Knoxville County Commission created a task force to study and evaluate the creation of a Transfer of Development Rights Program in the county. A TDR program could offer Knoxville County a way to conserve valuable community assets such as: farms, including networks of contiguous agricultural land in designated rural areas; ridges, especially those marked by steep slopes and narrow ridge lines; selected watersheds; and historic and archeological resources, particularly farm houses and outbuildings where their setting and context are significant to the surrounding landscape.

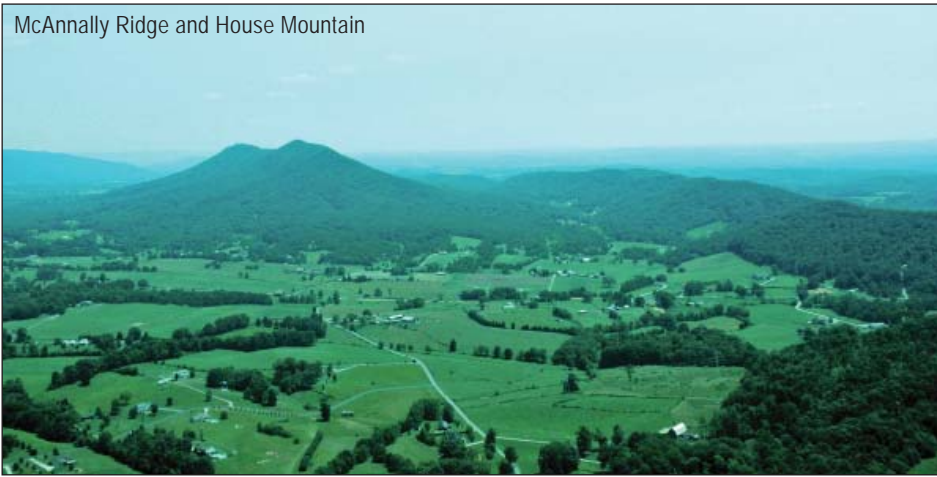
Development rights refer to the amount of development or density that could take place on a tract of land under zoning provisions. The density of areas identified as a preservation priority, or "sending areas," could be sold to "receiving areas," or areas that have the potential to support more development than what is currently allowed. A third party would store and administer the sale of development rights to real estate developers, speculators or local governments.

This program could act as a tool to help reduce sprawl by directing growth away from areas that the community wants protected while allowing higher intensity development in areas that citizens agree could more easily accommodate growth. This plan also could foster more intensive development in areas that have the necessary infrastructure, such as roads and sewer systems, that higher density requires.

After studying the issue, the task force voted not to pursue a TDR program in Knoxville County at this time.



McAnnally Ridge and House Mountain



## JOINT CITY/COUNTY TASK FORCE ON RIDGE, SLOPE & HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT

During the past year, the Joint City/County Task Force on Ridge, Slope and Hillside Development has continued in their mission to develop policies that balance conservation and development on hillsides and ridges in Knoxville and Knox County.

The task force was established with several goals and considerations. Public safety concerns, resource protection and the preservation of natural beauty were taken into account, while balancing private property rights with the community benefits of these areas.

Earlier this year, members of the task force's public relations committee made presentations to the city council and county commission to introduce the concepts of their recommendations. Their recommendations, including the policy proposals, were then brought to the citizenry through a series of nine public meetings held in communities throughout the county.

The initial proposals involve changes to the subdivision regulations, zoning and engineering codes for the hillside and ridgetop areas. These include reduced road pavement widths, reduced building setbacks, the promotion of fire safety programs, guidelines for reforestation management practices and the creation of a conservation subdivision ordinance.

Five additional policies also are included in the recommendations, which will be presented in the form of a plan. The first proposal reduces the residential density on ridges and hillsides. Rural areas would be reduced to one dwelling unit per acre on 15-20 percent slopes with less on slopes above 25 percent. Suburban areas would allow two dwelling units per acre on 15-20 percent slopes. The second proposal would limit the intensity of use, prohibiting industrial and large-scale commercial development, limiting the size of buildings and limiting building heights to 35 feet, and requiring large complexes to be placed at the base of a ridge. Thirdly, hillside disturbance would be reduced by prohibiting clearing and grading without an approved development plan and allowing less clearing and grading depending on the percentage of slope. This aspect of the policy would also create borrow pit standards by limiting their extent and identifying alternative sites. The recommendations also call for the adoption of reforestation standards and slope restoration standards. The final proposal calls for the creation of public green space and greenways to conserve key hillside and ridgetop areas as a connected public green space system. This would identify areas for donation or a purchase program for the greenway and park systems. Density bonuses would be established for site plans that include conservation areas or public green spaces.

The task force, in its work to study protection measures, has been funded in part by grants from the Tennessee Division of Forestry and the USDA Forest Service.

Northwest of Watt Road and I-40



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Upon the initiative of MPC chairman Trey Benefield, a Sustainable Development Working Group was assembled to explore the development of a program to encourage sustainable development in Knoxville and Knox County. This team included MPC commissioners, developers, city council members, county commissioners and neighborhood representatives.

Sustainable development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet our needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for our future generations. It is one of the key principles of the city and county's comprehensive plan, The Knoxville – Knox County General Plan 2033.

This working group has created a program to help encourage development that minimizes vehicle miles traveled related to commuting, promotes the preservation of areas along streams and rivers and results in residential infill and redevelopment.

Through this program, developers who utilize practices that meet these sustainable development goals may qualify for development incentives, which could include density bonuses, height bonuses, parking reductions and an expedited process.

A draft of the proposed sustainable development incentives programs for both the city and county are available on the MPC website.

## MAGNOLIA AVENUE CORRIDOR PLAN

The Magnolia Avenue Corridor is the last major portion of land and transportation systems that could be revitalized within the neighborhoods known as the “Heart of Knoxville.”

Adopted at the July 2009 MPC meeting, the Magnolia Avenue Corridor plan was guided by a vision developed through several workshops hosted by the Magnolia Area Merchants’ Association. This vision creates a picture of what the corridor should look like in 2020 - “a vibrant corridor with a mix of strong businesses, a variety of good housing and well designed parks and civic spaces.”

This plan is designed to create opportunities to enhance development along the corridor, including the north end of downtown, the Hall of Fame – Caswell Park area, Burlington, and the areas in between. It focuses on the physical environment and outlines opportunities for mixed-use development, restoration of historic resources, street improvements, and improvements to public, open spaces.

Four districts are proposed in the plan each with specific land use proposals, which contain the framework to create more pedestrian friendly, mixed use districts. The plan also contains a Complete Street Design with recommendations for sidewalks, bike lanes, transit opportunities, and landscaping to encourage pedestrian traffic along the corridor.

To implement the plan, the development of form codes is suggested along with street improvements and changes to parking requirements in the zoning code. Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places and historic district overlays could help preserve the areas historic resources. Use of the city’s Façade Improvement Program, Empowerment Zone program and a Redevelopment Area designation could help expand investment opportunities in the area and eliminate blight. Keys to implementation include the adoption of a R-1HK (Heart of Knoxville) residential zoning, which is more appropriate to the area’s typical 50-foot wide lots; the reconstitution of the merchant’s association to form a Magnolia Avenue Business Association; and the creation of a Magnolia Avenue task force to address the socio-economic issues that face the corridor.

The adoption of the Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan amends the East City Sector Plan and the Central City Sector Plan.



### Cherry Street Square

Cherry Street is a connector to I-40 and a gateway to Magnolia Avenue. When it was widened to support additional travel demands, it was envisioned that Cherry Street would be extended southward and the right-of-way was purchased for this connector. That project is no longer being considered. The wide right-of-way currently has underutilized travel and turn lanes, which could be reclaimed as public open space. As envisioned in the AIA drawings, this area could be converted to a public square with buildings facing the square. A monument or similar feature should be a centerpiece of this square.



The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization 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. In addition, TPO works with a larger seven-county area on various projects designed to improve air quality.

The Knoxville region was allocated \$12,678,421 in funds for transportation related projects from the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009, which the President signed into law in February.

The TPO worked to prepare a list of potential projects with the assistance of local governments in anticipation of these funds. A total of \$50 million worth of projects were requested by local jurisdictions. The requested projects were then evaluated by TPO staff for eligibility. To be eligible for stimulus funds, a project must be eligible for federal funding and must be contracted by November 2009.

The TPO Executive Board quickly approved two projects, which constituted more than \$5 million of the economic stimulus funds. The remaining \$7.2 million were allocated at a special Executive Board meeting in March, where they approved the list of projects as recommended by the TPO Technical Committee.

The 2009-2034 Knoxville Regional Mobility Plan was adopted by the TPO Executive Board at their May 27 meeting and was approved by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency.

In March, TPO hosted another series of public meetings to present their vision for the region as exemplified in the Mobility Plan. TPO staff reviewed the plan’s project list, which includes highway and non-highway projects, and engaged attendees in a discussion about transportation’s impact on climate change and public health issues.

The 2009 Regional Mobility Plan was developed during a volatile time in the region. Gas prices and fuel consumption, which is how a large percentage of transportation projects are funded, have risen and fallen drastically. This issue has further contributed to an increased interest and demand for



public transit services. Additionally, development pressures are forcing the region to assess its ability to accommodate future growth in a sustainable manner.

An unknown future also presents challenges for transportation planning. New technologies, new behavioral habits, changing population trends, and unknown funding are uncertainties that could dramatically alter priorities in the region before the end of this plan's life. A shared vision and a willingness to adapt can help everyone during these changing times arrive at a brighter future.



Volunteer Assisted Transportation hybrid sedan

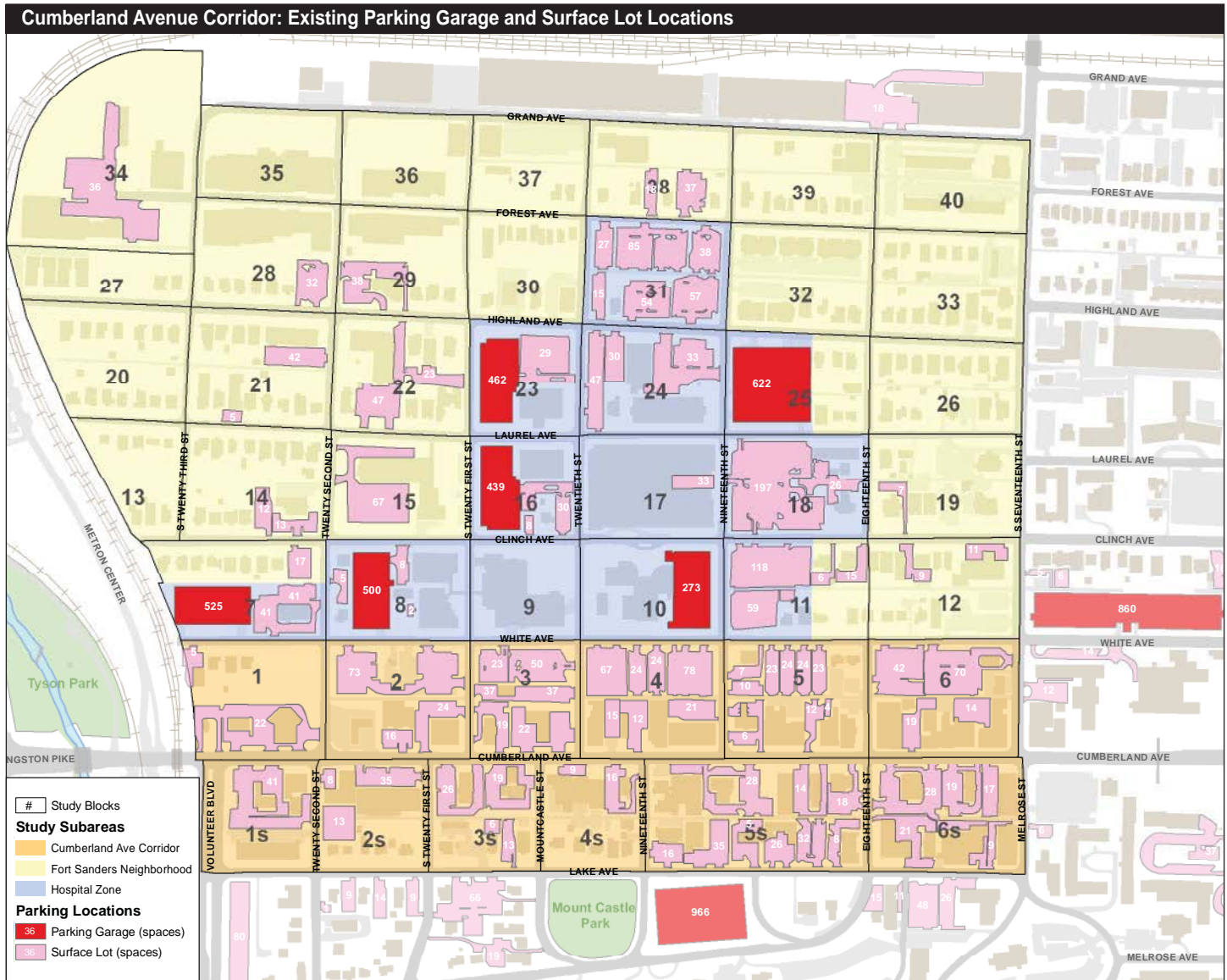
## VOLUNTEER ASSISTED TRANSPORTATION

TPO, the official recipient of New Freedom funding for the Knoxville area, awarded the Knoxville Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) Office on Aging \$250,000 in Federal Transit Administration New Freedom funding for the start-up of their Volunteer Assisted Transportation Program. The grant provided funding for five hybrid sedans and one minivan as well as operating funds for the program. TDOT and CAC provided matching funds. The program uses trained volunteer drivers to provide door-THROUGH-door transportation, where a volunteer driver stays with the passenger and assists them throughout the entirety of the trip.

## CUMBERLAND AVENUE CORRIDOR PROJECT PARKING STUDY

Cumberland Avenue Corridor Project Parking Study was developed to help the city plan for ways to alleviate current and future parking issues in the Cumberland Avenue District including specific recommendations that can be implemented in phases over a 10-year time frame.

Although the district has approximately 6,700 parking spaces, several factors hinder the public's perception and use of these existing facilities. In keeping with the adopted Cumberland Avenue Corridor Plan, the parking plan creates a pedestrian-friendly environment by implementing walking and cycling improvements to promote a park-once environment. Shared parking also is suggested to better utilize the existing parking areas for public and private use. A Parking Benefit District could offer another option for funding this plan.





## COMPLETE STREETS STUDY

A Complete Street is safe, comfortable and convenient for travel via automobile, foot, bicycle and transit. Unfortunately, today, streets are often inadequate with no room for bikes or pedestrians, no sidewalks and lanes that are too narrow to share with bikes and too dangerous to cross on foot.

Since the majority of the region's arterial road infrastructure has already been completed, TPO is focusing on the transformation of existing roads into complete streets instead of the construction of new ones. The TPO's Complete Streets Study examined two auto-oriented corridors in the region to come up with recommendations for how to make them Complete Streets. The two corridors studied are:

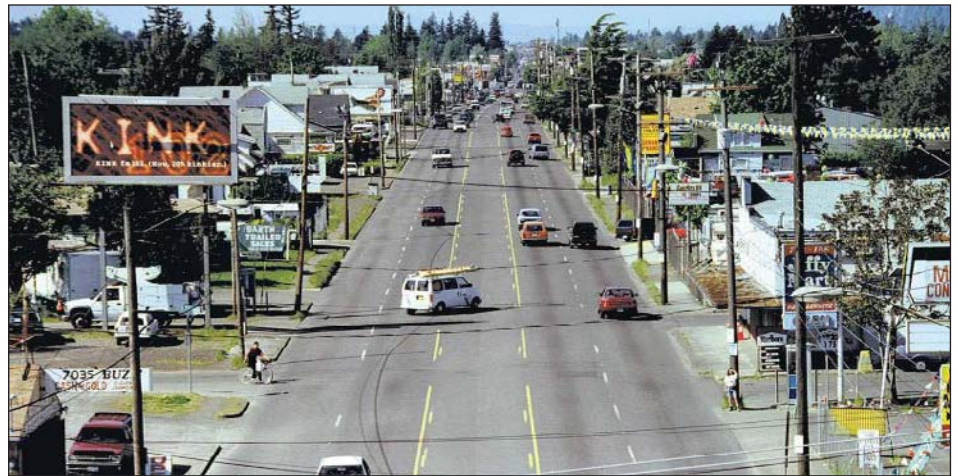
- North Broadway/U.S. 441/State Road 33 from Old Broadway to Colonial Circle in the Fountain City neighborhood of Knoxville
- Washington Street/South Hall Road/State Road 35 from Lamar Alexander Parkway to Lincoln Road in Maryville and Alcoa

Study Teams were created for each corridor to help guide the study. These teams consist of city officials, neighborhood associations, civic groups, community business groups and other interested parties. TPO with the help of consultants from Gresham, Smith & Partners then held two intensive week-long "studios" – one for each corridor. Each studio began and ended with a public workshop.

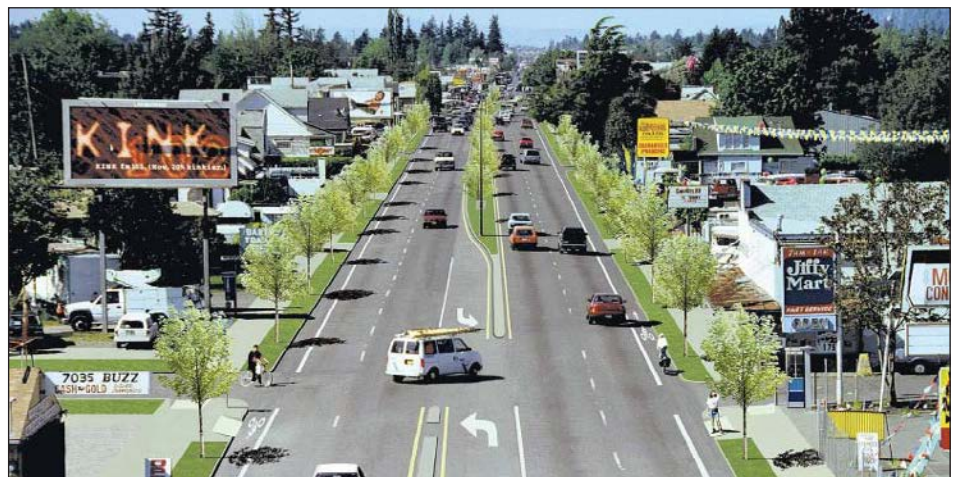
The study also produced a guide to retrofitting other corridors into Complete Streets. The guidelines focus on design treatments and concepts most typically encountered in suburban corridor transformations including sidewalks, crossing treatments, bicycle facilities, medians, on-street parking, lighting, landscaping and access management.

Before the plan was published, the consultants engaged neighborhood groups in a discussion on the proposed guidelines for creating complete streets during a public meeting in May before presenting them to the TPO Executive Board.

The reports for both corridors along with the final Complete Streets Study is available on the TPO website.



A 'Before' and 'After' example of a Complete Street transformation



## DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING

The city has begun a Downtown Knoxville Wayfinding Project to make it easy for visitors to navigate around downtown Knoxville as well as highlighting its attractions and offerings in an appealing and informative manner. The goal of the city's project is to create a well-designed and consistent signage system that includes pedestrian-scale signs, maps, trailblazer signs, KAT trolley signs as well as signs directing automobiles to and from parking garages and major traffic arteries.

MPC's recently developed Downtown Knoxville Design Guidelines emphasized the enhancement of the pedestrian environment in downtown Knoxville. The guidelines called for a "comprehensive wayfinding system for pedestrians" to further the safety, orientation and beautification of downtown.

In early 2009, the city selected a contractor to lead the public process for input, create a design, establish sign locations and create a manual for maintenance of the signs and systems. They will work with the steering committee, which consists of representatives from the City of Knoxville, the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the Knoxville Tourism & Sports Board, the Central Business Improvement District, the East Tennessee Community Design Center and Knoxville Area Transit.



Replacing the 'visual clutter' with a well-designed and consistent system of signs is the project goal.



## SMART TRIPS

Interest in the Smart Trips program continues to grow as more commuters, faced with increased fuel costs, look for alternative methods of transportation such as carpooling, mass transit, biking, walking and telecommuting. Smart Trips now has 58 enrolled employers with many more showing interest in the program.

### Smart Trips Month

Smart Trips Month in May challenged commuters to make the road less traveled. Participants enjoyed a variety of events designed to promote transit, carpooling, bicycling, walking and other alternatives to driving alone.

Many new programs were added along with past favorites, such as last year's popular "Undriver's License" and "How many can you fit in a Fit?". Smart Trips Month kicked off with PARKing SPACES DAY, inviting businesses in a designated area to rent a metered parking space and turn it into a public park space. Other activities included the Historic Fountain City Walk co-sponsored by Fountain City Connections, a Hidden Knoxville Walk led by Jack Neely through several interesting spots within walking distance of downtown, and Bike to Work Day.



Jack Neely's *Hidden Knoxville Walk* made a stop at the 501 Arthur Street restaurant in the Mechanicsville neighborhood.

### Commuter Challenge

The 18-month Commuter Challenge that began in May 2008 in conjunction with TDOT's SmartFIX40 project. During that time, more than 1,100 new members joined Smart Trips. Their efforts reduced almost 1.7 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions in the past year and saved more than \$200,000 in fuel and maintenance costs. Commuters who logged 75 trips using alternative transportation during the challenge were eligible for the prizes including a Nintendo Wii, iPod Touch, iPod Shuffle and the grand prize, a \$1,500 AAA Travel Package.

## TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Knoxville Area Transit (KAT) is completing work on a Transit Development Plan (TDP) designed to improve the efficiency of bus routes. TPO has been administering the TDP, which will guide KAT as they closely examine all routes to identify those that are in need of updating and help them identify opportunities for streamlining the system. The proposed changes will be presented to the KAT board in early 2010 and all changes will be timed with the opening of the new LEED-certified transit center in downtown, which is scheduled to open in August 2010.



Clockwise from top: Home Federal Bank, TVA and KUB employees participate in *How many can you fit in a Fit?*. Home Federal won with 21 people.

An awards ceremony was held in June to present commuter awards for the Longest Bicycle Commute, Most People in a Carpool, Most Diverse Commute, Sightseeing Award and Go Getter Award. The Business Challenge awarded prizes to the Small Business with the highest number of Smart Trips participants and the Large Business Challenge for most new registrants. Also, two videos were screened as part of the Wheel to Reel Contest, which challenged participants to create a short film about their commute.

## BICYCLE PROGRAM

### Neighborhood Bike Ride

The 8th Annual Neighborhood Bike Ride explored the historic Downtown North area including the neighborhoods of Fourth and Gill, Edgewood Park, Fairmont & Emoriland, and Oakwood/Lincoln Park as well as the Central Street Redevelopment Area. Around 250 people enjoyed the 10-mile ride and lots of free pizza afterwards.

### Tour de Lights

During the 2008 Tour de Lights, more than 120 bicyclists experienced the holiday lights of downtown and the Island Home neighborhood while singing carols and yelling holiday greetings. The ride seemed to become a cheery parade as downtown spectators enjoyed the decorated bikes and bicyclists that lit up the evening.

Participants got to enjoy treats from Rita's before the ride, along with bike safety checks by Harper's and Fountain City Pedaler. After the ride, Mast General provided hot cocoa and cookies. Prizes were awarded for best decorated person, bicycle and helmet.



### Bike Plan

The 2009 Bicycle Plan Update, a revision of the 2002 Bicycle Plan, was officially adopted by the TPO Executive Board in May as part of the Long Range Mobility Plan process. The new plan was written to be more user friendly and includes many specific suggestions, which the Bicycle Advisory Committee has already begun working to implement.



MPC's GIS staff and KGIS have successfully collaborated on the launch of an online mapping application. This tool provides free of charge, web-based access to boundaries details on about 17,000 MPC cases dating back to the early 1980s through a mapping interface.

A large quantity of MPC case history is being exposed as part of this application. The historical aspect of the applications provides the ability for an in depth understanding of an area's recent development history. For more recent cases, especially for those occurring since 2006, a summary document, site plans and the staff report are available for viewing in a PDF format. For cases on the current MPC agenda, a link to the current month's agenda item including staff report, maps and other associated documents will be posted about two weeks before each MPC meeting

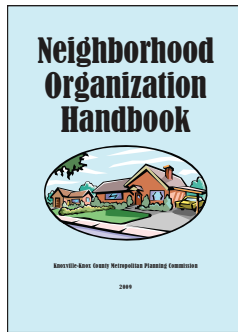
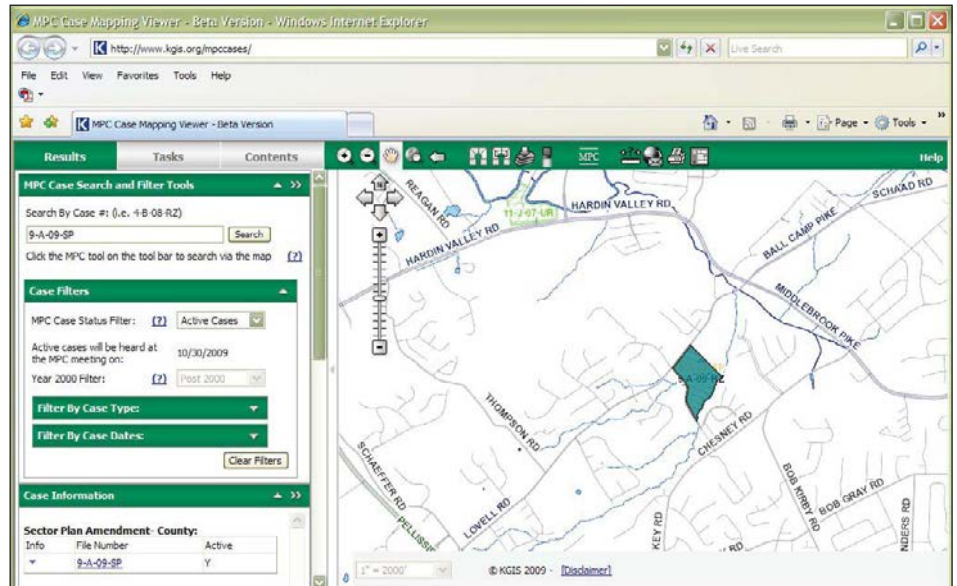
The integration of advanced searches into the application allows users to locate specific types of cases very easily. This functionality includes the ability to filter cases by case status, case type, or case date. GIS data of specific interest to those interested in planning are available through the website. In addition to parcel, addresses and planimetry, MPC Sector Plans, Zoning, the City's One Year Plan, existing land use and aerial photography can be viewed.

MPC was asked by the Knox County Commission to provide technical assistance to the Redistricting Committee, which was assigned with the task of redrawing County Commission district lines in accordance with a Charter Amendment approved by voters in November 2008. MPC staff provided GIS support along with population data and other technical services to aid the Committee in its efforts.

## CENSUS BUREAU

The Information Services department of MPC worked with the census bureau to redraw the Census Tract Boundaries for the upcoming census.

Tracts that have seen growth were split so as not to include more than 8,000 people. Tracts with less than 1,200 were merged to include more people. Knox County

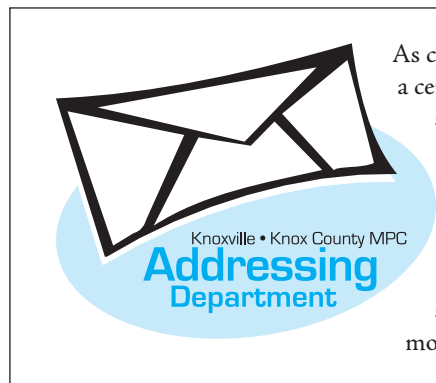


## PUBLIC OUTREACH

This year, Information Services staff published a *Neighborhood Organization Handbook* that is available online and in the MPC Library. This free publication is intended to assist in the creation and development of neighborhood organizations.

MPC also has begun several new projects to enhance our communications efforts with the public. The MPC website now features an extended calendar that lists public meetings scheduled by MPC several months in advance. This is in addition to the existing rollover calendar feature on the website front page and a printable pdf calendar for the current month.

With the current popularity of social media, MPC is now on Facebook™. The MPC Facebook™ page provides fans with updates regarding agenda activity, upcoming meetings and the MPC Update, which has replaced the bi-weekly Memo to the Commissioners. Staff has also launched a new email service that will send email updates to anyone who signs up, according to their interest in MPC activities.



As citizens apply for building permits, they received a certified address. During FY 2008-09, the addressing staff created 4097 addresses for new residential and non-residential development. In this process the staff also changed or corrected 53,597 addresses. Additionally, the addressing staff maintains the GIS base map of Knox County. This work required adding 453 new street segments to the map and modifying 3021 street segments.

had 83 tracts in the 2000 census, but with the current Knox County population of approximately 410,000 it should grow to 115 tracts considering the bureau's ideal population of 4,000 people per tract. The tracts will provide more targeted information about different areas of the county including education, housing and income trends.

In 2008, Information Services provided the Census Bureau with addresses for every property in Knox County to be used in their Master Address File. The Census Bureau relies on local agencies for the addresses to ensure that new developments and demolitions are properly counted.



---

## MPC ONLINE

Staff continues to increase the amount of information available to the public online by managing the official websites for MPC and TPO as well as sites for related groups. In FY 2008-09, the MPC site saw an explosive 48% growth rate in the number of pages served: a total of 793,240. The TPO site held steady in FY2008-09, serving more than 160,000 pages.

This year, MPC's website received a new look as it was updated to better accommodate the wide range of MPC duties. The new web page was designed using CSS, a web programming language that is more user friendly for those with disabilities. In addition, staff added the following sections this year:

### Additions/Improvements to MPC Online:

- New CSS compliant home page
- Online press releases
- MPC Updates
- Knox County Commission Redistricting Committee
- Sustainable Development Incentives Program
- Transfer of Development Rights
- New online calendar system
- Online surveys for
  - Joint City County Task Force on Ridge, Slope, and Hillside Development and Protection (2)
  - Knoxville South Waterfront street names (2)
  - Smart Trips
  - Excellence Awards
  - Cumberland Avenue Circulation Study
  - Mobility Plan feedback

### Additions/Improvements to TPO Online:

- Complete Streets
- ARRA resources

### Other sites that MPC manages:

- Smart Trips
- Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority
- Historic Preservation in Knoxville and Knox County
- East Tennessee Regional Clean Air Coalition
- Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association

---

## 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 journals. Business people, journalists, students, and realtors use the facility on a regular basis. Recently published topics include:

- Blount County Bicycle Map
- Complete Streets Study Guidelines, Three Volumes
- Comprehensive Development Plan for the Tennessee Technology Corridor
- Convenience Voting in Three Tennessee Counties
- Cumberland Avenue Corridor Parking Study
- Development Activity Report 2008
- Development in Knox County: New Construction Projects 2008
- Employment in Knox County
- Gobblers Knob-Sherrod Road-Millers Avenue Neighborhood Conservation District Design Guidelines and Designation Report
- Knoxville Area Facts and Figures 2009
- Knoxville Regional Mobility Plan 2009-2034
- Magnolia Avenue Corridor Plan
- Multi-Dwelling Housing Trends
- Neighborhood Organization Handbook
- Office Market Analysis 2008
- One Year Plan Update for the City of Knoxville
- Recommendations for Transfer of Development Rights Task Force
- Shopping Center Market Analysis 2008
- State of Preservation in Knoxville 2008
- Sustainable Development Incentive Program Draft
- Transportation Improvement Program 2008-2011
- Unified Transportation Work Program 2010

---

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

As an extension of their work with the planning commission, MPC staff participate in a variety of boards, commissions and task forces.

- East Tennessee Community Design Center
- Community Development Facade Review Committee
- Community Development Infill Housing Committee
- Downtown North/I-275 Advisory Committee
- Knox Heritage Ex-Officio Board Member
- Knox Heritage Preservation Advocacy Committee
- Knoxville Board of Zoning Appeals
- C-7 Cumberland Avenue Design Review Board
- Cumberland Avenue Advisory Committee
- South Waterfront Advisory Committee
- East Tennessee Quality Growth
- Knox Greenways Coalition
- Knoxville Greenways Commission
- Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenway Council
- Statewide Advisory Committee for Tennessee's Safe Routes to School Program
- Knoxville City Council's Transportation and Mobility Committee
- Knoxville Tree Board
- Knoxville Public Art Task Force
- Joint City/County Task Force on Ridge, Slope and Hillside Development and Protection
- Knoxville and Knox County Historic Zoning Commissions
- Tennessee Model Users Group
- Transportation Research Board Committee: Strategic Highway Research Program & Expert Task Group
- Knox County Transfer of Development Rights Task Force
- CBID Development Committee
- Downtown North Steering Committee
- Fort Sanders Long Range Planning Committee
- City/County Sustainable Development Incentives Program Working Group
- County Transfer of Development Rights Task Force
- Knoxville City Council's Public Property Naming Committee
- Legacy Parks Land Conservation Committee
- Community Action Committee Board of Directors
- Knox County Board of Zoning Appeals
- Downtown North Streetscape Committee

---

## LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL ROLES

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

- National, state and local chapter meetings of the American Planning Association
- South Knoxville Summit
- Presentations to State and Regional GIS conferences (TNGIC and ETNGIS).
- Government Finance Officers Association 2008 Satellite Teleconference
- Southern Transportation and Air Quality Summit
- Association for Commuter Transportation International Conference
- Board of Realtors preservation course
- Preservation training session for Knox Heritage
- Knox Heritage monthly Preservation Network series



## UNAUDITED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	FY08/09 Budget	FY 08/09 Actual	Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)
Fees and Charges	\$386,000	\$376,208	(\$9,792)
Fees for Telecom Towers	\$15,000	\$16,500	\$1,500
TPO <sup>1</sup> Grants and local match (Federal, state,local)	2,644,974	1,956,330	(688,644)
City of Knoxville	763,430	763,430	0
Contract - City of Knoxville - PNI grant	100,000	79,972	(20,028)
Contract - City of Knoxville - Cumberland Avenue	50,000	50,000	0
Knox County	894,000	894,000	0
Contact - Knox County - TTCDA	6,000	6,000	0
Contract - Knox County Schools /PEFA II	29,583	24,583	(5,000)
Contract - Development Corporation of Knox County	0	10,524	10,524
In-Kind Contributions (Office Space)	120,000	119,164	(836)
Withdrawal/(Addition) to Fund Balance	117,487	196,979	79,492
<b>TOTAL FUNDING SOURCES</b>	<b>\$5,126,474</b>	<b>\$4,493,690</b>	<b>(\$632,784)</b>

Salaries and Employee Benefits	\$2,887,964	\$2,821,052	\$66,912
Contracted Services	214,000	205,840	8,160
Supplies and Materials	68,000	47,837	20,163
Other Charges	171,236	165,277	5,959
Capital Outlay	13,000	0	13,000
Telecom Tower Expenditures	15,000	16,500	(1,500)
Grant Expenditures - 13 programs <sup>2</sup>	1,757,274	1,237,184	520,090
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$5,126,474</b>	<b>\$4,493,690</b>	<b>\$632,784</b>

NOTES:

1. TPO - Transportation Planning Organization (84 percent of actual grant revenues, or \$1.65 million, are federal dollars)

2. Thirteen grant programs include TPO and other contracts:

- FHWA - Federal Highway Administration
- FTA - Federal Transit Authority
- RTPC - Regional Transportation Planning Council
- Smart Trips
- TPO Bike Enhancement
- RCAC - Regional Clean Air Coalition (Alcoa)
- Complete Streets
- ULAM - Urban Land Allocation Model
- Cades Cove Phase II
- PNI - Empowerment Zone (City of Knoxville)
- KAT Development Plan
- JARC - Jobs Access Reverse Commute
- New Freedom

## **ONLINE QUICK REFERENCE**

Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC)  
[www.knoxmpc.org](http://www.knoxmpc.org)

Knoxville Area Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)  
[www.knoxtrans.org](http://www.knoxtrans.org)

Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority (TTCDA)  
[www.knoxmpc.org/ttca](http://www.knoxmpc.org/ttca)

Smart Trips  
[www.knoxsmarttrips.org](http://www.knoxsmarttrips.org)

East Tennessee Regional Clean Air Coalition  
[www.etnrac.org](http://www.etnrac.org)

**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**

Suite 403 • City County Building  
400 Main Street  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902  
865 • 215 • 2500  
F A X • 215 • 2068  
[www.knoxmpc.org](http://www.knoxmpc.org)