

Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission

# ANNUAL REPORT

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FY 2012-2013

# Planning Commissioners

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The Planning Commission is an advisory board comprised 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 without compensation and may be re-appointed. The Commission meets the second Thursday of every month.



**REBECCA LONGMIRE**  
CHAIR  
2006-2014



**BART CAREY**  
VICE CHAIR  
2007-2015



**HERB ANDERS**  
2012-2016



**ART CLANCY, III**  
2012-2016



**LAURA COLE**  
2008-2014



**GEORGE EWART**  
2008-2013



**LEN JOHNSON**  
2012-2016



**MICHAEL KANE**  
2007-2015



**NATE KELLY**  
2009-2013



**CHARLES LOMAX**  
2012-2016



**BRIAN PIERCE**  
2010-2014



**JEFFREY ROTH**  
2011-2015



**JACK SHARP**  
2003-2015



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



**JANICE TOCHER**  
2012-2016

# Keynotes from the Director

## Winding Down, Cranking Up, and Keeping On

### Winding Down

As we quickly approach the end of 2013 and the culmination of the Plan East Tennessee (PlanET) five-county regional planning process, it's a good time to reflect on all that we have accomplished and how much we have coming up.

During the PlanET process we've had more than 10,000 contacts with people who attended community forums, served in working groups, shared ideas online, participated in small group meetings (we call them Meetings-in-a-Box because the facilitator arrives with a portable meeting kit, with all materials in a box), or engaged in a variety of other ways. Mayors, city council members, county commissioners, planners, environmentalists, students, business people, educators, average citizens, and even protestors have shared their ideas on the direction the region should take in the future.

PlanET has affected every division of MPC, and every employee has participated.

In phase one we gathered data by holding public forums and hosting an online town hall so we could understand where we are as a region. In phase two we asked participants to tell us their thoughts about where they'd like us to be in the future, using the project website ([www.planeasttn.org](http://www.planeasttn.org)) and small group meetings to share their visions of the region in 2040.

During both phases, we conducted a tremendous education and outreach effort to bring as many people to the table as possible. We've held a regional symposium, ETCompetes!, we've

encouraged high school and college students to participate, we've hosted a speakers series to bring new ideas to the public, presented videos, and had guest bloggers on the PlanET website.

It's been a busy two years!

As we move into phase three—and maybe beyond—the work continues. It's time to get our deliverables ready for the sponsors of all this activity, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Yes, there will be a printed plan. But we want all this work to result in more than a pretty book that sits forgotten on a shelf when the “next big thing” hits the streets. We're planning to leverage the success of ETCompetes! into a regional spirit of collaboration among businesses, governments, and citizens that will last for many years. Stay tuned.

### Cranking Up and Keeping On

Don't let the first part of my yearly recap fool you. We're working on a lot more than PlanET! As the economic recovery continues, Development Services is seeing a resurgence of activity. Applications for rezonings, concept plans, and uses on review are up by more than 12 percent compared to the previous year, and in the first few months of the new year, activity has increased further.

Our planners are still cranking out sector plan updates, small area plans, and ordinance amendments, as well as staffing the Infill Housing Design Review Committee, the Downtown Design Review Board, the Food Policy Council, the C-7 Board, the City and County Historic Zoning Commissions, the Tree



Board, and the Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority Board.

TPO, in addition to managing one of the most successful bicycle programs around and winning awards from the governor for its Smart Trips program, produced a Long Range Mobility Plan in record time this year.

And don't forget the support staff—administrative assistants, GIS, graphics, and research staff—who support all the efforts mentioned above, as well as PlanET!

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the hard-working staff of MPC for the last two years of juggling priorities and deadlines. It isn't easy, but together, we'll get it all done...and done well!



# Planning Commission Staff

The Planning Commission is supported by a staff of 35 people who work in four divisions: Development Services, Comprehensive Planning, Transportation Planning, and Information Services. Each group has unique abilities and responsibilities, and it is common for work teams to be formed across division lines to collaborate on projects.

The Executive Director manages the agency and is responsible for developing and administering the work program and budget. An eight-person management team is led by the Executive Director.

Every workday dozens of citizens walk up to MPC’s Development Services counter to obtain application forms, file plans, or receive guidance on projects. This division processes and reviews requests for rezonings, subdivisions, and development plans, and it prepares a recommendation on each case that will be considered by the Planning Commission.

Comprehensive Planning focuses on long-range planning. Updating sector plans and the Knoxville-Knox County General Plan fall under this division’s responsibilities, as well as special projects like park inventories, small area plans, corridor studies, and guidelines for neighborhood overlays.

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

Information Services includes the addressing staff, the geographic information systems group, a graphic design team, and two researchers. This division manages MPC’s library, websites, computer network, and various community outreach activities, including publications, social media, and market studies. Information Services staff work closely with the other divisions of the agency, providing specialized support for all planning efforts.

Liz Albertson .....	Planner II
Jeff Archer, AICP .....	Senior Planner
Alisa Ashouri .....	Smart Trips Program Coordinator
Bryan Berry, AICP .....	Research Associate II
Tom Brechko, AICP .....	Principal Planner
Amy Brooks .....	Senior Transportation Planner/Project Manager
Michael Brusseau, AICP .....	Senior Planner
Doug Burton .....	Principal Transportation Planner
Mike Carberry, AICP .....	Comprehensive Planning Manager
Dori Caron .....	Administrative Assistant II
Michael Conger, PE .....	Senior Transportation Engineer
Emily Dills .....	Planning Technician II
Mark Donaldson .....	Executive Director
Terry Gilhula, PhD .....	Information and Research Manager
Kaye Graybeal, AICP .....	Historic Preservation Planner
Donna Hill .....	GIS Specialist
Alan Huff .....	Transportation Planner II
Ewing (Buz) Johnson, AICP .....	Deputy Executive Director
Dan Kelly .....	Development Services Manager
Tim Kuhn .....	GIS Manager
Betty Jo Mahan .....	Administrative Assistant II
Sara Martin .....	Smart Trips Outreach Coordinator
Sherry Michienzi .....	Receptionist
Debbie Mitchell .....	Administrative Assistant I
Marc Payne .....	Planning Technician
Pat Phillips .....	GIS Operator
Sarah Powell .....	Webmaster/Senior Graphic Designer
Dee Anne Reynolds .....	Finance Manager
Mike Reynolds .....	Planner II
Kelley Segars .....	Principal Transportation Planner
Susan Taylor .....	Administrative Assistant II
Jo Ella Washburn .....	Graphic Designer
Jeff Welch, AICP .....	Transportation Planning Manager and TPO Director
Ellen Zavisca .....	Senior Transportation Planner
Alex Zendel .....	GIS Analyst
Farewell to MPC staff who left during the year:	
Nathan Benditz, PE .....	Transportation Engineer

## Smart Trips Brings Home the Gold in National Race to Excellence

Smart Trips—a regional program housed within MPC that promotes commuting alternatives—earned a Gold Award in the National Center for Transit Research’s 2012 Race to Excellence. Smart Trips was named “Best Of” in the Supporting Agency category and was one of only four agencies nationwide to be awarded gold in the race.

The Race to Excellence encourages, recognizes, and highlights dedicated professionals throughout the country who promote commuter benefits, transportation options, and the Best Workplaces for Commuters (BWC) designation in their workplaces and throughout their local communities.

To win the race, Smart Trips assisted six local employers—Elizabeth Eason Architecture, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, Mast General Store, the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission, Red Chair Architects, and Tennessee Valley Authority—in obtaining the national BWC designation in March 2012 and then promoted those awards on behalf of each of the companies.

## MPC among Best Workplaces for Commuters for Second Year

MPC, along with 10 other local employers, was honored at an awards ceremony on April 30, 2013 by BWC for meeting its National Standard of Excellence. This designation was awarded by the National Center for Transit Research and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Six of the winning organizations, including MPC, met the standard for the second consecutive year.

To earn the designation, each employer offered its employees at least three innovative benefits to encourage them to choose alternatives to driving to work alone. MPC employees could claim an

unlimited monthly transit pass—paid for by the agency—or work a compressed workweek and were also eligible to take part in the emergency ride home, gift card, and carpool matching programs that came with participation in Smart Trips.

BWC is a public-private partnership developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Transportation.

## Smart Trips Wins Governor’s Environmental Stewardship Award

Smart Trips was awarded the 2013 Governor’s Environmental Stewardship Award for Excellence in Clean Air at a ceremony on June 25 in Nashville. Award winners in several categories were recognized by Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Bob Martineau for their positive impact on the state’s environment and natural resources.

“The continued health of Tennessee’s air, land, and water plays a critical role in keeping our communities strong and attractive for locating a business or raising a family,” Haslam said. “Recognizing the innovative efforts that help conserve and protect our natural resources is

important, and today’s announcement shows that Tennesseans are committed to caring for our state in a way that affects today and future generations.”

The Governor’s Environmental Stewardship Awards program recognizes exceptional voluntary actions that improve or protect our environment and natural resources. Eleven winners were chosen from more than 100 applications, based on criteria including on-the-ground achievement, innovation, and public education.

## Individual Recognition

Several MPC staff members received individual honors or were elected to offices in FY2012-2013:

- Amy Brooks was named to the “40 under 40” list by the Knoxville Business Journal.
- Buz Johnson completed the CAC Community Leadership Program and was also elected section director for the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association.
- Mike Conger was elected Treasurer of the Tennessee Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers.
- Ellen Zavisca completed five years of service as the Chair of the Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenways Council.



Smart Trips staff pose with Governor Haslam at the Governor’s Environmental Stewardship Award ceremony.

# Plan East Tennessee

PlanET is a partnership of local residents, non-profit representatives, business leaders, government officials, planners, and transportation experts in Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Union counties and beyond. Participants are looking for ways to address the region's challenges in five key areas: economy and workforce, transportation and infrastructure, housing and neighborhoods, healthy communities, and the environment.

PlanET is made possible by a generous grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and in-kind support from regional partners. The grant period began in February 2011 and is expected to conclude December 31, 2013.

Over the past year, PlanET focused on several efforts:

- Engaging the public to define a vision for the region and set goals and priorities to realize the vision

- Cultivating partnerships
- Refining and prioritizing goals and objectives
- Launching the ETCompetes! Speaker Series
- Developing an action plan to ensure that PlanET continues beyond December 31, 2013

## Milestones Reached this Year

The project team reached several key milestones during the year:

- A regional vision was finalized based on two rounds of community input.
- A preferred growth concept was defined.
- Goals and objectives to meet the vision and preferred growth concept were evaluated through public input and working group meetings.
- A fourth major public input campaign was completed, concluding 19 months of public involvement.
- An ETCompetes! Speaker Series was launched.
- Nearly 20 demonstration projects

were either completed or underway in all five counties.

## Public Outreach Activities

One of the most critical pieces of this project has been the public outreach program, and considerable effort was made to connect with people not typically engaged in regional planning. The project team implemented a multi-faceted outreach program in 2013 that included a range of tools targeted at different population groups:

### *Youth-focused Meeting in a Box*

The PlanET Outreach Coordinator worked with middle school, high school, and college students in the five-county region during the third round of community input. MPC staff assisted the coordinator during these events.

### *Working groups*

Two series of working group meetings were held, with more than 150 business, non-profit, and education leaders participating.

### *Meeting in a Box rounds three and four*

MPC staff conducted dozens of Meeting in a Box sessions across the region for rounds three and four of the community involvement effort.

### *Online input via MetroQuest*

To accommodate people who could not attend a Meeting in a Box session, the project team created an online tool to be used for individual participation during the third and fourth rounds of community input.

### *Social media tools (Facebook, Twitter, PlanET Blog, and YouTube)*

Social media sites were used to support the PlanET message and to distribute



PlanET launched its Speakers Series with a presentation by Chuck Marohn.



important information about the project. A Facebook page and Twitter feed provided opportunities for interactive messaging, and a YouTube channel hosted project-related videos and news stories. Bi-weekly blog posts from regional leaders were a feature on the PlanET website.

**PlanET website ([www.planeasttn.org](http://www.planeasttn.org))**

PlanET staff maintained a project website throughout the project, keeping it updated with information about events and important project deliverables. The website includes links to PlanET’s MetroQuest, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube sites.

**Regional contact database**

PlanET staff maintained an online contact database to track attendance at PlanET events, share information among team members, and develop a long-term regional contact list.

**Traditional media communications**

Traditional media were used to convey information about the project too, including a speaker series, interviews, media packages, and press releases to the region’s television and radio outlets. The local PBS affiliate, WUOT, aired a PlanET announcement for nine weeks.

**Stakeholder focus groups**

Thirteen focus groups were conducted across the five-county region in communities with exceptional socio-economic challenges. Results from the focus groups will be available in the coming months.

**Speaking at community events**

The project team continued to find opportunities to speak about the PlanET effort. Over the last year PlanET representatives spoke at the following events:

- Maryville College Sustainable Campus Initiative Day
- East Tennessee Green Building Council board meetings
- Knoxville Regional Transportation



Booths at community events like Earth Day were part of PlanET’s public outreach activities.

Planning Organization Technical Committee

- Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization Executive Board
- Various Meeting in a Box events
- Tennessee Association of Utility Districts (East Tennessee Division)
- National Association of Development

Organizations Annual Conference

- East Tennessee Community Foundation

**Regional demonstration projects**

MPC staff worked with faculty and students from The University of Tennessee College of Architecture and Design on several demonstration projects. In Fall 2012, studies on renewing older



PlanET staff worked with citizens of all ages during the third round of community input.



neighborhoods and commercial areas were completed, with sites including the Jackson Square area in Oak Ridge and the Hall Road, Lindsay Avenue, and Home Avenue communities in Alcoa and Maryville. One student design team created concepts for historic preservation and selective redevelopment of Oak Ridge's original town site. Another team created plans for pedestrian-oriented streets and architecture in Alcoa and Maryville, including redevelopment of older shopping centers.

In Spring 2013, UT faculty and students developed greenway trail plans for several communities. The legacy of coal mining was the basis for a trail that could link Briceville and Lake City. A rail-to-trail project was conceived between Greenback and Alcoa. Filling gaps along the Second Creek trail was the focus in Knoxville. In Union County, a trail and community

garden was planned for Paulette Elementary School.

MPC staff collaborated with UT faculty in choosing the projects. Staff also provided technical data to help students with their analyses and mentored them through feedback on final products.

MPC planners also worked closely with the East Tennessee Community Design Center to finalize demonstration projects in Loudon and Maynardville. Report posters for each of the demonstration projects are in development and will be presented soon.

There are 17 demonstration projects either underway or complete for the five counties.

**Legacy Coordinator**

A PlanET Legacy Coordinator was hired in June, 2013 to work full-time

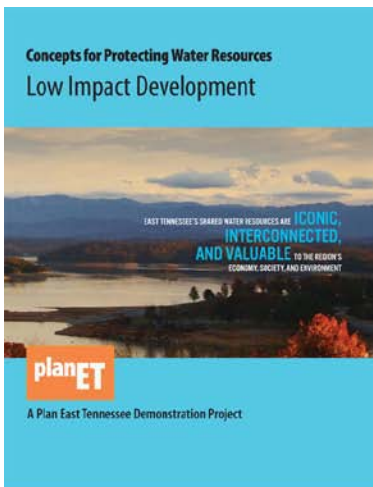
in key issue areas to ensure that the regional planning effort will maintain its momentum beyond December 31, 2013, the end of the grant period.

**Education roundtable**

Two education roundtables were hosted this year, with a third planned for Fall 2013. The focus was to learn and share what key leaders in education and workforce development are working on in our region and at the state level. The exchange will be used to build recommendations to make our region economically stronger and more competitive.

**What Has Been the Outcome So Far?**

PlanET's public outreach program has touched 10,000 citizens and continues to grow through the development of new stakeholder groups and partnership activity. Early in the project, the outreach effort was challenged by low public meeting attendance, a small but vocal opposition



East Tennessee's iconic water resources are a sustaining economic, social, and environmental asset. These resources are vulnerable to impacts from prevailing development patterns in the region, human activities, and existing stormwater infrastructure. Each increase the quantity of polluted stormwater runoff draining to region's streams, rivers, reservoirs, and groundwater resources, compromising their health and the healths of the communities they sustain. With the Plan East Tennessee Region's population poised to grow 43 percent by 2040, reliance upon these water resources will increase while their health is further threatened by expanding development. Low Impact Development methods proposed in this publication offer existing and expanding communities an enhanced approach to watershed planning, community design, and site development that avoids, minimizes, and manages impacts to the region's shared water resources.



**About Plan East Tennessee (PlanET)**  
PlanET is a public-private partnership between the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and the Metropolitan Planning Commission. The mission of PlanET is to provide technical assistance to local governments in the region to help them address water quality and quantity issues. PlanET is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information, visit [www.planet-tn.org](http://www.planet-tn.org).

**REGIONAL WATER RESOURCES**  
This region is connected through our shared water resources. Watersheds, creeks, streams, rivers and reservoirs carry life and through multiple colors and textures, are part of the management of these resources and shared with each other to ensure a clean and abundant supply for domestic water consumption, industry, recreation, tourism and the ecosystem.

**DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS ON WATERSHEDS**  
Our growth patterns create numerous impervious surfaces that contribute to impermeable runoff. These are more heavily concentrated in our urban areas, but are common throughout the region. Types of development vary as the amount of impervious surface and the range of pollutants generated from stormwater runoff. Many impervious substrates in our region are considered impervious due to the construction.

**LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT**  
Low Impact Development (LID) is an enhanced approach to planning, design, and development that avoids, minimizes, and manages impacts to the PlanET Region's shared surface and groundwater resources, supports the natural hydrologic process, LID addresses water resources through an interconnected network of permeable Best Management Practices (BMP) and green infrastructure practices. LID principles may be applied to new development, the retrofit of existing communities, sites and infrastructure, as well as to existing activities on individual properties. Exemplifying these principles and stewarding water resources is a responsibility shared by everyone who lives, works, and plays within the PlanET Region.

**ACROSS PLANNING, DESIGN, AND DEVELOPMENT SCALES, LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT SEEKS TO:**

- EFFICIENTLY USE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE:** Protect water quality and quantity; Reduce water consumption; Promote water conservation; Encourage green building practices.
- IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY:** Reduce impervious and soil disturbance; Reduce sediment and soil loss; Reduce water use and use of stormwater management systems; Reduce water quality impairment.
- REDUCE DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS:** Address impacts at the local, regional, and watershed management scales; Reduce runoff volume and peak flow; Reduce water quality impairment; Reduce water quality impairment.

**THE LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT APPROACH**

**Avoid**  
The LID approach avoids impacts to underground landscapes and watershed hydrology through pollution prevention, the efficient use of water resources and the preservation of naturalized land and sensitive landscapes. Strategies such as site development, smart growth in under-served sites in existing communities and avoid disturbances to landscapes that protect water resources.

**Minimize**  
Reduce construction and runoff impacts that minimize impacts by limiting the amount of land area developed, reducing disturbance to vegetation and soil, and decreasing the amount of impervious surfaces can reduce the need for and size of stormwater management systems.

**Manage**  
LID manages stormwater quantity and quality at its source through decentralized, distributed Best Management Practices (BMP) and green infrastructure practices that restore natural hydrologic functions and biological processes into developed landscapes. These methods are capable of reducing runoff, controlling peak flow rates, and improving stormwater quality before it is discharged to receiving waters or infiltrated into groundwater aquifers. They are also capable of enhancing site aesthetics, improving air quality, creating wildlife habitat, and providing innovative educational opportunities.

**INTEGRATED DESIGN**  
A residential green roof, rain garden, permeable pavement, and rainwater harvesting system, all integrated into a single design, can significantly reduce runoff and improve water quality.

**RAIN GARDENS**  
Rain gardens are a type of landscape feature that captures runoff from roofs, driveways, and parking lots, and allows it to infiltrate into the ground, reducing runoff and improving water quality.

**PERMEABLE PAVEMENT**  
Permeable pavement allows water to pass through the surface into the ground below, reducing runoff and improving water quality.

**RAINWATER HARVESTING**  
Rainwater harvesting systems collect and store rainwater from roofs for use in irrigation, flushing toilets, and other non-potable uses, reducing runoff and improving water quality.

**ACROSS PLANNING, DESIGN, AND DEVELOPMENT SCALES, LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT SEEKS TO:**

- EFFICIENTLY USE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE:** Protect water quality and quantity; Reduce water consumption; Promote water conservation; Encourage green building practices.
- IMPROVE WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY:** Reduce impervious and soil disturbance; Reduce sediment and soil loss; Reduce water use and use of stormwater management systems; Reduce water quality impairment.
- REDUCE DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS:** Address impacts at the local, regional, and watershed management scales; Reduce runoff volume and peak flow; Reduce water quality impairment; Reduce water quality impairment.

**About This Project:**  
This project was funded by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and the Metropolitan Planning Commission. The mission of PlanET is to provide technical assistance to local governments in the region to help them address water quality and quantity issues. PlanET is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information, visit [www.planet-tn.org](http://www.planet-tn.org).

**Acknowledgements:**  
The authors would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions to this project: [List of names]

PlanET demonstration projects were a collaboration between MPC and UT. A total of 17 projects were underway in 2013.



to regional planning, and limited diversity among participating citizens.

The team responded with a multi-faceted engagement strategy, relying on a dispersed outreach program that emphasized going to participants through Meeting in a Box sessions, stakeholder focus groups, and community events to promote PlanET. The team participated in more than 200 meetings since the project kicked off in October 2011.

**Other Project Related Activities**

While the public outreach program continued to drive the majority of project activities, parallel activities included collecting data, working with community groups on capacity building projects, and creating tools to assist citizens in understanding choices to realize the regional vision.

***Regional collaboration***

PlanET staff collaborated with organizations focused on similar goals and objectives. Team members participated in events such as a Health Equity Summit, East Tennessee Community Design Center’s symposium on Walkable Downtowns, and Oak Ridge National Lab’s Sustainability Summit.

***Tennessee Regions’ Roundtable***

Coordinated by Nashville’s Cumberland Region Tomorrow, the Tennessee Regions’ Roundtable is a network of organizations such as state and federal agencies, affiliate organizations, and funding groups. The Roundtable provides a catalyst for efforts to support and expand statewide economic competitiveness and opportunity, quality community development, and wise use of fiscal resources.

***Preferred development concept***

Staff refined a computer planning model and worked toward a final preferred development concept to represent the regional vision and input received to date. Work also began on the Housing-plus-



*Working groups continued to play an important role in the PlanET process.*

Transportation index for the baseline and preferred growth concepts.

***Equity Analysis***

MPC staff participated in data collection, review, and presentations for the Equity Team’s Fair Housing Equity Analysis component of the regional plan.

***Tell the story of our region***

MPC staff served on a team that created a video documentary to tell the story of our region.

***Regional transit authority analysis***

Increased transit options were identified as a top priority for the future during public input. In response, work began on a peer review of transit authorities around the country.

***PlanET Livability Report Card***

An update of the PlanET Livability Report Card is underway. The second edition is expected in Fall 2013.



*Local residents told their unique stories in a PlanET video project.*

# Development Services

## Building Activity

Investment in new construction increased this year in Knoxville and Knox County. The value of residential development improved sharply, up from \$141.3 million in 2011 to \$220.8 million in 2012. Permits for two notable residential projects were issued: Wellsley Park at Deane Hill apartments (250 units) in west Knoxville and Morning Pointe Assisted Living Facility (73 units) in north Knoxville. Non-residential construction saw \$181.2 million in new investment, highlighted by the Proton Therapy Center (\$24.3 million) and Northshore Elementary School (\$15.9 million).

Nearly 1,600 residential building permits were issued in Knox County this year, a 59 percent gain since 2011. Detached dwellings accounted for the largest share, 55 percent (867 units), while multi-dwellings were second, capturing a 35 percent share (562 units). The Southwest

County Sector led the way with 387 residential units, followed closely by the Northwest County Sector with 359. The Southwest Sector also recorded the highest number of non-residential permits, for 29 projects.

## Subdivisions

The number of residential subdivision requests was down slightly this year, both in number (59 subdivisions) and affected acreage (386 acres), but the number of newly created lots (528 lots) was higher than last year's total. The average residential subdivision was 6.5 acres in size and comprised of nine lots, each about 0.7 acres. Non-residential subdivisions saw gains in number of plats approved (40) and lots created (70).

## Changes to the Zoning Map

To accommodate new construction, a change in zoning is sometimes required. In 2012, 68 residential and non-

residential rezonings were approved, affecting 485 acres. Residential applications accounted for 70 percent of total acreage rezoned. The largest single case was a 110-acre request in the North City Sector for General Residential and Planned Residential designation to accommodate up to 264 dwelling units. Agricultural land converted by rezoning totaled 74 acres, a 15 percent share of approvals. Agricultural conversion remains remarkably low compared to activity from 2005 and 2006 when more than 2,000 agricultural acres were rezoned each year.

## Code Amendments

MPC staff considered 16 amendments to the city and county zoning ordinances in 2012. Of those, 11 requests were adopted, one was withdrawn, and four are pending. Two amendments to the minimum subdivision regulations were considered, with one being adopted.

### **Zoning Ordinance for Knoxville, Tennessee**

- Amendments regarding funeral establishments, crematories, cemeteries, and associated facilities (multiple versions)
- Amendments regarding development standards for subdivisions within the Hillside and Ridgetop Protection areas
- Amendments to conform to State law regarding the membership composition of the Knoxville Historic Zoning Commission
- Amendments related to design and construction standards for parking areas and driveways, including a revised definition for parking space
- Amendments regarding administrative procedures for Form Districts
- Amendments allowing consideration of the BP-1 Business and Technology Park zone outside the TO-1 Technology Overlay zone and revising the list of permitted uses/uses on review
- Amendments regarding retail, service, and restaurant uses in the I-3 General Industrial zone district
- Amendments regarding creating a corridor overlay zone district (City tabled)
- Amendments to permit courtyard development in appropriate residential zone districts (City postponed)
- Amendments to the City Sign Code regarding sign height (City postponed)

### **Zoning Ordinance for Knox County, Tennessee**

- Amendments to conform to State law regarding the composition of

and appointment of members to the Knox County Historic Zoning Commission

- Amendments requested by Knox County Code Administration editing, clarifying, correcting, and making other minor changes to the County Zoning Ordinance
- Amendments to the County Sign Code regarding billboards and electronic message centers were divided into three separate ordinance amendments:
  - Prohibiting the conversion of billboards and other advertising signs to electronic advertising signs or electronic message center signs in all zone districts
  - Regulating electronic message center signs in all zone districts
  - Prohibiting billboards and other advertising structures in all zone districts (County withdrew)
- Amendments regarding development standards for subdivisions within the Hillside and Ridgetop Protection areas (County tabled)

### **Knoxville-Knox County Minimum Subdivision Regulations**

- Amendments regarding development standards for subdivisions within the Hillside and Ridgetop Protection areas
- Amendments regarding land ineligible for subdivision following timber harvesting within the Hillside and Ridgetop Protection areas (MPC withdrew)



# Comprehensive Planning

## Sector Plans

MPC's Comprehensive Planning division is responsible for updating 12 city and county sector plans on a rotating basis, and during the past year, staff completed the South County plan and began updating the Central and East City plans.

### *South county plan adopted*

The South County Sector, which comprises 65 square miles, is steadily growing. Over the last decade, population increased nine percent. Most residential growth was single dwelling units, while the sector remains largely rural—60 percent of the sector is agriculture, forest,

and vacant land. Retail development has occurred primarily around the intersection of Chapman Highway and Governor John Sevier Highway at the South Grove Shopping Center.

The proposed land use component of the sector plan changed very little from the previous edition, adopted in 2002, with the exception of adding three new mixed use districts. The districts will help revitalize previously developed areas that have high vacancy rates, such as older shopping centers. Most allow retail, office, and medium- to higher-density residential development.



*The South County Sector Plan protects rural, historic, and scenic character as development occurs within the Governor John Sevier Highway corridor.*

Though designated a state Rural Scenic Highway, residents expressed concerns that Governor John Sevier Highway is not being adequately protected as “scenic.” The sector plan included a proposal for corridor design standards for John Sevier Highway to address new development along the highway.

Expanding on elements of the East County Sector Plan, the French Broad Conservation Corridor principles were applied to the south side of the river. The goal is to retain rural, historic, and scenic character as development occurs within the corridor.

Out of the citizen participation process, a small area plan for Alcoa Highway was requested. Concerns about forthcoming roadway improvements and high vacancy rates in existing shopping centers prompted the additional study.

After holding several community meetings to present a draft plan, explain concepts, and gather feedback, the final South County Sector Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission, City Council, and County Commission.

### *Central and east city plans underway*

The Central and East City Sector Plans were last updated in 2002 and 2003. In the interim, there have been many other studies completed for these two areas, including corridor plans for Magnolia Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, Cumberland Avenue, and I-275/N. Central Street, and neighborhood/small area plans for Lonsdale, Oakwood/Lincoln Park, and Emory Place.

The public input process for both plans began with a community survey. Leaders of neighborhood organizations and staff from the City's Office of Neighborhoods helped develop and distribute the survey, and more than 600 responses were collected. Additional public input was gathered by attending 10 neighborhood/community organization meetings: four in the Central Sector (Parkridge Community Association, Oakwood Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association, Old North Knoxville Watch, and Edgewood Park Neighborhood Association) and six in the East Sector (Burlington Homeowners and Community Association, Town Hall East, Edgewood Park Neighborhood Association, East City Business and



Professional Association, Dandridge Avenue Neighborhood Association, and Knoxville Center Mall merchants group).

The surveys and community meetings helped staff understand the land use, community resources, and transportation issues in both sectors. According to residents, the most pressing needs are better road design to accommodate pedestrians, improved public safety, better use of industrial land, and higher design standards for private development. Survey results and preliminary plan concepts were discussed at the first round of public meetings held in late Spring. MPC staff will complete both sector plans in 2013 or early 2014.

### **Knoxville-Knox County Food Policy Council**

MPC has supported the Food Policy Council (FPC) since its creation in 1982, attending monthly meetings and related events around the area. This year staff worked with the Council to host a series of community meetings to address food access and farm-to-fork issues. MPC mapped food deserts and analyzed data related to the state of our local food system. The community meetings were well attended, and recommendations, ranging from further analysis of Knox County's food system to defining urban agriculture uses in local zoning ordinances, were drafted. The recommendations will be presented

to Knoxville City Council and Knox County Commission for consideration. MPC also helped FPC create and maintain an online presence, building a website and supporting a social media outreach effort to promote FPC activities.

### **Corridor Overlay District**

MPC has recommended a change to the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance that would enable the creation of roadway corridor overlay districts. Such overlays would provide guidelines for landscaping, unique signage, lighting, and building characteristics. A roadway corridor generally would be considered a major thoroughfare, such as Clinton Highway, Chapman Highway, Washington Pike, or Governor John Sevier Highway. The need for the ordinance change was discussed during adoption of the East County and South County Sector Plans. Such overlays have been used by many cities to improve road safety, aesthetics, and traffic management in strip commercial development.

### **Grayfield Redevelopment**

MPC put a graduate landscape architecture student to work this year on a project to demonstrate reuse options for older, largely vacant shopping centers. Such places, dubbed grayfields, hold redevelopment promise, and innovative design can generate new, viable uses. MPC's graduate intern proposed a plan for a vacant retail center in north Knox County that called for conversion of space to accommodate hundreds of new housing units, add office area, and renovate a portion of the retail footage. The plan also called for conservation of a Beaver Creek open space system.



*The Central and East City Sector Plans will be completed in the next fiscal year.*



# Transportation Planning

The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), staffed by MPC planners, serves as the transportation planning board for Knox County, most of Blount County, and parts of Anderson, Loudon, and Sevier counties. Members of the TPO include the cities of Knoxville, Maryville, Oak Ridge, Alcoa, and Lenoir City, the Town of Farragut, and the counties of Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Sevier. The State of Tennessee and the East Tennessee Development District are also participants in the process.

Under contract with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), TPO staff is also responsible for conducting regional transportation planning in the air quality non-attainment/maintenance areas for ozone and PM2.5. Those areas are comprised of Anderson, Blount, Jefferson, Knox, Loudon, and Sevier counties as well as parts of Cocke and Roane counties.

## TPO Executive Board and Technical Committee

The TPO Executive Board and Technical Committee work with TPO/MPC staff to make decisions on regional transportation plans and projects. The Executive Board, which sets policy and adopts plans, is comprised of 14 elected officials from the TPO planning area and representatives from the East Tennessee Development District and the governor of Tennessee. The 22-member Technical Committee consists of local planners and engineers. The Technical Committee works closely with staff and makes recommendations to the Executive Board.

The 2010 U.S. Census indicated that the Knoxville urbanized area had expanded

by approximately 100 square miles, and the population had grown by 139,000 since the 2000 census. Expansion of the urbanized area will add representatives from Anderson County, the City of Clinton, and the City of Loudon to the TPO Technical Committee and Executive Board in Fall 2013.



## 2040 Regional Mobility Plan

The Regional Mobility Plan sets priorities and communicates the long-range vision for transportation in the Knoxville region. Federal law requires that all transportation projects receiving federal funds be included in the Mobility Plan and be based on money that is expected to be available.

The 2040 Regional Mobility Plan was adopted by the TPO Executive Board in April, 2013. The plan considers all modes of transportation and supports integration among them. The four guiding principles of the mobility plan are:

- Preserve and manage the existing transportation system.
- Evaluate transportation and land use decisions simultaneously.
- Provide safe and secure transportation choices by planning and building for all modes of transportation.
- Future transportation investments must protect and build on the region's strengths.

The 2040 Regional Mobility Plan identified \$4.5 billion in project expenditures over 27 years. Approximately nine percent of those will support transit, 11 percent will construct new roads or extend existing roads, 40 percent will add through-lanes to existing roadways, and 40 percent will support other projects such as intersection improvements, safety, greenways, sidewalks, and turn lanes.

## Smart Trips

Smart Trips launched the new Smart Trips Neighborhoods program this year, encouraging people to choose alternative means of transportation when taking short, personal trips near their homes. The program was launched in a test area, the 37917 zip code near downtown Knoxville, and participants logged their trips on a free website similar to the one used for the main Smart Trips work commute program. The Neighborhoods program was an effort to encourage people to make healthy transportation choices whenever they travel.

Smart Trips hired an Outreach Coordinator whose responsibilities include



Smart Trips Neighborhoods Program participants chose Belle Morris Elementary School to receive the program's charitable donation.



Local businesses decorated windows to promote alternatives to driving alone to work in the Smart Trips Window Display Contest.

## Planning for Pedestrians

TPO partnered with other local agencies to plan for places and programs that allow people to have healthier and more active lifestyles. One of its closest partnerships was with the Knox County Health Department (KCHD), which coordinated the Knox County Safe Routes to School program. TPO assisted KCHD in writing grants and organizing events. Staff also participated in the Tennessee Safe Routes to School State

Network, which brought together Safe Routes practitioners and supporters to share ideas and information. The TPO was also actively involved with the Network's policy teams on Complete Streets and School Siting.

TPO joined KCHD on several other initiatives, including Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities; Pioneering Healthier Communities; and, Together! Healthy Knox. All of these efforts focused on policy and environmental changes to support healthier choices like walking and bicycling for transportation.

## Greenways

TPO partnered with greenway advocates from across the Knoxville region as part of the Knoxville Greenway Commission, the Knox Greenways Coalition, and the Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenway Council. TPO staff served as chair of the Regional Greenway Council, which brought together planners from a dozen local

governments and coordinated planning and marketing of regional greenways.

## Bicycle Program

The Knoxville Regional Bicycle Program made great strides this year to raise awareness about the importance and value of biking.

The Bicycling Ambassadors program used volunteers to talk one-on-one with the public at community events and festivals. Ambassadors encouraged bicyclists to ride more often and more safely and educated motorists on the rules of the road. Ambassadors and other volunteers presented "Sharing the Road with Bicyclists,"—a program that reinforced the dangers of distracted driving, speeding, and road rage—to every high school driver's education class in Knox and Blount counties.

TPO staff worked with the City of Knoxville's traffic engineering department on plans for signage for four bicycle routes. The route connecting Cedar Bluff/ West Hills to downtown and UT was signed, and a route connecting downtown to Ijams and the Urban Wilderness Corridor was in process. The other two routes will be signed later in 2013.

The Bicycle Program's email list grew from 1,900 to 2,200 people during the

marketing to companies and institutions, visiting health and benefits fairs, hosting seminars, and developing a network of business advocates for the program.

## Commuter Challenge

Smart Trips 2012 Commuter Challenge ran from June 1 through July 31. Membership gained 255 new participants, and more than 250,000 pounds of green house gas emissions were removed from the region's air during the two-month event that encouraged commuters to trade their drive-alone ride to work for an alternative mode.

Smart Trips hosted two promotional events during the Challenge, a downtown window display contest and a transit trivia game show aboard the Gay Street Trolley. Both events were met with enthusiasm from participants and increased Smart Trips' presence downtown.

Scripts Networks Interactive won the 2012 Grand Prize—a \$500 contribution to the charity of its choice. UT Medical Center was awarded the Green Spirit Award for most enthusiastic participation. Other category winners were the Metropolitan Planning Commission, 21st Mortgage, and The University of Tennessee.



Mayor Rogero welcomed Bike to Work Day participants to Market Square.



year, and its Facebook page grew from 600 likes to more than 800.

The TPO bike rack grant program has been responsible for providing more than 515 bicycle racks throughout the air quality non-attainment area since the program began in 2004.

The 2012 Bike Month included Bike to Work Day, the annual Neighborhood Bike Ride, an “I Bike KNX” Festival on Market Square, many bikes rides and bike repair classes, and several Ride Smart classes.

**Tour de Lights**

More than 550 people turned out for the 5th Annual Tour de Lights bike ride in downtown Knoxville. The event saw more costumes and decorations than ever before, despite the threat of rain. The festive ride visited downtown and toured the holiday decorations of Fourth and Gill and Old North Knoxville. Neighborhoods welcomed the riders as spectators gathered on porches and in yards. The ride was sponsored by the City of Knoxville, the Knoxville Regional Bicycle Program, Three Rivers Market, and Mast General Store, and it would not have been a success without the help of the Knoxville Police Department and all the volunteers.

**Regional Transit Corridor Study**

Staff oversaw a study which examined major corridors in the TPO planning area to determine if any could support higher capacity transit services. One of the study’s goals was to select projects that could be implemented within 10 years using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant funds. Capital-intensive federally-funded transit projects can take six to 10 years to design and construct, depending on the complexity of the project. The RTSC identified twelve corridors that warranted analysis in the region. The corridors were screened through a two-tier process, and three were identified as strong possibilities for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) style service. The corridors are Cumberland Avenue/ Kingston Pike, Magnolia Avenue, and North Broadway.

The study also provided recommendations to increase transit usage and foster regional transit growth:

- Consider implementing a Regional Transit Authority to facilitate inter-county transit service.
- Implement express bus service within the Knoxville region.
- Create a Transit Alliance to educate the public about the benefits of transit.
- Create Transit Overlay Districts along corridors to enhance the use

of transit and encourage transit supportive land uses.

**Urban Area Transit Funding Crisis**

TPO staff worked with regional transit agencies, local governments, and TDOT to remedy a funding crisis that resulted from changes in the Knoxville urbanized area and threatened transit services throughout the TPO jurisdiction. The Knoxville urbanized area—which is determined by the U.S. Census Bureau—recorded the largest increase in the state in both population and land area between 2000 and 2010 and encompasses most of Knox and Blount counties and parts of Loudon, Anderson, and Sevier counties. At the same time, a new federal transportation law, called Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) went into affect on October 1, 2012 and eliminated some Federal Transit Administration funding programs and merged others.

Changes to FTA funding and the dramatic increase in the urban transit service area threatened to affect Knoxville Area Transit (KAT), Knox County CAC Transit, and East Tennessee Human Resource Agency (ETHRA) services. TPO staff held workshops and meetings and facilitated a regional dialog that led to a temporary solution allowing transit services to continue at current levels and serve all of the TPO urban area.



The Tour de Lights holiday bike ride has become a seasonal favorite event in downtown Knoxville, drawing more than 700 riders in 2012.

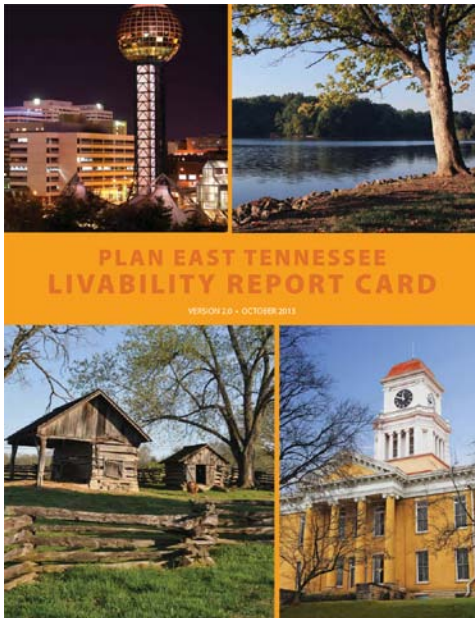
# Information Services

## Specialized Support for PlanET

MPC's Information Services (IS) division supported the PlanET project this year with staff expertise in research and data analysis, geographic information systems, graphic design and printing, and communications.

IS staff took the lead on writing a second edition of the PlanET Livability Report, a summary of existing conditions that identified and rated regional strengths and challenges. Staff also provided computer mapping expertise to the consultant team, helping them visualize how the region might accommodate new population over the next 30 years by developing a number of growth scenarios. Staff also lent considerable research support to the City of Knoxville in developing a fair housing equity assessment, a major companion document of the regional plan.

In addition, IS staff enhanced and maintained PlanET's website in 2012 and 2013. The site dispensed project



Information Services staff took the lead in producing the 2013 Livability Report.

information like event announcements and coverage, report releases, public meetings, blog posts from area leaders, and videos of citizen interviews. The site also served as a clearinghouse for staff and consultants to share data on socio-economic topics. For example, staff researched and gathered data for dozens of measures for the region's economy, transportation network, education system, public health, housing, and environment and made all information available via the online data clearinghouse.

## Knoxville Metropolitan Area Redefined

Each decade, following the release of the U.S. Census Bureau's population counts, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) re-tabulates the nation's metropolitan statistical area (MSA) boundaries. MSAs are groupings of counties with close social and economic ties. The geographic delineations are used by planners, sociologists, community service providers, and other researchers as a basis for defining study or service areas.

In 2013, OMB released its new definition of the Knoxville Metropolitan Statistical Area, expanding it from five counties—Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Union—to nine with the addition of Campbell, Grainger, Morgan, and Roane. As a result, the region's population grew from 698,000 to nearly 838,000. IS staff reported the changes by compiling Census Bureau data, formatted reports, and a detailed

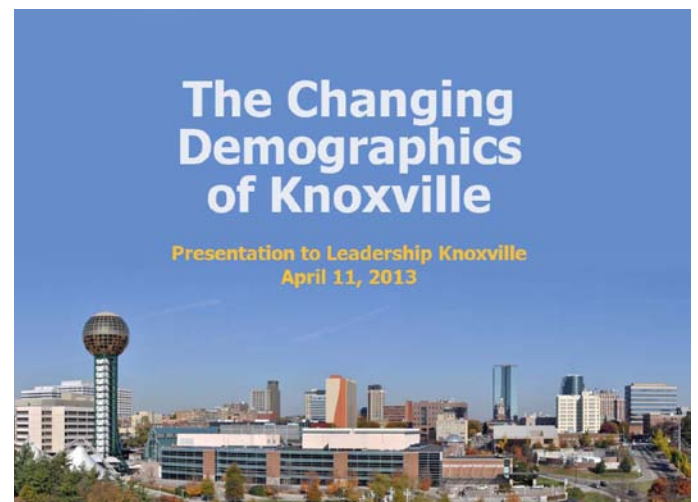


The PlanET website offered many opportunities for online participation in the process.

presentation to assist local users of socio-economic information. All of the IS products were made available through the MPC website.

## Property Market Studies

IS staff is responsible for researching and writing three property market reports published by MPC as a public service: Office Market Analysis, Shopping Center Market Analysis, and Industrial Space Inventory. The office market is analyzed yearly while the other reports



IS staff prepared several products to explain new Metropolitan Statistical Area boundaries.



are produced on a less frequent, rotating basis. This year's efforts included the office and shopping center reports.

**Office Market Analysis**

Knoxville's office property markets made a lukewarm showing in 2012. The areawide vacancy rate climbed 200 basis points, from 14.9 percent in 2011 to 16.9 percent this year. The downtown market reported slightly higher availability, up from 14.1 percent in 2011 to 14.7 percent, but the year's big story was the large increase reported in suburban market vacancies, swelling 270 basis points to an overall rate of 18.0 percent.

Occupancy fell in all Knoxville sub-markets, and areawide absorption turned negative, dropping to levels similar to those last seen in 2010. Absorption figures for the suburbs showed a 365,000-square foot loss, while downtown absorption was 65,000 square feet in the red.

Two new properties were added to the local inventory this year: the 17,000-square foot Southeast Eye Center on Conner Road in the North sub-market and the 9,600-square foot building at 306 Prosperity Drive in the Cedar Bluff sub-market.

Among Knoxville's three main categories of rentable office inventory, general use accounted for the bulk (68 percent share) with a vacancy rate of 17.9 percent. Medical followed with more than 3.3 million square feet of rentable space and 25.0 percent availability. Government use comprised the remaining supply with the lowest vacancy, 7.0 percent.

**Shopping Center Market Analysis**

In the last couple of years, the national economy has shown modest improvement. Unemployment was 8.2 percent in April, 2012, down from 9.0 percent during the same period in 2011, while per capita retail sales were up 7.6

percent in 2011. Although employment and consumer confidence improved, total retail sales performance figures were only slightly above those registered in 2007.

According to analysts, national retail vacancies remained flat, hovering around 11 percent over the last three quarters of 2011. Despite stagnant availability, the prospects of economic improvement stirred developers to revive retail projects shelved when the economy contracted in early 2008. This was evidenced by new retail supply increasing from 23 million square feet in 2010, to almost 50 million square feet delivered in 2011. Most analysts, however, do not expect the pace of new retail development to accelerate further until 2014.

Since last reported by MPC in 2008, the Knox County shopping center market offered mixed signals about its overall health. The inventory of gross leasable retail space increased 7.9 percent for a total of 17.7 million square feet countywide, however, while new supply was added, vacancies climbed from 9.2 percent in 2008 to 12.9 percent availability in 2012. Among local sub-markets, results also were mixed. Broadway/North, Chapman/Alcoa, and Farragut/Pellissippi each reported inventory gains over 300,000 square feet, but they also recorded some of the county's highest vacancies.

**Addressing**

MPC's Addressing Department ensures that each residence and place of business in Knox County is systematically assigned a valid, unique address, complete with a building number and road name. Correct addresses are essential for the community's safety and for proper service delivery. There are more than 250,000 addresses currently in use in Knox County.

New addresses must be approved as part of the MPC subdivision and development plan review process. Also, all activities



*Office Market Analysis is produced annually, while Shopping Center Market Analysis is published on a rotating basis with other property studies.*



requiring building permits (construction, demolition, and improvements) need address verification by the Addressing Department. This type of work, known as address certification, involves close communication with citizens, businesses, land developers, utility providers, and the postal service.

During FY2012-13, Addressing staff created 1,984 addresses for new development. Staff also changed or corrected 12,355 existing addresses, added 99 new street segments to the county base map, and modified 170 existing street segments.

## MPC Online

Staff continued to increase the amount of online information available to the public by managing the official websites for MPC and TPO as well as sites for several related groups. In FY2012-13, the MPC website hosted 59,000 visitors who viewed nearly 150,000 pages. During the same

period the TPO site had more than 30,000 visitors and 57,000 page views.

Additions/improvements to MPC online:

- Development Activity Report, 2012
- Knoxville Area Facts and Figures, 2013
- North County Sector Plan
- South County Sector Plan
- East City Sector Plan update page
- Central City Sector Plan update page
- New and improved Population Data section
- Office Market Analysis for Knoxville and Knox County, 2012
- MPC News: 32 articles published
- Technical Reports: Knox County's Population Center and The Prevalence of Disabilities in the Knoxville Region

Additions/improvements to TPO online:

- Special event sites for Bike Month, Neighborhood Bike Ride, and Tour de Lights
- Knoxville Regional Transit Corridor Study
- Long Range Mobility Plan 2040

Other sites that MPC manages:

- Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenway Council
- Historic Preservation in Knoxville and Knox County
- Knox-Blount Greenway, new in 2012
- PlanET
- Smart Trips, redesigned in 2013
- Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association

- Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority

In addition to traditional websites, MPC has expanded its social media presence by using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Constant Contact (email service) to keep the public informed and to drive visitors to the MPC, TPO, Smart Trips, and PlanET websites.

## MPC Library

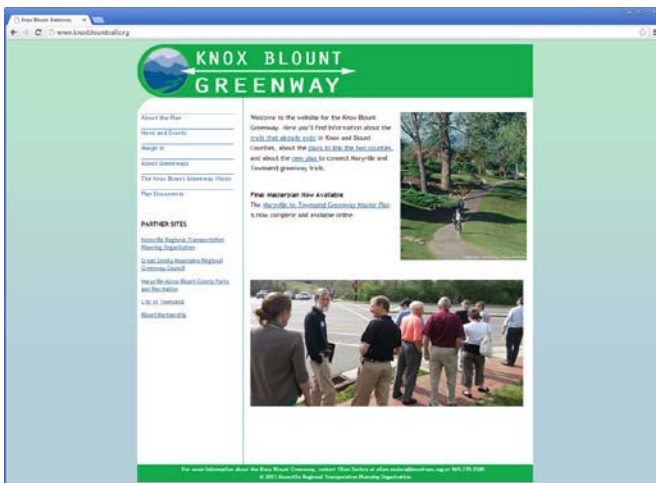
The MPC Library is home to thousands of reports, journals, and books on a wide range of urban, rural, and regional planning topics. The library also includes print and digital U.S. Census material and other government data sets.

MPC-produced holdings include Planning Commission meeting materials, such as applications, staff reports, and supporting documents for subdivision, rezoning, use on review, and all other case types. The records date back to 1939 and are available digitally (PDF) for reading or printing. The MPC library also is the repository of all documents researched and published by MPC staff.

The library is open to the public each weekday during regular business hours.

Recent staff publications:

- Development Activity Report, 2012
- Knoxville Area Facts and Figures, 2013
- Knoxville One Year Plan, 2013
- Long Range Regional Mobility Plan 2040
- MPC Annual Report, FY2011-12
- North County Sector Plan
- Office Market Analysis for Knoxville and Knox County, 2012
- Preservation 2012: A Report to the Knoxville Mayor
- Shopping Center Market Analysis for Knoxville and Knox County, 2012
- South County Sector Plan
- Technical Report: The Prevalence of Disabilities in the Knoxville Region



IS staff added the Knox Blount Greenway website to their stable in 2013.



# Boards and Committees Supported by MPC Staff

As an extension of their work with the Planning Commission, MPC staff participated in a variety of boards, committees, and task forces.

## TTCDA

The Tennessee Technology Corridor Development Authority concept is based upon the ability to achieve aesthetic quality and environmental conservation for developments within the Technology Overlay zones of the city and the county. Design guidelines shape future development and ensure quality design in the development process. By building on the area's existing assets, the guidelines attempt to achieve functional, aesthetic, and visual unity while maintaining individual user expression.

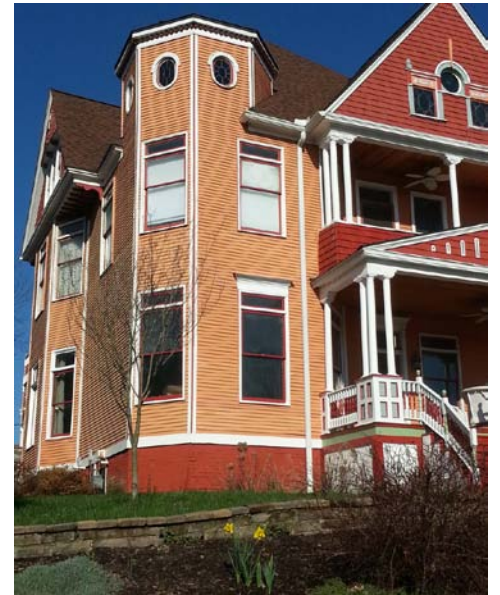
During the year, the TTCDA considered and approved enhanced requirements for notifying the general public about cases coming before the Board for action. An expanded newspaper public notice, signage, and more detailed agenda information for the TTCDA webpage were adopted. To cover the cost of these new requirements, the Board also adopted a revised fee schedule for all applications requiring full Board approval.

The TTCDA Board welcomed Tammy White and Dr. Anthony Wise as full Board members. White is the Executive Director of Leadership Knoxville, and Wise is President of Pellissippi State Community College. With their addition, the Board now has a full complement of seven members. Chairman David Collins and member Ben Pethel were reappointed to new five-year terms.

## Historic Zoning Commission

The Historic Zoning Commissions (HZC) for Knoxville and Knox County are responsible for reviewing applications to repair, alter, rehabilitate, relocate, or demolish properties protected by local historic overlay districts (zoned H-1); reviewing proposed new construction within historic overlay districts; and, identifying historic properties for local or National Register designation.

Upon design review and approval of proposed work within historic district overlays, a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is issued by the HZC or MPC staff. Design review of work within historic districts is intended to assist in stabilizing and improving property



*The Historic Zoning Commission saw an increase in applications during the year.*

values in historic areas by encouraging rehabilitation or new construction that is harmonious with the historic area. Out of 120 COA applications this fiscal year, 117 were approved, and three were denied. This total is a slight increase over the previous year's 115 applications. Fourth and Gill and Old North Knoxville Historic Districts led the way with 44 and 42 reviews respectively.

## Infill Housing Review Committee

MPC's Infill Housing Design Review Committee examines applications for new housing in established neighborhoods for conformance to the Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Design Guidelines. The committee ensures that development within the Infill Housing Overlay District (IH-1) is architecturally compatible with the neighborhood, fosters neighborhood stability, creates pedestrian-oriented streets, and meets a wide range of housing needs. The nine-member review committee includes MPC staff and representatives from



*MPC staff supports the TTCDA board in reviewing development applications in the Technology Corridor.*





*The Infill Housing Design Review Committee helps neighborhoods retain their character.*

City Plans Review and Inspections, City Engineering, City Community Development, and the East Tennessee Community Design Center. The committee meets the fourth Wednesday of each month.

In FY2012-13, the review committee issued 14 certificates that resulted in nine new houses, two additions, and three new lots in Edgewood Park, Lonsdale, and Oakwood/Lincoln Park. In addition, MPC staff participated on the City of Knoxville Community

Development Department's Infill Committee and assisted in the review of 15 houses that were funded through various city programs.

**Downtown Design Review Board**

The Downtown Design Review Board examines development proposals for private and public projects in Knoxville's center city. The goal of the review board is to foster attractive and harmonious development and rehabilitation of the downtown area.



*A series of demolition requests have spurred a review of the Downtown Design Review Guidelines.*

Twenty-two projects were reviewed by the Downtown Design Review Board in the past year. The majority of applications were for signs, awnings, and minor exterior alterations (such as new storefronts and windows). Some notable projects included exterior renovations of the Medical Arts Building and Andrew Johnson Building and expansion of the State Street Garage. The board also reviewed three demolition requests which have spurred a review of the guidelines and ordinances related to the demolition of structures downtown.



*Since the inception of PlanET nearly every MPC staff member has been involved with the project.*



## Other Committee, Board, and Task Force Participation by MPC Staff

- Beaver Creek Technical Committee
- C-7 Cumberland Avenue Design Review Board
- CBID Development Committee
- Community Action Committee Board of Directors
- Community Action Committee Transportation Advisory Committee
- Community Action Committee Volunteer Assisted Transportation Committee
- Community Development Facade Review Committee
- Community Development Infill Housing Committee
- Cumberland Avenue Advisory Committee
- East Tennessee Community Design Center
- East Tennessee Council on Aging and Disability
- East Tennessee Quality Growth
- East Tennessee U.S. Green Building Council
- Geography Network of East Tennessee
- Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenway Council
- Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities Steering Committee
- I-81 Corridor Coalition
- Incident Management Task Force
- KGIS Coordinating Committee
- Knox County Air Pollution Control Board
- Knox County Board of Zoning Appeals
- Knox County Community Health Council
- Knox County Parks Board
- Knox County Safe Routes to School Partnership
- Knox Greenways Coalition
- Knox Heritage Ex-Officio Board Member
- Knox Heritage Preservation Advocacy Committee
- Knoxville Board of Zoning Appeals
- Knoxville City Council's Public Property Naming Committee
- Knoxville Greenways Commission
- Knoxville Regional Freight Advisory Committee
- Knoxville Regional Project Action Coalition
- Knoxville Transportation Authority
- Knoxville Tree Board
- Knoxville Utilities Board Pace 10 Partners Council
- Knoxville-Knox County Food Policy Council
- Magnolia Avenue Warehouse District Advisory Committee
- Pioneering Healthier Communities
- PlanET Board of Mayors
- PlanET Community Leadership Team
- PlanET Consortium
- PlanET Equity Team
- PlanET Working Groups:
  - Economy and Workforce
  - Environment
  - Healthy Communities
  - Housing and Neighborhoods
  - Transportation and Infrastructure
- Rural Transportation Planning
- Safe Routes to School State Network
- Tennessee Model Users Group
- Tennessee Regions Roundtable - Steering Committee
- Together! Healthy Knox
- Transportation Research Board Committee – Strategic Highway Research Program

## 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 best practices:

- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations Annual Meeting
- Cumberland Region Tomorrow's Power of Ten Summit
- Drivers' Education Program for Knox County, Blount County, Alcoa, and Maryville Schools
- East Tennessee Equity Summit
- Envision Utah's Scenario Planning Workshop
- Federal Highway Administration Panel on Greenhouse Gases
- Greater Knoxville Research Network
- League of Women Voters
- National Association of Development Organizations
- National, state, and local chapter meetings of the American Planning Association
- Regional Symposium on Implementing Transit
- Smaller Places Summit – Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy
- State and regional GIS conferences
- Tennessee Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers Conference
- Travel Model Improvement Program Webinars
- U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development Sustainable Communities and Housing Convention
- U.S. Green Building Council Southeast Leadership Summit
- Watershed Academy

# Financial Summary

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**Statement of Revenues/Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance**  
**Budget and Actual - General Fund**  
**For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2013**  
(Pending audit by Pugh & Company, P.C.)

	<u>Final Budget</u>	<u>UNAUDITED 2013 Actual</u>	<u>Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)</u>
<b>Revenues:</b>			
Fees and Charges	\$399,000	\$459,664	\$60,664
Federal Government Grants (1)	3,231,100	2,519,347	(711,753)
State of Tennessee Grants (1)	243,000	234,010	(8,990)
Local Grant Match (other than MPC)	0	4,153	4,153
City of Knoxville	905,000	905,000	0
Knox County	546,000	546,000	0
Miscellaneous Contracts (2)	20,191	27,031	6,840
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b><u>\$5,344,291</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,695,205</u></b>	<b><u>(\$649,086)</u></b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
Salaries and Employee Benefits	\$2,738,561	\$2,644,846	\$93,715
Contracted Services	2,251,800	1,587,205	664,595
Supplies and Materials	124,300	63,286	61,014
Other Charges	205,700	197,837	7,863
Capital Outlay	13,000	0	13,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b><u>\$5,333,361</u></b>	<b><u>\$4,493,174</u></b>	<b><u>\$840,187</u></b>
Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	\$10,930	\$202,031	\$191,101
Fund Balance, July 1	\$698,292	\$698,292	\$0
Fund Balance, June 30	<b><u>\$709,222</u></b>	<b><u>\$900,323</u></b>	<b><u>\$191,101</u></b>

## Footnotes:

1 - Ten grant programs include:

FHWA Highway Planning and Construction; FTA Technical Studies; Regional Transportation and Air Quality; Knoxville Smart Trips Program; Knoxville Car Share Program; TPO Bike Parking Enhancement; Regional Transit Corridors Study; FTA Job Access and Reverse Commute; FTA New Freedom; Sustainable Communities Grant Program / PlanET (pass through City of Knoxville).

2 - Miscellaneous contracts - actuals:

PBA/Knox County Schools PEFA III, \$10,191; Cumberland Region Tomorrow, \$10,000; Miscellaneous, \$6,840.



## **ONLINE QUICK REFERENCE**

Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC)

[www.knoxmpc.org](http://www.knoxmpc.org)

Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)

[www.knoxtrans.org](http://www.knoxtrans.org)

Plan East Tennessee (PlanET)

[www.planeasttn.org](http://www.planeasttn.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)

Great Smoky Mountains Regional Greenways Council

[www.smokymountainsgreenways.org](http://www.smokymountainsgreenways.org)

Knox Blount Greenway

[www.knoxblounttrail.org](http://www.knoxblounttrail.org)

KNOXVILLE·KNOX COUNTY

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