

KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY PLANNING

1956 CELEBRATING 70 YEARS 2026

ANNUAL REPORT
FY 2025-2026



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This year marks Knoxville-Knox County Planning's 70th anniversary. Much has changed since the agency's inception- regional priorities, processes, and the people who have dedicated countless hours to serving our community - but what remains is our agency's commitment to ensuring a healthy and vibrant community for all.

This is evident in the long-range work our staff is undertaking that provides once-in-a-generation opportunities for our community. Advance Knox is well into its final stage, creating Knox County's Unified Development Ordinance, which will combine all relevant development regulations into one document that supports the vision created in the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan adopted in 2024. After many rounds of outreach, a full draft will be released later this year.

This spring, we also teamed up with the City of Knoxville to embark on an update of the city's Comprehensive Plan – a guiding document that will direct decisions on land use, transportation, and investment priorities for the next 25 years. The process is called What's Next Knoxville? because at the heart of this effort is the community participation that will shape the city's long-term vision for the future. A draft plan is expected by next year.

In addition to these major projects, our team manages day-to-day work: balancing monthly caseloads, collaborating with our partners on plans and studies, and supporting internal and external teams through data analysis and reporting, website development, graphic design, and more.

Central to all our endeavors is the community and ensuring that everyone is invited to help shape the future. I encourage you to read through the following pages to learn more about our accomplishments over the past year and the opportunities for continued collaboration in the year ahead.



OUR MISSION

Promote healthy, vibrant communities through comprehensive planning and land use management; involve residents in an open planning process; provide objective advice to public officials; and serve as an information resource for all.

OUR CORE DUTIES

Prepare and Adopt

a general plan

Review

subdivision regulations and site plans

Prepare and Recommend

zoning ordinances and maps

Review

proposed zoning amendments

Advise and Review

on a capital improvements plan

Perform

special purpose studies

**KNOX COUNTY
BY THE NUMBERS**

Population

511,453

\$75,210

Median household income

232,546

Housing units

Median home selling price

\$368,500

Public parks

6,441.6
acres

85.9

Cost of living
index (100
U.S. average)

42.4%

Population with
bachelor's degree
or higher

Labor force

261,158

12.1%

Population
growth over
past 10 years

3.1%

Unemployment rate

Area

526
sq.
miles

Greenways and
walking trails

235.1
miles



PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

The Planning Commission is an advisory board made up of 15 citizens—seven appointed by the City Mayor and eight by the County Mayor.

These volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds, representing diverse community interests and concerns. They serve staggered four-year terms and may be re-appointed. The Commission meets the second Thursday of every month.

Executive Committee: On an annual basis, the Planning Commission Chair appoints an Executive Committee consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and three other members of the Commission. Terms are one year in length.

The Executive Committee reviews and recommends the annual budget and work program, and consults and advises on matters brought by the Executive Director.

Executive Committee Membership:
Matthew Anderson, Lou Browning, Tim Hill,
John Huber (Chair), Richard Levenson (Vice-Chair)

The Planning Commission heard **515 total cases**

- 176 Rezoning
- 93 Subdivisions (preliminary and final plats)
- 80 Development plans
- 55 Plan amendments
- 43 Special uses
- 29 Other business
- 22 Use on reviews
- 10 Ordinance amendments
- 5 Planned developments
- 2 Hillside protection

MAIN ASSEMBLY



MATTHEW ANDERSON
County | 2024-2028

NANCY BARGER
County | 2022-2026

MILES BIGGS
City | 2023-2027

TAMARA BOYER
County | 2018-2026

LOUIS BROWNING
County | 2018-2028

MARGARET BUTLER
City | 2025-2029

KARA DALEY
County | 2024-2028

NICK GILL
City | 2024-2028

TIM HILL
City | 2019-2027

JOHN HUBER (CHAIR)
County | 2022-2026

RICHARD LEVENSON (VICE-CHAIR)
County | 2022-2026

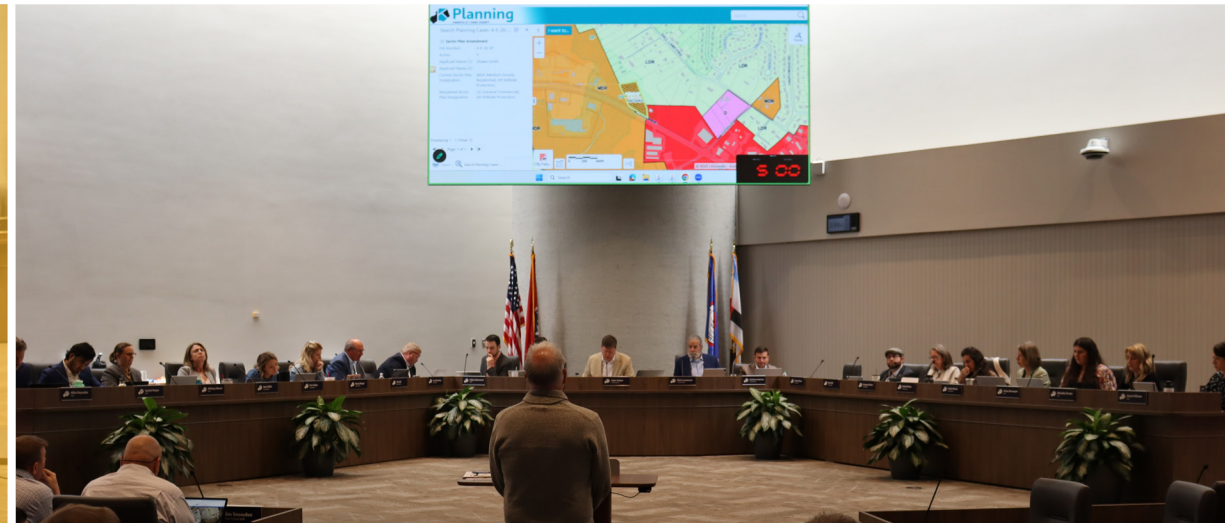
AMY MIDAS
City | 2021-2027

MARITÉ PÉREZ
City | 2021-2029

CATHY SHUCK
City | 2026-2028

KATIE OVERTON
County | 2023-2026

Planning thanks outgoing Commissioners Karyn Adams (2020-2025), Logan Higgins (2021-2025), and Katie Overton (2023-2026), for their service to the community.



**DEVELOPMENT
ACTIVITY**

Value of residential construction **\$1.4 BILLION**



163
Non-residential units permitted



1,905
Residential subdivision lots created



5,822
Residential units permitted



\$554.1 MILLION
Value of non-residential construction

PLANNING SERVICES

Planning Services staff guide residents, developers, and others through local review processes. Planners evaluate requests for rezonings, subdivisions, and development plans, and they prepare a recommendation for each case that will be considered by the Planning Commission.

The group creates and updates plans and conducts special studies, like park inventories, small area plans, and guidelines for neighborhood overlays. Staff also maintain the county's property addressing system. Planning Services works closely with several city and county departments, as well as our own Transportation Planning division, promoting the interconnectivity of land use and transportation infrastructure.

MICHELLE PORTIER, AICP
Planning Services Manager

JAKE BEAUMIER
Assistant Planner

ELLIE BERNSTEIN
Assistant Planner

KELSEY BOUSQUET
Planner

DALLAS DEARMOND
Administrative Assistant II

CHASE EUBANKS
Assistant Planner

SHELLEY GRAY
Senior Planning Services Specialist

SAMIUL HAQUE
Planner

JESSIE HILLMAN, AICP
Principal Planner

OSCAR INIGUEZ
Assistant Planner

LINDSAY LANOIS, AICP
Principal Planner/Design Review Program Manager

TINA PIATT, APHR
Business Officer

MIKE REYNOLDS, AICP
Principal Planner

WHITNEY WARNER, AICP
Planner

MALYNDA WOLLERT
Assistant Planner

ADDRESSING & PLATS

This team maintains the county's property addressing system. They make sure that each residence and place of business in Knox County is systematically assigned a valid, unique address, complete with structure number and road name, essential for the community's safety and proper service delivery.

They are also responsible for regulating subdivision of all land in Knox County, other than the town of Farragut. Final plats are reviewed and certified by staff. Plats requiring a variance from the subdivision regulations, or those that create 26 or more lots, require approval by the Planning Commission prior to certification.

ANDREA KUPFER, AICP
Planning Services Supervisor

SOPHIA DIECKHAUS
Planning & Addressing Specialist

DAVID HOBBS
Planning & Addressing Specialist

FRANKIE RAMOS
Senior Planning & Subdivision Specialist

SPENCER SCHMUDDE
Planning & Subdivision Specialist



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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

Staff members collaborate with the Planning Services division on corridor studies, small area plans, and other land use planning activities, in addition to working closely with the engineering departments and transportation service providers of Knoxville, Knox County, and several surrounding communities.

DOUG BURTON
TPO Coordinator

JONAH BIRD
Planner

MIKE CONGER, PE
Senior Transportation Engineer

CRAIG LUEBKE, AICP
Senior Planner

INFORMATION SERVICES

This division comprises several support functions, including research, GIS, web development, graphic design, and communications. Staff assist agency-wide planning activities by conducting background research for plans and presentations, maintaining the print and digital library, and leading community outreach efforts.

Planning's geographic information systems (GIS) group maintains land and infrastructure data systems and produces maps. Web and design staff are responsible for content management and presentation of the many websites housed at Planning, and they prepare artwork and layouts for the agency's plans, reports, and brochures.

TERRY GILHULA, PHD
Information Services Manager

NICK SCHOENBORN
GIS & IT Program Manager

EMILY JACKSON
Research Assistant

ELIZABETH SEMANDE
GIS Specialist

AUBREY WEILAND
Senior Research Associate

ALEX ZENDEL
GIS Analyst II

ALLY KETRON
Strategic Planning &
Communications Manager

JOSH ANDERSON
Senior Web Developer

JOSH BOKOR
Graphic Designer

BECCA JAMES
Communications &
Outreach Specialist

JENNA MUETTERTIES
Assistant Webmaster /
Web Developer



PLANNING ACTIVITY TIMELINE

2025

JULY

Assistant Webmaster/Web Developer Jenna Muetterties joins staff

2025 Facts and Figures Report is available

2024-2025 Annual Report is available

AUGUST

Staff participate in the city's Neighborhood Resources Fair

Second round of statewide My Travels Count Mobility Survey begins

SEPTEMBER

Planning and Knox County staff host Unified Development Ordinance open houses

Case Mapping Viewer is available for Historic Zoning Commission and Design Review Board cases

Staff participate in PARK(ing) Day

OCTOBER

Transit Supportive Development Study is available

FY 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program is adopted

Staff participates in the UT Campus Bike Fair

NOVEMBER

Breathe project team completes Regional Comprehensive Climate Action Plan

DECEMBER

Updated Interactive Crash Map and Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Facts Report are available

2026

JANUARY

Staff hosts One Year Plan public meetings

UDO virtual meeting series begins

FEBRUARY

Staff participates in Knox County Junior Commissioner sessions

MARCH

UDO draft zoning map is available and in-person meetings held

APRIL

What's Next Knoxville begins with in-person listening sessions

Assistant Planner Ellie Bernstein joins staff

One Year Plan is adopted

MAY

What's Next Knoxville? headquarters open in Market Square

Staff participates in local events to promote What's Next Knoxville?

JUNE

Staff participates in local events to promote What's Next Knoxville?

Assistant Planner Chase Eubanks joins staff

2025 Development Activity Report is available



In addition to their day-to-day work, our staff participates in many long-term planning processes. The following is a sampling of the major projects our team worked on over the past year.

KNOX COUNTY UDO

Staff continues working on the final phase of Advance Knox – the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Several rounds of in-person and virtual meetings have been conducted to share materials and provide opportunities for feedback on components of the draft ordinance and a proposed zoning map. Edits have been made throughout the process based on additional review and feedback. The first full draft of the UDO will be released later this year.

CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Together with the City of Knoxville, we have begun an update to the city's Comprehensive Plan which will guide decisions on land use, transportation, and investment priorities over the next 25 years. The process is called "What's Next Knoxville?" because we are asking for community input to shape the city's long-term vision for the future. The project kicked off with a series of listening sessions, outreach at local events, and a headquarters in Market Square. A second round of public engagement will take place in the fall.

COMPREHENSIVE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The City of Knoxville, with regional outreach support from our staff, completed Breathe: A Climate Action Plan for the Knoxville Region. This Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) was created through collaboration with the community, nonprofits, business leaders, and technical experts, and provides actionable strategies, that if implemented, will create a more healthy, resilient future.

CRASH DATA DASHBOARD & FACT SHEET

Staff updated the Crash Data Dashboard to provide greater insights and be more user-friendly. The tool is publicly available on the TPO website and allows users to review crash data dating back to 2015. The dashboard is interactive, giving users options to select specific criteria or to zoom in and out on the map to review data. It can be used for more specific analysis, like the Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crash Facts report that our staff also created to highlight trends in those specific types of crashes.

TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPMENT STUDY

Staff, along with the City of Knoxville and Knoxville Area Transit, completed the Transit Supportive Development Study. The study was a continuation of the previous year's work on the Priority Investment Areas map and can be used to create a corridor-based investment strategy to align land use, housing, and mobility planning with economic development and transit investment in order to expand access to jobs, housing, education, healthcare, parks, and everyday amenities.



AGENCY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Our agency tracks outreach efforts to measure visibility, participation, public interest, and feedback.

MEDIA

- 18 Articles shared on Planning & TPO websites
- 229 News articles published by local media

SOCIAL MEDIA

- 909 LinkedIn followers
- 1,345 Planning Facebook followers
- 585 TPO Facebook followers
- 74,632 Nextdoor impressions

NEWSLETTERS (OPENED)

- 11,044 Planning
- 5,006 TPO
- 434 Advance Knox
- 219 What's Next? Knoxville

OUTREACH & MEETINGS

- 37 Presentations to groups
- 49 Public meetings & events
- 23 days What's Next Knoxville Headquarters open



Boards Supported by Planning Staff

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

The Design Review Board examines proposals for private and public development in Knoxville's center city. The group also reviews applications for infill housing in Edgewood, Lonsdale, and Oakwood/Lincoln Park neighborhoods for conformance with the Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Guidelines. The goal of the review board is to foster attractive and harmonious development and rehabilitation of the downtown area and to ensure infill development is architecturally compatible with established neighborhoods, fosters community stability, creates pedestrian-oriented streets, and meets a wide range of housing needs.

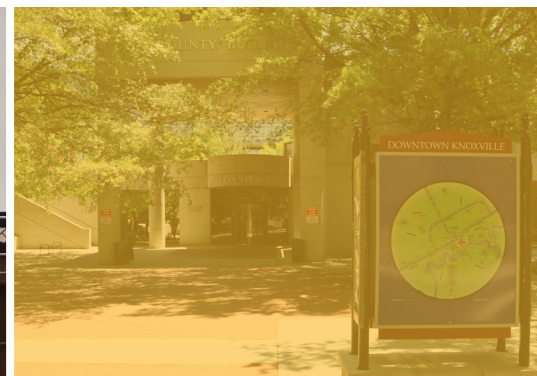
HISTORIC ZONING COMMISSIONS

The Historic Zoning Commissions for Knoxville and Knox County evaluate projects proposed in local Historic Overlay districts. Work of the commissions is intended to stabilize or improve property values by encouraging rehabilitation and new construction that is harmonious with the area. The commissions review applications to repair, alter, rehabilitate, relocate, or demolish properties; review proposed new construction; and identify properties for local or National Register of Historic Places designation.

TPO EXECUTIVE BOARD AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The TPO Executive Board and Technical Committee work with staff to make decisions on regional transportation plans and projects. The Executive Board, which sets policy and adopts plans, is made up of elected officials from the TPO planning area, representatives from the East Tennessee Development District, and the Governor of Tennessee. The Technical Committee consists of local planners and engineers who work closely with staff and make recommendations to the Executive Board.

In addition to the boards and commissions supported by our agency, our staff are involved in many local and regional organizations. They serve on task forces, councils, and committees where their experience and expertise make positive contributions to our community.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

Our staff collectively volunteered with several community organizations over the winter, including FISH Pantries, Ijams Nature Center, Knoxville–Knox County CAC, and Second Harvest Food Bank. In addition, staff members dedicate their personal time to volunteering in the following ways:

Amy Brooks serves as Treasurer for the Tennessee Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Mike Conger serves as President of the Tennessee Model Users Group.

Dallas DeArmond serves on the board for the Community School for the Arts.

Jessie Hillman serves as Treasurer for the Knoxville Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Becca James volunteers with Karns Community Fair, Tennessee Valley Fair, and West Knox County Little League.

Andrea Kupfer volunteers at Clarence Brown Theater.

Michelle Portier volunteers at East Tennessee Children’s Hospital.

Whitney Warner serves on the board for Two Bikes.

STAFF PROMOTIONS

Nick Schoenborn – GIS & IT Program Manager

YEARS OF SERVICE

30+ years

37 Terry Gilhula

36 Doug Burton

20+ years

28 Mike Conger

10+ years

19 Amy Brooks

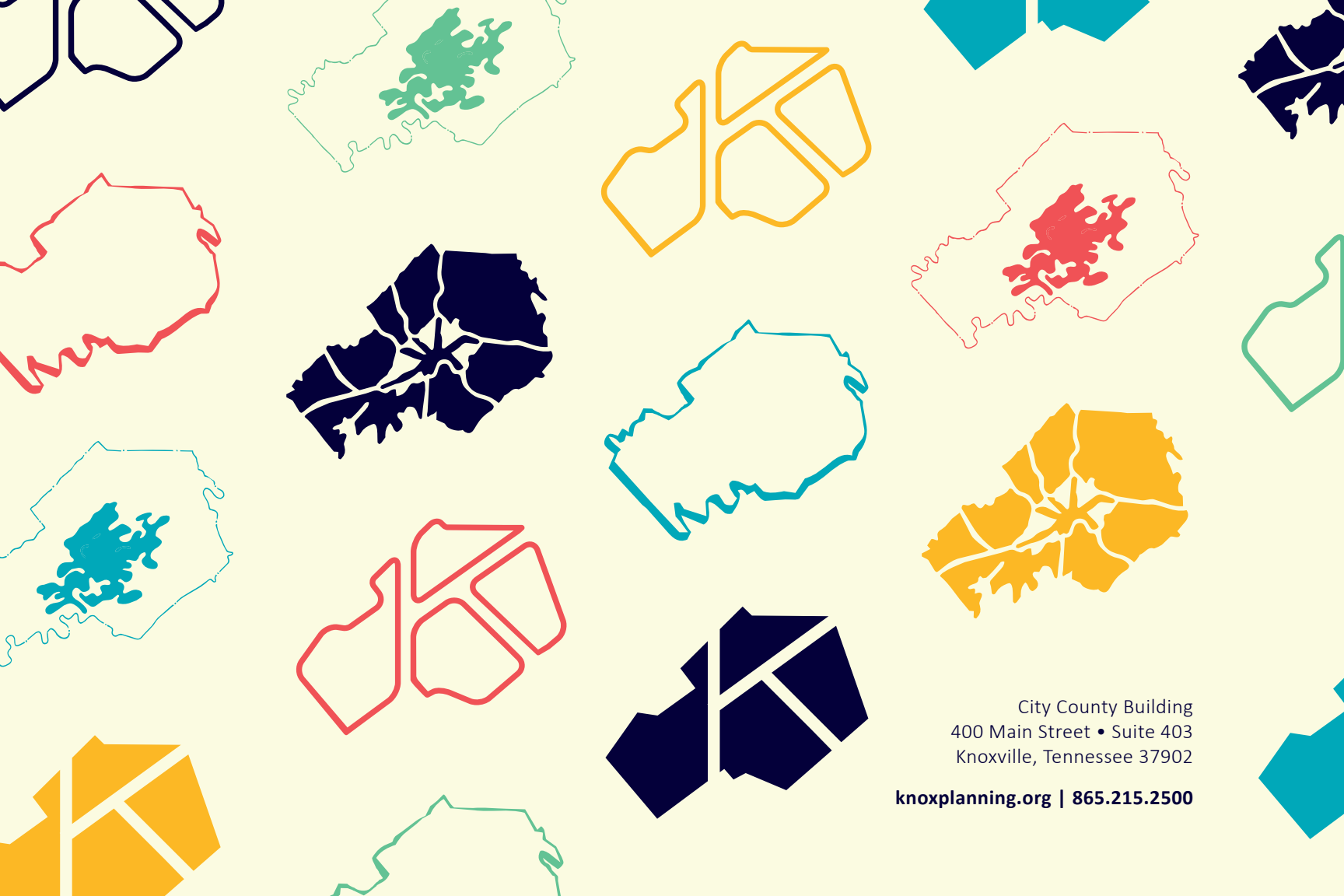
18 Mike Reynolds

12 Nick Schoenborn

10 Ally Ketron

10 Josh Anderson





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