



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Plan East Tennessee (PlanET) Report to be Released**

The Metropolitan Planning Commission has completed the first edition of the PlanET *State of the Region* report, a detailed look at the economic, environmental, and physical health of five East Tennessee counties. The report is the first major product to come out of the regional planning effort that got underway in February. PlanET is a collaborative process to support metropolitan and multi-jurisdictional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Union counties. The three-year process is supported by a grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to a large consortium of project partners in the five county region. The consortium of partners has begun meeting to help identify all of the potential stakeholders in the region. All of the mayors of cities and counties within the planning area have been invited to play a role in the planning process. MPC will manage the planning process.

### **Major findings from the *State of the Region* report:**

- Almost 90 percent of the region's households spend more than 45 percent of income on housing and transportation combined.
- Public transportation accounts for only 0.3 percent of commuter trips in the region compared to five percent nationwide.

- 15 percent of the region's population lives in poverty.
- The top ten employers in the region are in government and health care industries.
- Anderson, Blount, Knox, and Loudon counties register some of the highest numbers of days for harmful levels of particle pollution and ozone among all counties in the state.
- Knoxville ranks as the fourth most challenging place in the country to live with asthma.
- Diabetes, heart disease, and childhood obesity are prevalent health concerns across the region.

The *State of the Region* report will be released at the next PlanET consortium meeting, Tuesday, June 21, 10:30 a.m. – noon at the Oak Ridge Chamber of Commerce. The report will also be available online: [www.planeasttn.org](http://www.planeasttn.org) The project website will share information and keep the public informed about upcoming meetings and related events.

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