

# UPDATE

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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 22, 2010

## Meetings

MPC staff has scheduled a public meeting to review the proposed **R-4 (Residential / Office) zone district**, which would become a part of the City of Knoxville zoning code.

The meeting has been scheduled for **Thursday, March 25**, at 6:00 p.m. in the Small Assembly Room of the City County Building. It is anticipated the proposed ordinance amendment will be scheduled for consideration by MPC at its April 8 meeting. The draft regulations are available online at [www.knoxmpc.org](http://www.knoxmpc.org).

At the urging of Vice-Mayor Bob Becker, the City of Knoxville administration has released MPC staff to continue its effort to replace the existing R-4 zoning regulations with new regulations intended to create a **flexible, mixed-use zone district** that will allow the development of residences and low intensity office and professional uses within mixed-use land use plan classifications. The district is intended to be used as a transition between more intense development and low density residential uses, within a neighborhood center, or at the edge of established neighborhoods along arterial and major collector streets.

## Excellence Awards

The **deadline** for 2010 Excellence Awards nominations, April 2, is just around the corner. Please be sure to nominate any project that you think are worth of this recognition. The categories and criteria are available at [www.knoxmpc.org](http://www.knoxmpc.org).

## Smart Trips

In April, Smart Trips will unveil a comprehensive marketing campaign for the **2010 Commuter Challenge**. The campaign will include print, radio, television, billboards, bus advertisements and a new website, [www.knoxspat.com](http://www.knoxspat.com), which is being developed for the campaign. Smart Trips also will have booths at several community events in April and May with creative ways to engage passers-by.

## TPO

Jeff Welch and Mike Conger participated in a **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) workshop** last week. Staff is working to develop a process to incorporate environmental policies in the development of transportation projects.

The US Senate recently passed the **Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment Act**. The main provisions of this act regarding transportation are:

Extends SAFETEA-LU through Dec. 2010, providing funding through that time.

Restores the \$8.7 Billion that was rescinded in Sept. 2009. The TPO should see approximately \$8.3 million of Surface Transportation Program funds returned to us as well as Congestion Mitigation air Quality and Planning funds returned.

Funding for the federal highway program will be at FY 2009 levels, not the lower 30% lower level we have been allocated since Oct. 1, 2009.

TPO will administer two grants awarded to Knox County CAC. The **Job Access and Reverse Commute Program** will provide \$380,000 for transportation to get individuals to and from work. The **New Freedom Program** will provide \$376,000 to provide transportation for people who are disabled.

## Hillside and Ridgetop Task Force

The draft **Hillside and Ridgetop Protection Plan** has been reviewed by the task force co-chairs and should soon be available on the MPC website. Staff is in the process of completing the proposals and policy section of the plan, which should go before MPC in May. The plan will be presented at a task force meeting and a public meeting in April.

## Comprehensive Planning

Staff have worked with the city's Community Development department to outline a **summary report** of the 10-year Empowerment Zone project. A publication that includes this information should be finished in June.

During its March meeting, the **Downtown Design Review Board** voted to approve the placement of a Clayton i-house on S. Broadway. Staff felt the location and positioning of this unit is appropriate because it does not have direct road or sidewalk access so it cannot address the street as a typical structure downtown would.