



Municipal Technical Advisory Service
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2022 | QUARTER 3 | ISSUE 105



Selected New MTAS Resources

[ADA Coordinator Position in Selected Tennessee Cities and Towns](#)

[Regulation of Mailboxes in the Rights-of-Way](#)

[Water Needs of Tennessee Fire Departments](#)

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[New Knowledgebase materials](#)

[New MRLn materials](#)

[New MORE materials](#)

[Register for MTAS Training Event \(K@TE\)](#)



**VIEW OUR CURRENT
TRAINING CALENDAR**

Municipal Technical Advisory Service
UT Institute for Public Service

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TENNESSEE RETAIL ALLIANCE

The Tennessee Retail Alliance with the partnership of UT MTAS is now official. The first meeting with future member cities was held this month to evaluate and demonstrate software for the new organization. The software will assist in attracting the best-fit retailers and businesses and provide data driven insights to existing retailers and property owners to boost sales, increase tax bases and drive economic growth. Check out the software: [Get Local Foot Traffic Data to Drive Economic Development.](#)

Tennessee cities are the economic engine of our state. For many communities, sales tax is the predominant revenue stream to provide services to the citizens of Tennessee. The Tennessee Retail Alliance supported by the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) will provide a means to assist communities in promoting economic development through retail recruitment to increase jobs and increase sales tax revenue. MTAS strives to improve the lives of Tennesseans by providing the best customer service to our cities. We have identified a need for additional support for cities and towns as they work on retail recruitment efforts.

The TRA is a new organization created to connect business with local government. The TRA is a resource in which retailers can gather

relevant information about Tennessee cities such as available commercial properties, and our Tennessee communities can be readily connected to retailers. A three-tiered approach in supporting municipal retail recruitment will include educational sessions, data reports, and promotion and marketing at relevant regional and national events. Yearly membership dues are listed below.

Upcoming event: [ICSC@SOUTHEAST | ICSC: Innovating Commerce Serving Communities](#), October 13-14, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA

If you are interested in joining the Tennessee Retail Alliance or more information on the Alliance, please contact Angie Carrier, MTAS Management and Finance Program Manager.



City Population*	Annual Dues**	Number of Cities in State, Dues in Category
Under 2,000	\$1,000	179
2,001 - 5,000	\$1,500	70
5,001 - 10,000	\$3,000	39
10,001 - 20,000	\$5,000	24
20,001 and Up	\$7,500	30



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MTAS, TREEDC Host Community Resilience Roundtable in East Tennessee

Lieutenant Governor Randy McNally, Senator Richard Briggs, Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon, Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) President Dwain Land, University of Tennessee County Technical Assistance Service (CTAS) Environmental Consultant Kim Raia, Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) Executive Director Margaret Norris, and local officials from Anderson and Knox Counties participated in this important event. Roundtable attendees discussed how more intense, frequent rainfalls are straining infrastructure. Discussion also involved how we must target specific mitigation projects, secure funding, and then put those projects in place to provide additional resources to communities before disasters strike. Norris facilitated the conversation among 21 attending stakeholders.

Main Takeaways:

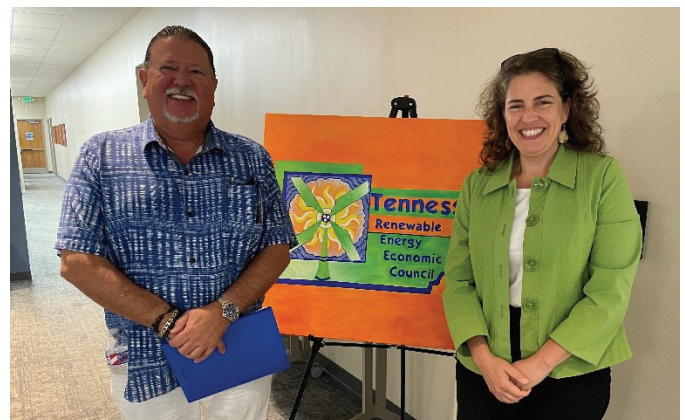
- More intense, frequent rainfalls are straining infrastructure, washing out roads and prompting emergency rescues in both Anderson and Knox Counties.
- We need to view mitigation and resilience projects like we do rescue and recovery efforts; they are urgent and necessary.
- Studies and plans are necessary, but it is the actions we take to follow through on new information that will impact the future of regional flood resilience.
- Once we identify resilience and mitigation projects, funding becomes the next question. Funding sources need to be available for communities to successfully mitigate known risks.
- Better maps and information that account for new development and changes in flood plains will help identify high-risk areas and prioritize projects.
- The focus of planning at the local, regional and state levels should be: How do we get ahead of the next flood?



Warren Nevad
Municipal Management
Consultant

- A statewide plan and supportive infrastructure would facilitate collaboration between municipalities and counties and help draw down additional resources to communities before disasters.

Similar roundtables will be held in Hamilton and Putnam counties later this year. To learn more about the Tennessee Flood Ready Coalition, visit floodreadytn.com.



Top: TREEDC President Dwain Land and Knoxville Mayor Indya Kincannon. Bottom: TREEDC President Dwain Land, Margaret Norris, MTAS Executive Director, Senator Richard Briggs and LT. Gov. Randy McNally.



TREEDC Member Woodland Mills Completes Installation of Emergency Battery Operated/Solar Generator for Civic Center

The town of Woodland Mills installed three Bronco Power Boost Eco Solar Generators for the William R. Nanney Civic Center. Woodland Mills Mayor and Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) member Joseph Lewis and the board of alderman recently converted the civic center to also serve as the designated community emergency shelter during natural disasters. These battery-operated generators will provide automatic backup power for the emergency shelter's refrigerator, lighting, receptacles for cellphones and laptops and heat for citizens staying in the shelter during emergencies.

In January 2022, Woodland Mills became the first local government in Tennessee to adopt by resolution a TREEDC/MTAS Community Resiliency Program. This innovative pilot program consists of a three-tier approach for the city to prepare for natural disasters. The resolution calls for 100 percent of electricity derived from renewable

energy sources by the year 2035, calls for preparation of a climate action plan and sets a goal to equip all municipal, commercial and residential structures with a Bronco Power Boost Eco battery generation that does not emit emissions and works automatically during power outages.

Woodland Mills was awarded a statewide Excellence in Green Leadership award at the 2022 Tennessee Municipal League Conference on August 16, 2022.

Watch the award video created by the Tennessee Municipal League: [2022 TML Achievement Award, Woodland Mills: Excellence in Green Leadership.](#)

Be Intentional About a Positive Organizational Culture

Friends who know me well from law enforcement circles sometimes kid me about being a broken record when it comes to my constant return during conversation to “Peelian Principles.” If you aren’t familiar with Sir Robert Peel or his nine principles, I will challenge you to some fun research for your next Google adventure. But that isn’t the purpose of this article. Well, not exactly. More to the point, returning to basic principles is sometimes a task we forget inside organizations.

In leadership, I consider the culture of an organization to be basic, yet often neglected. Why is culture important? Because everything from working environment, customer relationship and outcomes is impacted by organizational culture. Then what is the problem? If we know that the answer to organization health lies in organization culture, let’s just fix the culture!

It’s not that simple. How many people get up every day being intentional about a positive organizational culture? That is an important question because that sort of intentionality is required for a healthy culture. Forbes published an article in 2018 by Dave Fechtman¹ describing three guiding principles for creating an intentional culture listed as: Identifying organizational truths, leader buy-in and alignment of behavior and beliefs.

Simple enough, right? I work with police departments across our great state daily and see some of the smallest departments with some very large organizational culture problems. Likewise, I’ve seen large agencies with incredibly positive organizational culture. I mention the size variables simply to point out that the size of the agency, while a variable, does not singularly impact the cultural realities. Intentionality of the leadership in attending daily to cultural health is most significant.



David Moore
Police Management
Consultant

It’s easy to fail at the first task: Examining organizational truths. How we treat each other, how well we define expectations, what is important to the organization and how well we communicate those truths up and down the organizational structure are points to examine. If the questions related to these examination points provide feedback adverse to our own perceptions, it is easy to vacate the process. Leader buy-in and alignment of behaviors and beliefs then may be up for grabs.

To develop leader buy-in, the values established must be honest and arrived at through acceptance of thorough assessment. For me, a useful analogy is sighting in a rifle scope. The slightest millimeter variance from dead center at the scope magnifies exponentially as the distance increases, and it is the same with organizational alignment of values and organizational truths.

My colleague Rex Barton talks with municipal leaders often about mission-based policing. Ultimately, the mission and the vision of the policing agency needs alignment with the desired service of the citizen. Activities by the department will reflect the mission of the department if they are properly developed, communicated and directed. Issues arise when the activities of an organization vary from the mission. The best antidote for mission drift is for leadership within an organization to continually ask: How does this activity align with our mission, and how well have I communicated the mission to the activity providers?

¹Fechtman, David. January 26, 2018. [The three guiding principles for creating an intentional culture](#). Forbes Magazine.

Learning from Each Other at Finance Roundtables

MTAS recently facilitated three municipal finance roundtable learning opportunities in East Tennessee. Municipal staff from 22 cities were represented at the roundtables in Collegedale, Baneberry and Rocky Top. The gatherings were also attended by several MTAS staff as well as Southeast Tennessee Development District staff.

Roundtables are a very effective learning format where cities come together to discuss current issues, needs and concerns with each other. MTAS provides an initial agenda based on participant suggestions, but the meetings are intended to allow attendees to learn from others who have similar job duties in other cities. Participants can bring up any finance-related topic and hear the perspectives of everyone in the room. Attendees have commented frequently that these roundtables are some of the most informative meetings they attend. In particular, networking, gaining knowledge and learning that others struggle with similar issues makes this a favorite learning format.



Brad Harris
Finance and Accounting
Consultant

Below: Roundtable held in Rocky Top, Tennessee.

Bottom photo: Roundtable held in Baneberry, Tennessee.



New Law About Traffic Schools

Hello, court clerk friends. Last month, a new law that you may encounter went into effect. First, you should know that this new law should not cause any additional work or reporting requirements on your end. This law applies to the Tennessee Department of Safety (DOS) and to the individual driver convicted of speeding.

Short version: This new law allows a person convicted of speeding to attend a traffic school and have the points associated with this conviction removed, with a maximum of five points. The driver must do this within 90 days of receipt of a letter from DOS informing them of this option. The driver can do this only once in a four-year period.

More detailed version: This new law came into effect July 1, 2022. It was [Public Chapter No. 710](#). It has now been incorporated into the Tennessee Code as TCA 55-8-210.

Here's how it will work: Practically speaking, this law should not have any real impact in your day-to-day court practices. DOS will do the heavy lifting with this new law.

What it will look like in action:

1. Municipal Court Judge finds the person guilty of speeding.
2. Court Clerk reports the speeding conviction like normal.
3. DOS reviews the conviction. If the driver is eligible for this new program, DOS will send out a letter to the driver. This letter tells them that they can attend any approved traffic school from DOS's list of approved schools and have the points reduced from their driving record for the speeding conviction.
4. Once the driver receives this letter from DOS, the driver has 90 days to complete the traffic



John Eskew
MTAS Municipal Courts
Specialist

school and turn in certificate of completion to DOS. The letter provides the address and fax number to turn this in.

The good part is that this law places the work on DOS and the driver. The city court clerk does not turn in anything to DOS as a part of this law.

Copy of the DOS letter: [DOS sample letter](#).

Point of Note: If your judge orders traffic school at the court level, proceed like you always have. The person takes traffic school, shows you the completion certificate, you enter it as traffic school on your Court Action Report. This law only applies when your city reports a speeding conviction.

Main Takeaway: This new law should not create any new burdens or work for you. You likely will get questions from drivers who receive this and think it is something your court ordered. It's not. It's a new law passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor. DOS does the work on this one and if all goes smoothly, your court is not involved.

It's possible some of your cities with in-house traffic schools may receive students through this law because DOS allows the drivers to pick any school they wish.

If you have questions, please contact me at john.eskew@tennessee.edu, or give me a call at (615) 532-6827.

Short on Utility Training Hours?

Check out these upcoming MTAS opportunities to meet your training requirements! To register, e-mail [Doug Brown](mailto:doug.brown@mtas.com) or call (865) 974-9140.

Be sure to check out this MTAS City Byte for updated information on [Utility Training Requirements](#).

Topic	Course	Details
Utility Training	September 22 Effective Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:00–7:00 p.m. ET • 4:00–6:00 p.m. CT • Virtual via Zoom • 6 hours total (2 hours per session) • Registration: \$50/person
	October 12 Financial Oversight	
	November 2 Water/Wastewater Systems Overview	
Elected Officials Academy Level I	October 11 Foundations & Charters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5:00–7:30 p.m. ET • 4:00–6:30 p.m. CT • Virtual via Zoom • 10 hours total • Registration: \$210/person
	October 13 Ethics, Open Meetings, Public Records	
	October 18 Effective Meetings & Municipal Finance	
	October 20 Human Resources, Strategic Planning, Panel	
Ethics	November 3 Jackson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:30–10:30 a.m. • 2 hours per session • Registration: \$50
	November 9 Knoxville	
	November 10 Nashville	

Is Your West Tennessee City or Town Preparing for Growth?

In the UT Institute for Public Service (IPS) podcast series *In Touch with Tennessee*, MTAS Management consultants Chuck Downham and Ronnie Neill talk with IPS Communications Manager Susan Robertson about how MTAS is advising and assisting cities and towns in West Tennessee to begin preparing now for the upcoming growth related to the Blue Oval City set to open in 2025.

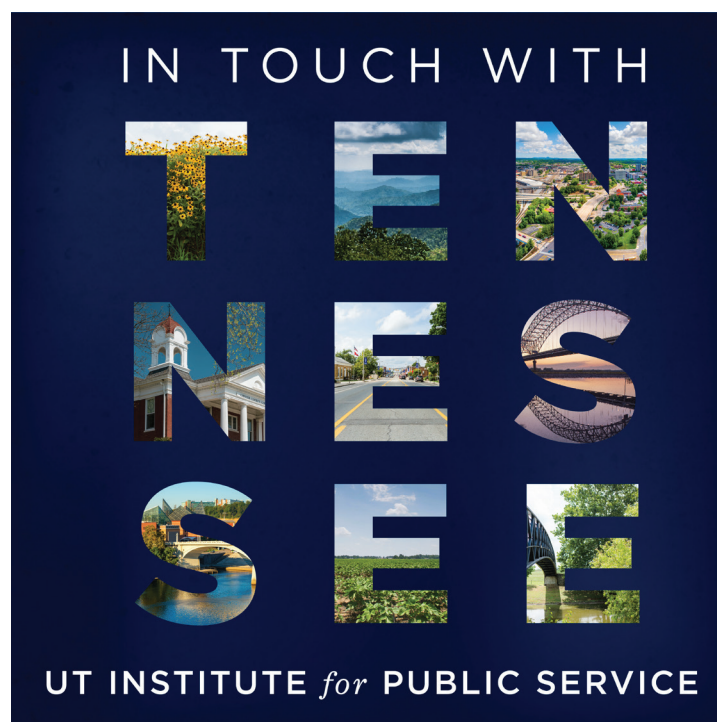
MTAS advice focuses on three key points for municipalities to consider:

1. Comprehensive planning: Does your city have a plan? Yes, and it's time to update it. If not, it's a great time to develop that plan.
2. Regulatory toolbox: Is your city ready with subdivision and zoning ordinances? What are the building codes that are governing building and development in your community? Do you have the staff needed to implement these regulatory efforts?

3. Public facilities and infrastructure: For instance, can your water, sewer, public safety and recreation infrastructure keep up with potential growth in your community? Start on a fiscal plan (capital improvements, etc.) to develop the needed infrastructure and facilities to support your community's growth.

The most important piece of advice from MTAS is to start addressing these three points now—don't wait. If we can assist in any way, please [reach out to MTAS](#).

Listen to the podcast on [Apple Music](#) or other podcast platforms. The podcast is also available on the [UT IPS website](#).



Blue Oval City Resources

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development has some [helpful resources](#) on their website regarding the historic Blue Oval City project in West Tennessee.

The site includes frequently asked questions along with events and resources related to the project. Resources include information and contacts on workforce development, working with the Blue Oval City, grant opportunities and planning resources. Recordings of meetings held so far

regarding the project can be found on the TNECD site for the Blue Oval City project.

Also follow the project on the Blue Oval City [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts.

TN Comptroller of the Treasury Announces New Certified Municipal Finance Officer Incentive Program

Beginning July 1, 2022, cities that have employees actively participating in the Certified Municipal Finance Officer (CMFO) program may be reimbursed for costs associated with their employees obtaining the CMFO certification. These costs include travel-related expenses and class fees. In addition, a one-time stipend of \$1,000 will be awarded to eligible city employees who successfully complete the program after July 1, 2022.

Policies and procedures related to these incentive programs, including eligibility requirements, can be found in the CMFO Policies and Procedures Manual.

[CMFO Policies and Procedures Manual](#)
(July 2022 Revision)

[Announcement Letter from the Comptroller's Office](#) (June 30, 2022)

**Tennessee Comptroller
of the Treasury**

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS FOR MUNICIPAL STAFF AND OFFICIALS

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPAL CLERKS AND RECORDERS

Fall Conference | September 14-16, 2022 | Murfreesboro

ICMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022

September 18-21, 2022 | Columbus, OH

TENNESSEE STORMWATER ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022

October 18-20, 2022 | Montgomery Bell State Park

TENNESSEE CITY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Fall Conference | October 26-28, 2022 | Gatlinburg

AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION, TENNESSEE CHAPTER, FALL CONFERENCE 2022

October 26-28, 2022 | Knoxville

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