

# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

July 2017 | Issue 84

## MTAS Training Classes

See what is coming up!

[bit.ly/MTASTrainingCalendar](http://bit.ly/MTASTrainingCalendar)

## New Information Resources from MTAS

HR2020 shifting perspectives:  
a vision for public sector HR  
International Personnel Management  
Association for Human Resources.  
HR2020 Task Force | [Click HERE](#)

Storytelling as best practice:  
how stories strengthen your  
organization, engage your  
audience, and advance your  
mission  
Andy Goodman | [Click HERE](#)

Top ten performance measures  
for fleet managers  
American Public Works Association.  
[Click HERE](#)

To see a list of ALL new  
materials recently added to  
the library holdings click [HERE](#)

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

MTAS Says “Bon Voyage” to  
Executive Director Jim Thomas

Say Good-bye to Solution Point and Hello to K@te!  
Training for Utility Managers

MTAS Consultants Named MPPA Fellows

TMBP and Lean Six Sigma

TREEDC

Training Program Update:

Training stats

Municipal Courts Conferences

EOA in 2016

Memphis Program

EOA Chattanooga

Chattanooga Public Works Week Breakfast

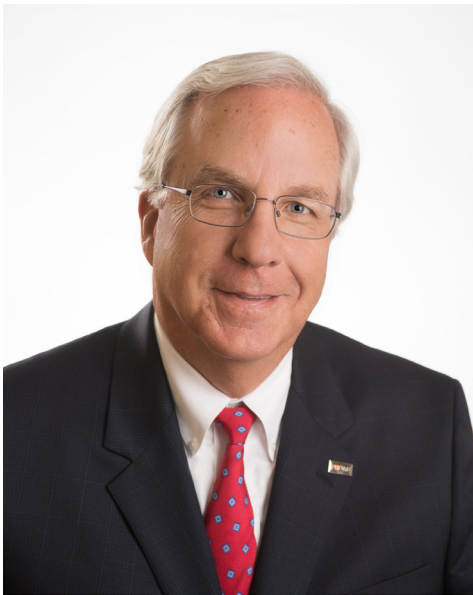
For more questions regarding the MTAS  
Municipal E-News, contact Frances Adams-O'Brien  
at [frances.adams-obrien@tennessee.edu](mailto:frances.adams-obrien@tennessee.edu)  
or 865-974-9842.

MTAS offices will be closed on September 4, 2017 for the Labor Day Holiday

# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

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## MTAS Staff and Customers Say “Bon Voyage” to Jim Thomas



MTAS' 8th executive director, Jim Thomas, began his much deserved retirement on June 30. Jim came to MTAS in 2011 as assistant director and became executive director in 2012. Jim was not one for a lot fanfare on his account nevertheless MTAS wants to thank Jim for his steady leadership, equal levels of concern for employees and customers, and for always keeping our eyes on the prize of effective services to Tennessee cities and towns.

Here are a few thoughts on Jim's impact during his time as MTAS Executive Director:

“Jim Thomas led MTAS with care and concern for customers, staff and mission. His contributions to the IPS Leadership Team will especially be missed – his thoughtful wisdom, timely humor, and drive for group achievement have helped us advance as an organization. Jim worked hard to regularly express appreciation to those around him, along with his expectations for work that makes a positive difference. He epitomized the effective public servant.” -- Dr. Herb Byrd, III, IPS Vice President

“It has been a pleasure to work with Jim Thomas. He was always quick to respond to my questions or my request for info from MTAS. He truly understood that MTAS and TML are partners. We will miss his sense of humor and his ability to work with all of us. I wish him and Sissy a lot of happiness and fun in this next phase of their lives.” -- Margaret Mahery, Tennessee Municipal League Executive Director

“There is a life “test” that applies to us all, in every situation, be it home, family, relationships, work, play, organizations, etc. It is simple – did we leave it better than we found it? And in Jim's case the answer is unequivocal - Yes. MTAS is better now, significantly so, than before Jim came along. And for that we owe him an enormous debt of gratitude. His personality and style of management were exactly what we needed at the time. The perfect match of person and situation. Although he will be gone, what he accomplished will remain for years.” -- Pat Hardy, MTAS Management Consultant and Program Manager

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“I have enjoyed working under Jim’s leadership. Jim listened to us and was a strong advocate for MTAS. I will miss him and his friendship and leadership... and the golf quips as well!” -- Brad Harris, MTAS Finance and Accounting Consultant

“Jim Thomas has always been great about recognizing employees for their hard work. Never, until I met Jim, had I heard of “Employee of the Minute.” I have received this honor twice.” --Kurt Frederick, MTAS Training Consultant

“On behalf of the 101 TREEDC Mayors, I just want to say thank you for supporting us to develop more clean energy and economic opportunities across Tennessee. During your tenure, you were also able to bring worldwide opportunities for our clean energy businesses and we will always be grateful to you- Best Wishes and you’re welcome to visit Dunlap anytime!” -- President of TREEDC and Dunlap Mayor Dwain Land

“Jim is not thinking of retiring from the world, but only from his daily focus on MTAS and the people who work for MTAS and how he could make them more effective and better. Jim brought a knowledge of city government and what those cities needed to MTAS, while building pride and motivation into the organization. And he did it with that gentle smile and spirit that we all wanted to follow and see succeed. Congratulation Jim and Sissy on moving forward to the next challenge!!!!!!” -- Jim Crumley, Assistant City Manager, Murfreesboro



*Jim at MTAS staff retreat with special guests (from left) Tim Ellis, City Administrator, Goodlettsville, Tenn. and Ken Wilbur, Mayor, Portland, Tenn.*



*Jim and Richard Stokes, MTAS Human Resources Consultant.*



*MTAS Christmas party with Warren Nevad, MTAS municipal management consultant and Bill Young, General manager Harriman Utilities board (and former MTAS utilities finance consultant).*

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## Goodbye Solution Point! Hello K@te!

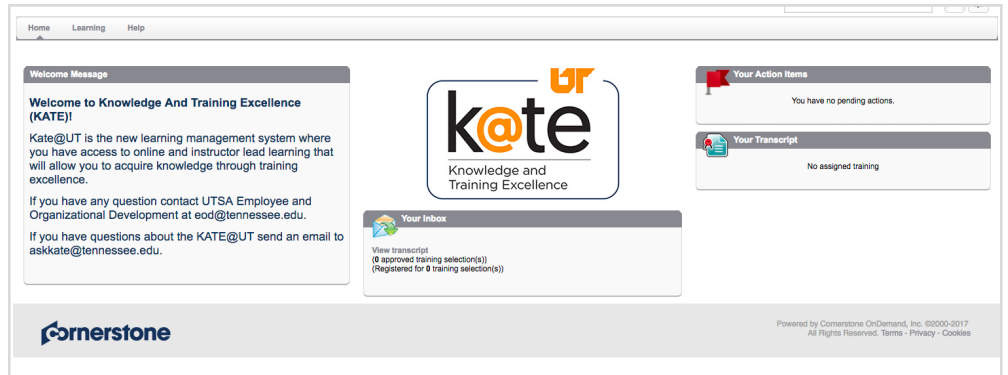
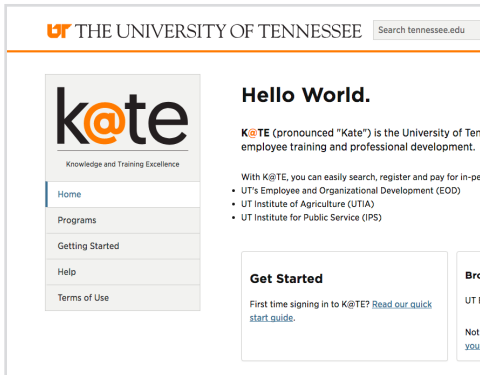
MTAS will transition from our current learning management system, Solution Point, to a new system to be called K@Te (Knowledge and Training Excellence) very soon.

Solution Point, is currently where our customers register for classes and take online courses.

MTAS will roll out K@te (Knowledge and Training Excellence) beginning in August. Solution Point will remain active and fully supported until K@te is up and running.

What does this mean to you?

- Your transcript and / or current enrollments will transfer to K@te.
- Your user id will transfer and you be asked to identify a new password.
- If you are currently taking online courses - you will need to follow a few steps for a successful transition.
  - You will need to finish out any online course you have started also known as "in progress," by July 17th.
  - After K@te is launched, you will be able to continue taking any online courses you have purchased.
- New enrollments to online courses will be placed on hold during the transition.



We appreciate your patience during this transition while we grow to better serve our customers in Tennessee.

If you have any questions about registering for courses during this time, please contact MTAS at 865-974-0411.

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## Training Required for City Officials Who Oversee Utility Systems

According to new legislation recently signed into law by Governor Bill Haslam, city officials who oversee a water and/or wastewater system are required to get training on finance, board governance, policy-making and other topics related to operating utilities. Review the law and read more about this here (link). Be on the lookout for training classes from MTAS in the coming months.

## Public Administration Master’s Program Recognizes MTAS Instructors

Several Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) consultants recently received honors from the UT Knoxville master’s of public policy and administration (MPPA) faculty.

UT MPPA faculty recently created a new honor to recognize and publicize the contributions of professionals to the advanced education and training of MPPA students. The title UT MPPA Fellow in Professional Practice is conferred by vote of the MPPA faculty, and signifies their appreciation for and the enduring value of the contributions made by a distinguished professional to the educational mission of the MPPA program.

MTAS Finance and Accounting Consultants Ralph Cross, Brad Harris and Al Major, and Municipal Management Consultant Margaret Norris were bestowed the honor at the MPPA hooding and awards ceremony in May.

In honoring each, the faculty acknowledged:

“The UT MPPA faculty appreciate Ralph, Brad, Al and Margaret as highly skilled communicators and accomplished professionals whose careers exhibit the highest standards of performance excellence and ethical conduct. For many years, they have graciously and generously shared their expertise, insight, and wisdom with our students in multiple evening seminars after clocking a full day of work and travel in the state. They are outstanding professional role models for our students. The MPPA faculty want you to know that we are very grateful for all they have done and continue to do to help train and develop the next generation of public servants.”

(In photos, each is pictured with David Folz, professor and MPPA director)



# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

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## Tennessee Municipal Benchmarking Project

The Steering Committee of the Tennessee Municipal Benchmarking Project has completed another successful annual business meeting! The committee installed outgoing chair Tony Cox, City Manager of Morristown, with Jay Evans, Assistant City Manager of Brentwood. MTAS would like to thank both Tony and Jay for agreeing to chair this important committee for TMBP.

The group was led through a productive planning process by MTAS Management Consultant, Pat Hardy. The top goals in the 2017-2022 plan are growth in membership and creating a sustainable funding structure. Task forces and subcommittees have been developed to work on marketing, incentives, and fee structure, among many other goals.

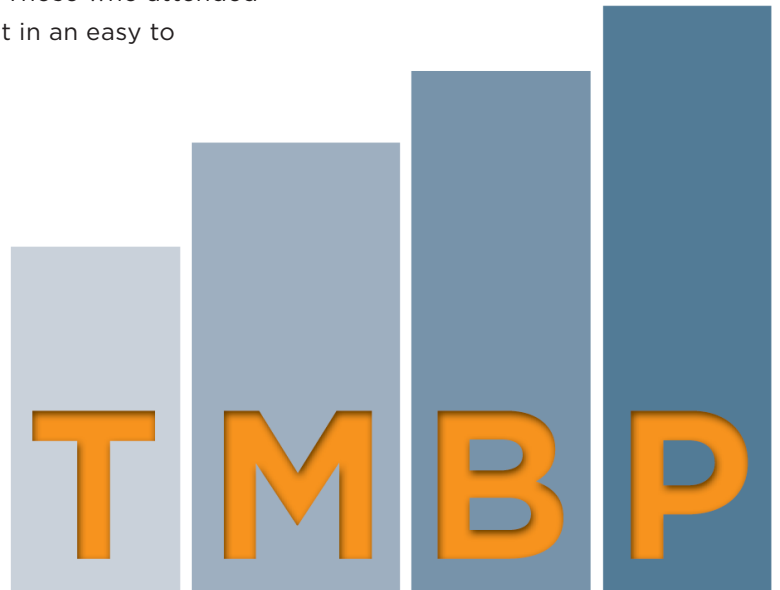
We are excited to offer a Lean Six Sigma Yellow-Belt training course to our TMBP members! This one-day course, also offered at our Annual Meeting this past March, gives cities the tools and techniques to conduct root-cause analysis and learn how to improve city processes and efficiencies. The course is taught by Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt Trainer, Bruce Berger. Those who attended this course in March found it extremely valuable and taught in an easy to understand, fun, and engaging format.

“While data and analytics are not usually considered fun and engaging, the Lean Six Sigma training provided by MTAS featured a seasoned trainer who was as good at keeping the group intrigued as he was at teaching us how to use data to move our organization in the way we want it to go. He presented the information clearly and provided useful tips we could take back and apply in our department.”

-- Aaron Browning  
Deputy Director, Knoxville Parks & Recreation Department



*(Far Left) Jay Evans, Assistant City Manager of Brentwood  
(Middle) Tony Cox, City Manager of Morristown*



## TENNESSEE MUNICIPAL BENCHMARKING PROJECT

# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

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## TREEDC Partners with MTAS and the University of Tennessee- Martin to Discuss Opportunities for Clean Energy in West Tennessee

On May 26, 2017, the Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC) conducted an educational forum highlighting best practices in renewable energy available for West Tennessee cities and counties. TREEDC members Environmental Defense Fund and the Nature Conservancy sponsored the forum held at Paris Landing State Park. The University of Tennessee - Martin provided tours of their state of the art mobile energy trailer for the audience of 41 local, state and university officials. Paris City Manager Kim Foster welcomed the attendees and discussed Paris' current energy efficiency project.

Martin Penny with Cooley Public Strategies urged local officials to support the growth of clean energy stating that this grassroots approach would also reap area economic benefits. Max Shilstone, Director of Business Development for TREEDC Gold member Clean Line Energy Partners provided a powerpoint presentation to describe the Plains & Eastern Clean Line Project which will connect Tennessee to superb wind resources of Great Plains with a High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC) transmission line. This HVDC line focuses on connecting renewable resources to load centers. The transmission line uses narrower right-of-ways than equivalent Alternating Current and has lower line losses. This line which begins in Guymon, Oklahoma and ends in Tipton County, Tennessee will bring hundreds of direct jobs during construction. The \$300 million investment in transmission

facilities in western Tennessee will provide significant tax revenues to Tennessee. He concluded his remarks by expressing his appreciation to TREEDC for helping him engage with community officials.

Albert Tieche of the University of Tennessee Center for Industrial Services urged officials to develop plans for business continuity planning for disasters. Tieche used the Nashville floods of 2010 as a lesson for communities to have adequate disaster preparedness. TREEDC Board Member Pat Riley gave a presentation about the benefits of compressed natural gas for commercial and government fleets. Riley stressed the importance of local communities becoming energy independent for their transportation needs. Attendees also heard presentations relating to energy efficiency and solar

energy from TREEDC members Siemens, Energ3, Lightwave Solar, Hannah Solar and Vis Solis.



*From left to right - TREEDC Holds reception: Milan Mayor DW Beasley, Max Shilstone, Clean Line Energy, Bill Owen, Asset & Equity, James Talley, Hannah Solar, Ryan Ball, Siemens, Dana Deem, MTAS, Mike McWherter, TREEDC Board Member, UT-Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver, TREEDC Chairman, Warren Nevad, MTAS, Carlos Mayer, Vis Solis, Kim Foster, Paris City Manager, and Angela Garrone, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy*



# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

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## MTAS Training Successfully Serving Cities in Tennessee in 2016 and 2017!

The MTAS training team and municipal employees across the state experienced a successful 2016. Through hard work and a collaborative effort, MTAS was able to offer a record number of instructor-led trainings (ILT) as well as online classes to customers. A closer look at the numbers tells the story.

**10,780 PEOPLE** in online classes and in classroom training

**34,000+** total hours of training offered across the state

**1351** 564 instructor-led classes

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total of overall classes 787 online classes

Total of over 34,000 hours of training offered across the state. The training department is working to keep the momentum going in 2017. We are off to a successful start but still have a lot of work ahead of us if we hope to catch up and surpass our success in 2016. We've offered many classes in this first half of the year with a strong list of trainings to come. Some of those offerings coming up are:

- Municipal Legislative Update
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
- National Flood Insurance Program Training
- Leadership in Local Government
- Ethics and Professionalism
- Strategic Planning - For Your City, Your Work Life, and You
- Planning for Public Infrastructure Through Subdivision Regulations
- 2017 Business Tax Update

More on these classes as well as a complete list of online classes can be found at our website <http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu> .

## Annual Municipal Court Clerk Conferences

In March and April, MTAS hosted two Municipal Court Clerk Conferences in conjunction with the Administrative Office of the Courts. These annual conferences provide continuing education for those clerks in courts with standard municipal court jurisdiction, as well as those with concurrent general sessions jurisdiction.

Topics ranged from Open Records for Municipal Courts to Tools for Intentional Excellence in Work Life Balance. As to Tools for Intentional Excellence led by Dr. Rubin Cockrell, one clerk remarked, "[E]xcellent session, well-spoken and knowledgeable about a subject that is so important." Former UT Athletic Director Joan Cronan spoke on Sports is Life: Best Practices in Leadership. Her inspiring stories from her time at UT and working with Pat Summitt were excellent examples of how to lead in your day-to-day life.

Wayne Deason from the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security (TDOS) provided a course on Court Action Reporting. The relationship between court clerks and TDOS is vital to maintain compliance with reporting traffic violations in Tennessee. MTAS looks forward to working with the Department of Safety in continuing to provide this much-needed information to municipal clerks.

The clerks will have more opportunities for continued education later this fall with the Municipal Court Clerk Foundations & Updates Sessions in Smyrna, Collegedale, Cookeville, Johnson City, Knoxville, Bartlett and Jackson. Be on the lookout for more information regarding these classes.



(Left) Joan Cronan speaking to Municipal Court Clerks (right) Dr. Rubin Cockrell speaking on Tools for Intentional Excellence



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## Elected Officials Academy Has Banner Year in 2016

The last of 2016 saw many municipal elections across the state and with them a new group of elected officials. MTAS consultants jumped into action and held a total of seven Elected Officials Academies Level 1 (EOAs) beginning in December 2016.

EOA Level I is comprised of five, two-hour sessions that cover the topics of Ethics and Open Meetings, Foundations and Structures of Municipal Government, Introduction to Charters, Codes and Open Records Law, Municipal Finance, and Council at Work.

Seven cities across the state: Unicoi, Jackson, Lewisburg, Luttrell, Collegedale, Lebanon, and Harriman hosted the classes MTAS very pleased to have good attendance and positive comments about the training such as:

- “This class let me know what I can do and not do”
- “Valuable perspectives presented”
- “Class discussion and examples - very helpful in understanding material”
- “Knowledgeable presenter. Presented in an interesting manner”

All together the academies were attended by 140 elected officials from 59 cities across the state.

MTAS also offered the more advanced EOA Level 2 as pre-conference sessions to the 2017 Tennessee Municipal League Annual Conference in Murfreesboro. The 24 attendees learned about municipal police and fire services, water and wastewater operations, risk management, and the human resource functions of a city. EOA Level 2 will be offered again pre-conference at the 2018 TML Annual Conference so start planning to attend now!

Would you like to host an Elected Officials Academy in your city? Contact your MTAS management consultant to talk about the details.

**For more information about the Elected Officials Academy, contact Dr. P.J. Snodgrass, MTAS Training Consultant at [pj.snodgrass@tennessee.edu](mailto:pj.snodgrass@tennessee.edu) or 865-974-9858.**

## Memphis Graduates First Management & Leader Certificate Class

The city of Memphis in partnership with MTAS celebrated the first Management & Leader Certificate Program graduating class in May. Sixty-seven managers, supervisors and team leaders participated in this inaugural program. Mayor Jim Strickland and Chief Human Resources Officer Alex Smith honored the graduates at a ceremony held in the city’s Hall of Mayors.

MTAS and Memphis’s Professional Development Institute (PDI) are continuing this endeavor by expanding to three certificate track programs: Administrative Certificate Program, Professional Certificate Program, and Management & Leader Certificate Program.

Memphis’s Professional Development Institute is designed to help city government become more efficient and effective and to assist employees in achieving professional success and personal growth.

“PDI offers learning courses, certificate programs, and leadership development programs to position individuals for career advancement. The mission of PDI is consistent with the goals and objectives of City Government – to help employees move ahead in their careers by better equipping them with the tools they need to improve their lives and those of citizens.” Alex Smith, chief human resources officer, Memphis.

Through this partnership, MTAS looks forward to assist Memphis in its focus to develop employees to their full potential.



*MTAS’s Abb Oglesby and Ronnie Neil participate in Management & Leader Certificate graduate.*



*Mayor Jim Strickland congratulating Management & Leader Certificate graduate.*

# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

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## Chattanooga Council Members Attend EOA

An Elected Officials Academy was held June 2-3 for the newly elected city of Chattanooga council members. The new members were very inquisitive and excited to build upon their knowledge regarding municipality operations. They were a very lively group and enjoyable to work with over the two days. They attended classes on the foundations of government, charters and codes, finance, ethics, and working together as a council.



*Attending were (left to right in picture): Erskine Oglesby Jr, Anthony Byrd, Demetrus Coonrod, and Darrin Ledford.*



*Attendees hard at work!*

## Public Works Week

Have you thanked a Public Works employee in your community lately? No? Well, have you ever stopped to think how it would affect your daily life without them working hard every day?

Since 1960, APWA has sponsored National Public Works Week. Across North America, more than 29,000 members in the U.S. and Canada use this week to energize and educate the public on the importance of public works to their daily lives: planning, building, managing and operating at the heart of their local communities to improve everyday quality of life.

All across Tennessee many municipalities celebrated Public Works Week in May. For many communities this involved public displays of equipment, picnics for employees, and even special recognition of those employees that go the extra mile. One such city that did this was Chattanooga. Chattanooga held its first Public Works Awards Breakfast. Director Justin Holland recognized employees who go the extra mile, retirees who left a great legacy, and the annual rodeo winners (who will go on to compete at the state APWA competition).



The number of municipalities participating in the week continues to grow, which means the number of citizens who are exposed to the value of public works grows. One of APWA's main goals is to educate the general public about the value and necessities of public works projects throughout North America. National Public Works Week is one tool that greatly assists with this, but the best tools are the staff and elected officials of our municipalities. Have you bragged on the public works officials to your neighbors? Have you thanked them personally for the job they have done? I hope you realize that they are true heroes in our community and do great work. Take time today to show them your appreciation. After all, appreciation doesn't just happen during public works week, but throughout the year.

# MUNICIPAL E-NEWS

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## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

### Tennessee Fire Chiefs Association

Annual Conference | July 22-25, 2017  
Murfreesboro, Embassy Suites

### Tennessee Government Finance Officers Association Fall Conference

October 11-13, 2017 | TBA

### Tennessee Association of Municipal Clerks and Recorders Fall Conference

September 20-22, 2017 | Murfreesboro, TN

### Tennessee Stormwater Association

October 17-19, 2017 | Fall Creek Falls, Pikeville, TN

### Tennessee City Management Association Fall Conference 2017

September 20-22, 2017 | Gatlinburg, TN

### International City County Management Association Annual Conference

October 22-25, 2017 | San Antonio, Texas



***Coming This August***

[kate.tennessee.edu](http://kate.tennessee.edu)