



March 3, 2011

**Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC) Report:
Sustainable Communities in Tennessee Forum: Crossville Art Circle Public Library:
March 1, 2011**

From: Warren Nevad, the University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS)

The Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC), a statewide environmental economic development organization of municipal and county mayors formed by the University of Tennessee held its first 2011 membership forum at the Crossville Art Circle Public Library on Tuesday, March 1, 2011. More than 90 attendees representing 21 cities, 8 counties, USDA Rural Development, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Economic and Community Development, Upper Cumberland Development District, Wyndam Fairfield Glade resorts and area citizens and businesses joined together to discover innovative municipal statewide best practices in renewable energy. Sustainability professionals from TREEDC partner cities Athens, Chattanooga, Cookeville, Franklin, Knoxville, Nashville and Oak Ridge presented informative details about their unique environmental programs to the audience. Participants also heard presentations about the ECotality electric vehicle project update and Truckstop Electrification project in Crossville to install 50 solar electrified and HVAC supplied truck spaces at ECO Plateau Travel Center in Crossville. The City of Crossville assisted TREEDC and the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) with the development of its educational and networking forum which offered area stakeholders valuable insights in sustainability opportunities for the Upper Cumberland region communities and businesses.

Mayor Graham highlighted the Crossville's recent successes with the annual sustainability fair for area students and its commitment to reduce their carbon footprint by producing biodiesel processed by used vegetable oil from restaurants in the county. The University of Tennessee President Emeritus Dr. Joe Johnson urged the audience to support TREEDC's goals to help the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) promote more green power community investment in Tennessee. Dr. Johnson who also serves as the TREEDC Chairman of the advisory board urged more cities, counties, small businesses, corporations and individuals to help TREEDC accelerate more market development of cellulosic ethanol, biomass gasification, solar energy, biodiesel and energy efficiency programs. TREEDC President and Pikeville Mayor Greg Johnson recognized various mayors and elected officials from Ducktown, Graysville, Gainesboro, Knoxville, Byrdstown and Cumberland and Bledsoe counties.

Stephanie Cox, Area Manager with ECotality advised the audience that her organization has recently started working with the City of Memphis and Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division to place 10 public electric vehicle (EV) charging locations by September 2011. The

utility will also buy five EVs this year for its fleet including an electric bucket truck. City of Nashville Office of Environment and Sustainability Director Christopher Bowles gave an historical overview of the accomplishments of Mayor Karl Dean's green ribbon committee and also advised the crowd that the city recently completed its downtown tree canopy assessment. Sustainability Coordinator Jake Tisinger urged other cities to follow their program of offering Solar 101 workshops to Knoxville's citizens and businesses. Chattanooga's Director of Sustainability David Crockett revealed that Volkswagen's manufacturing plant in Chattanooga will feature innovative energy efficiency measures such as efficient electric motors on the production lines and stormwater recycling on the grounds.

Franklin Sustainability Director Andrew Orr stated that the goal of Franklin is to reduce greenhouse gases by 7% by 2014 by reducing per capita energy usage by 20%. Oak Ridge Sustainability Coordinator Athanasia Senecal gave an overview of her city's climate action planning process. Athens Public Works Director Shawn Lindsey informed the group that the city plans to install all LED lighting in all traffic signals and hopes to divert at least 40% of all wastes from the landfill through recycling. Economic Development Director Melinda Keifer discussed the City of Cookeville's Energy Efficiency partnership with Cummins Filtration which will graduate 22 energy leaders to help the city mitigate \$1.8 million dollars in electricity costs. Details on this project called the "Unplugged Challenge" along with all other presentations from the forum will be available at <http://www.mtas.tennessee.edu/public/web.nsf/Web/Economic+Development> shortly.

To date, TREEDC has held similar forums in Memphis, Jackson, Franklin, Kingston and Fall Creek Falls. The next forum is scheduled for April 5, 2011 which will be sponsored by TREEDC board member and Jackson City Councilman Ernest Brooks, II, Jackson Chamber of Commerce and Jackson Energy Authority. Pathway Lending will present details regarding their low-interest loans through the Energy Efficiency Program that was launched last August through an alliance with TVA, The U.S. Department of Energy, Pinnacle Financial Partners and the State of Tennessee. Seating is limited to the first 65 registrations at treedc08@yahoo.com. Please contact TREEDC President Johnson at 423-618-5758 for membership information.