

2025 Baneberry Governing Members

Board of Commissioners

- Mark Plonski, Mayor
- Tom Carter, Vice-Mayor
- Tina Raddish, Commissioner

City Staff

- Michael Phagan, City Manager, Code Enforcement
- Vicki Gentry, Administrative Assistant
- Ed Stiner, Baneberry Municipal Judge
- David Gaut, Building Inspector
- Michael Eddington, Right-of-Way Maintenance

Planning Commission

- Tom Carter, Chairman
- Karl Kammann, Vice Chairman
- Mark Plonski
- Jim Stover
- Beth Mooney
- Michael Harris

Roads Commission

- Rick Powers, Chairman
- Jim Idol
- Jim Wilson
- Brian White
- Craig Smith

Board of Zoning Appeals

- Brian White, Chairman
- Craig Smith
- Jim Wilson
- Taylor Atrican
- Mark Howard

Social and Entertainment Committee

- Sandra Plonski, Chairman
- Kim Waugh
- Chrissy Cummins
- Vicki Gentry
- Tom Clemmons
- Tina Raddish
- Aurora Rosas

Envision Baneberry 2035 Working Group

- Judy Keane, Chair
- Sandy Plonski, Social and Entertainment Committee (SEC)
- Tina Raddish, Commissioner
- Scott Smith, Resident
- Beth Mooney, Planning Commission
- Craig Smith, Roads Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals
- Jim Idol, Roads Commission

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This Comprehensive Plan allows proactive planning to manage change effectively. It guides decision-makers in balancing growth, quality of life, and open space preservation while addressing residents' service needs. The Plan also recommends regulatory updates, public improvements, decision-making processes, and potential zoning changes.

Regular monitoring is essential to adapt to unforeseen conditions affecting the Plan's success. Progress tracking is facilitated by the "Envision Baneberry 2035 - Master Progress Record" spreadsheet.

This document represents a shared vision of the community of Baneberry. It is not intended to be a map of how to achieve the vision and the committee encourages the City to explore grant-writing services or other creative funding means as a support service to attain some of the goals

The Plan is organized into five sections:

1. **Introduction:** Outlines the Plan's structure, organization, and creation process.
2. **A Look Back:** Summarizes the City's history and current status
3. **Going Forward:** Defines the City's vision, mission, values, and core goals, focusing on preservation, promotion, recreation, transportation, and public services
4. **Plan Goals:** Lists broad goals with specific, measurable objectives to guide decision-making
5. **Action Items:** Details of the implementation and maintenance of the Plan, utilizing the Master Progress Record for tracking progress.

1) Introduction

The Baneberry Comprehensive Plan builds on three previous plans: 1) the 1993 "Baneberry General Plan, 1993-2003," which established development goals and policies, 2) the 2015 "Envision Baneberry," a revision reflecting the changing needs of the community and finally, 3) The current "Envision Baneberry 2025" continues this trend, adapting to evolving community needs while maintaining relevant long-term goals. It emphasizes evaluating goals, objectives, and strategies for their relevance during updates.

The Comprehensive Plan aims to seek consensus on key issues, create a shared vision, serve as the main policy guide, provide a mandate for implementation, enhance residents' quality of life, and fulfill legal requirements.

Public involvement is critical, with the Working Group drafting the plan through consultations with various stakeholders. A public meeting will then be held to inform city residents and get feedback before the final plan is submitted for approval and adopted as an official city ordinance.

The plan retains a focus on preserving Baneberry's character, promoting growth, maintaining recreation and open spaces, ensuring transportation safety, and providing adequate public services.

Once the broad strokes of the plan are approved, the next step is to differentiate priorities by near-term and long-term projects and budgetary needs.

2) A Look Back

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Baneberry is a quiet community surrounded by Douglas Lake, characterized by rustic custom homes with scenic porches overlooking the golf course, lake, and mountains. Residents enjoy a close-knit atmosphere, with frequent community events and abundant local wildlife.

An hour away, Knoxville offers urban amenities while surrounding towns provide shopping and dining options.

Closer still is the nearby Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg, and Pigeon Forge- collectively the largest year-round draw of visitors in the nation.

Overall, Baneberry blends natural beauty with a welcoming vibe, ideal for a peaceful lakeside lifestyle and easy access to these world-class attractions.

A collaborative task force of diverse residents is dedicated to defining and shaping the town's future, focusing on recreation, engagement, and quality of life. Their efforts aim to foster a vibrant, sustainable community.

The City of Baneberry's recreational, environmental, and economic future is currently at a crossroads, experiencing both gains and losses in amenities that define Baneberry's close-knit community lifestyle.

While the city has expanded services, including the addition of a dog park, land acquisitions, and updated codes for land use - a recent event has upended Baneberry.

Beginning in 1972 the heart of Baneberry (and its sole commercial tax revenue generator) had been the golf course and clubhouse restaurant. Over time, the commercial land was purchased by a land developer intent on building private residences, pitting the developer's wishes against the will of the residents. Since the sale, city officials and residents have resisted efforts to change the commercial land to residential use.

City officials have worked diligently to clarify, restore, and uphold original master plans and the expressed community vision that has governed key amenities, engaged residents, draw in visitors, and provided entertainment, growth, as well as economic opportunities.

The resolution of this conflict will ultimately determine the face of Baneberry in the years to come.

Who lives in Baneberry?

While population growth has slowed, median household income has increased dramatically

According to 2022 census data, Baneberry had an estimated population of 620, with a median age of 52.7. The population grew by 2.48% from 605 in 2021. The median household income in 2022 was \$95,000, an increase of 83% over 2015 figures. That puts Baneberry in the 85th percentile of Tennessee household incomes.

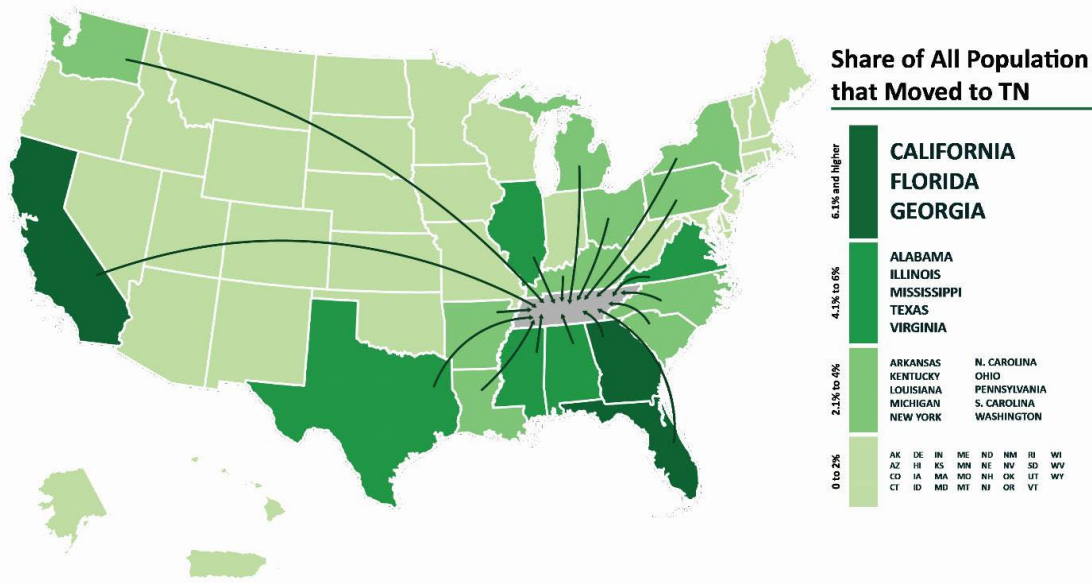
The population in 2010 was 482, a 31.7% increase since 2000, and a 45.2% increase since 1990. Population growth since 1990 though steady has decreased likely due to reduced availability of buildable lots.

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The largest ethnic groups are White (Non-Hispanic) at 89.2%, Two or More (Non-Hispanic) at 7.42%, Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander (Non-Hispanic) at 2.1%, Asian (Non-Hispanic) at 0.968%, and American Indian & Alaska Native (Non-Hispanic) at 0.323%.

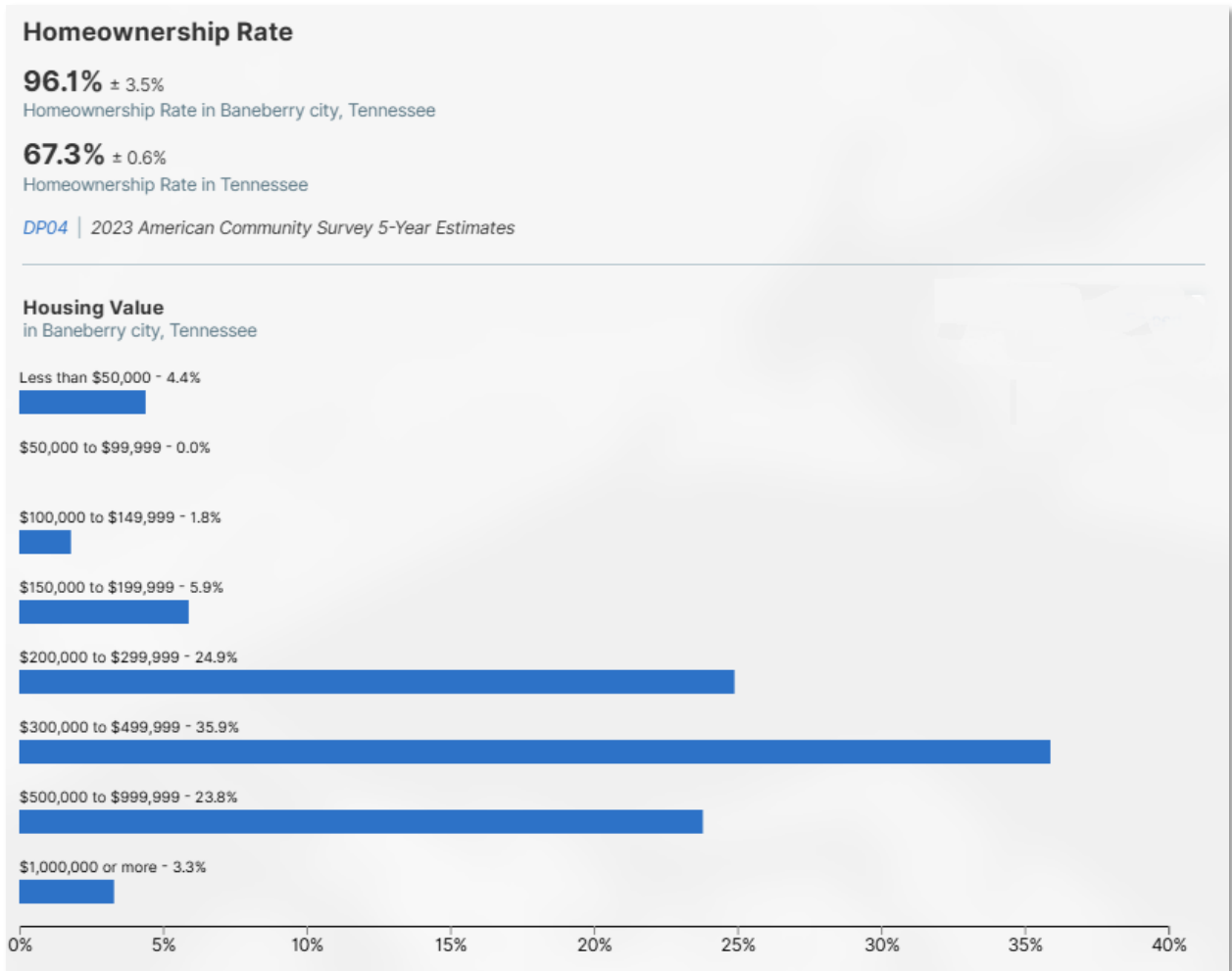
No households reported a non-English language as their primary language, and 98.9% of residents are U.S. citizens. While we could find no data on where our residents came from, Baneberry's growth has been largely fueled by the overall migration trend to the state of Tennessee:

Migration to Tennessee | 2022



93.9% of the housing units in Baneberry are owner-occupied. This percentage declined from the 2021 rate of 94.3%.

This chart shows the percentage of owner-occupied in Baneberry compared to neighboring geographies.



3) Going Forward

Long-range plans, programs, and policies for Baneberry must be based on clear-eyed reality, research, forecasts, and assumptions that realistically influence future development. These assumptions form the foundation for interpreting and evaluating the Comprehensive Plan, which is designed as a “living” document adaptable to unforeseen development activities. The Baneberry Planning Commission will amend the Plan's goals as needs arise and conditions evolve.

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Baneberry is a very small city with a relatively small budget. As an incorporated city, Baneberry does receive some limited funds from the state however, to qualify for these funds the city is required to meet the same basic requirements of cities many times larger. Because these types of funds are limited, leadership must be judicious and target where such funds will do the best for the most people.

Plan Goals

Envision Baneberry 2035 is a roadmap for identifying and quantifying goals that the city sees as its responsibility. It is divided into 5 Major Goals. Many of the items in each goal will overlap due to their shared responsibilities.

4) Plan Goals:

Goal #1: Community Character and Lifestyle

- Baneberry should prioritize enhancing its appearance and quality of life through active landscape maintenance, possibly contracted out.
- Changes in commercial property ownership present both opportunities and challenges.
- Communication with Jefferson County representatives is encouraged
- A formal job description for the Code Enforcement Officer is needed.
- Coordination with the City Building Inspector should be improved
- Ongoing water management improvements are being studied.
- We should celebrate major milestones of the city--like the 40-year anniversary.

Goal #2: Promotion and Growth of the City

- To foster growth, Baneberry must proactively expand its Urban Growth Boundary and demonstrate an ability to add value by providing essential services, such as road maintenance and public safety.
- Planning must include cost estimates
- Cultural and governmental speakers should be invited for community engagement.
- Include a statement/provision for a central city center/downtown (merchant/service) area for Baneberry (either Harrison Ferry or Iron Gate development area.**
- Suggestion that zoning descriptions need to be included for development areas such as food truck pads, etc. (see last bullet point statement).**
- Consider the exploration of Baneberry's qualification for space to be designated as an enterprise zone – capable of granting/receiving special tax breaks, regulatory exemptions, or other public assistance to encourage private economic development, job creation, etc. **

Goal #3: Recreation/Space/Environment

- Baneberry is known for its boating and outdoor recreation, with many residents owning boats, golf carts, or RVs.

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- Emphasizing green space and major recreational amenities like walking trails, boat launches, food trucks, and outdoor concerts is essential.
- The former 120-acre golf course in Baneberry, operational from 1972 to 2022 with various amenities, faced sustainability challenges and was sold to a private developer in 2023.
- Currently idle, this property represents the largest potential area for future recreational use, such as a golf course or other social space. While most residents prioritize revitalizing the golf course, financial and structural hurdles make this difficult.
- Consequently, the committee explored multiple alternative land use options to align with Goal #3, considering ways for the town to gain control or collaborate with third-party landowners.
- A table of concepts is provided below, offering mix-and-match land use ideas that may comply with Baneberry’s zoning requirements.

Goal #4: Strengthen Public Services **

- The former 120-acre golf course in Baneberry, operational from 1972 to 2022 with various amenities, faced sustainability challenges and was sold to a private developer in 2023. **
- Currently idle, this property represents the largest potential area for future recreational use, such as a golf course or other social space. While most residents prioritize revitalizing the golf course, financial and structural hurdles make this difficult. **
- Consideration of an 8” water line (to/through) the back side of Baneberry (Iron Gate and undeveloped land) to allow for growth.**
- Baneberry currently has a low or inefficient utility fault tolerance. Currently, we have only single-source services entering town, and there is a need to have multiple redundancies for extra layers of protection/expansion.**
- Baneberry fire bond to allow for greater water supply into the city – Consider a tax and/or assessment for non-Baneberry residents benefiting from the city’s investment in expanded service (fire protection, increased water flow, right-of-way, etc.).**

CONCEPT	HIGHLIGHTS	TAX/REVENUE POTENTIAL
Modified golf operations	18-hole or 9-hole executive course rebuild – keeping a piece of Baneberry’s golf history	Lease and/or tax potential from 3 rd party operators
Distillery, Brewery, or Vineyard	Promotes tourism to the community while possibly highlighting a branded product	Tax and lease revenue potential from 3 rd party operators.
Food truck court	Low cost promoting resident gatherings and outside community visitation	Lease revenue. Possible entertainment tax revenue
Dedicated & attractive multi-purpose event venue (such as a large pavilion with ample support facilities, parking restrooms, kitchen, etc.)	Suitable space is likely catering to the diverse SMERF segment (Social, Military, Educational, Religious, and Fraternal groups and include weddings, family reunions, and group gatherings). Becomes a focal point and stable gathering point for residents and the adoption of hosted events, festivals, fairs, etc.	A steady stream of revenue through lease, vendor commissions, door proceeds, etc. It may be possible to use the existing structure formally known as the restaurant/pro shop however, this space has likely become inadequate. The current structure faces code and other ADA accommodation

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		challenges and is generally not seen as large enough to support needed occupancy
Pickleball courts	Promoting healthy lifestyles while offering residents a new form of low-impact recreation.	Passive revenue opportunity through league dues, tournament fees, and leased court space. Can be expanded to multiple communities for regular league events.
Dedicated nature trails & greenway plan	Segment portions of existing space (generally undevelopable) to promote a healthy lifestyle with dedicated walking, biking, and exercise areas. The concept could be expanded with new zoning in Baneberry's undeveloped land space (in and around Iron Gate area)	Certain grant monies and/or capital improvement campaigns may be available to help offset development. It is unlikely any revenue could be generated outside of reallocated or new tax increases.
Community co-op gardens	Carve out small plots for residents to lease land for personal vegetable gardens. Potential for local resident farmers market event.	Marginal and seasonal rental revenue to the city
Community-supported commercial organic farm operations	Multiple possibilities to allocate leased space for commercial farming under the Baneberry banner. Potential for LMA farmer's market; appealing to other communities	Tax and/or land lease revenue to the city
Redesigned community recreation center and grounds	The concept is to separate community offices and meeting spaces with more appealing and comfortable multi-functional social gathering spaces dedicated to residents only. May include a playground, pool, firepits, picnic, bandstand, gaming areas, business center, library, fitness center, gathering center, outdoor movies, etc.; effectively becoming a "club" feel without an actual country club	Can charge certain "social and/or per day memberships" for dedicated calendar hosting, pool memberships, club memberships, etc. Certain other events would be free to residents (such as our regular social activities). Revenue possibility for residents to lease space for limited private events.
Equestrian center/stables	Development of unique stable, trails and riding/training complex.	Positive property tax revenue and possible shared leasing proceeds. Can host events and regular visitation
Short-term vacation rental cottages/inn	Phased vacation rental development creating planned "micro-community" of private cottages with amenities	Property tax revenue & possible shared hotel leasing proceeds.

Community Waterfront Center

Baneberry lacks a common waterfront access or recreational area, creating a gap for residents without direct lakefront access and limiting the town's ability to host events.

The committee prioritizes exploring opportunities for residential lakefront access and the development of amenities like a park, cabana, restrooms, picnic areas, and possibly a marina with associated services.

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Despite potentially high costs due to limited property availability, a comprehensive development plan could offer unique attractions for residents and visitors.

To enhance waterfront operations, the city should consider land annexation and connections to St. Road 25 for better traffic flow, which could foster broader master-planned community growth. Engagement with Jefferson County and TVA regarding new waterfront opportunities is essential.



Events, Festivals & Fairs

Baneberry could host events, from small fairs to music festivals, enhancing tourism and quality of life. Activities could include a farmer's market, craft fairs, 5K runs, and bicycle races (coordinated with adjacent municipalities, and food truck festivals to attract visitors.

Event Center



Farmer’s Market

** Community feedback



Food Trucks and Craft Fairs



Land Annexation

Exploring annexation opportunities is essential for expanding the city's borders and tax base.

Funding & Alternate Funding Considerations

The city should pursue various funding avenues for land purchase and development, including partnerships with government and private entities, tax increases, property transfer fees, capital campaigns, and grants.

Low to No Cost Advisory Support

Resources may be available from Parks & Recreation departments within the County, TVA, University of Tennessee Extension, local expert committees, and pro bono sources to assist in planning and development.

Goal #5: Efficient and Effective Transportation System

The Envision Baneberry revision committee focused on initiatives to enhance the transportation infrastructure.

Evaluation and Restoration

Baneberry's paved roadways have suffered neglect over the past decade, leading to erosion, drainage, and foundation issues affecting both paved and gravel roads. Immediate identification and mitigation of these problems should be prioritized. The Road Commission must develop, maintain, and sustain a five (5) year rolling road maintenance and development plan with cost

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estimates for each year's proposed projects. The Road Commission will maintain this major road plan for the city of Baneberry, Tennessee. A certified copy of the major road plan shall be filed in the Office of the Registrar of Deeds for Jefferson County, Tennessee (*Tennessee Code Annotated §§ 13-4-301 to 13-4-309*).

Cooperative Efforts

The city must engage with Federal, State, and County governments to secure infrastructure funding and grants for ongoing development. As the community grows, alternative transportation options such as bike lanes and walking greenways should be developed. Addressing problematic traffic patterns outside the city also requires collaboration with other agencies.

Encouraging Growth

To support growth, Baneberry needs to maintain and enhance its transportation infrastructure, especially to underdeveloped properties. The Road Commission should enforce building requirements to prevent roadway damage during construction and ensure developers provide adequate access to unimproved roads. Building permit applications should include documentation of existing roadway conditions, drainage impacts, and the developer's responsibilities.

Future Transportation Needs

Over the next decade, Baneberry should focus on widening main thoroughfares like Back Nine Drive, Nina Road, and Harrison Ferry Road to accommodate growth. An alternative entrance through the Iron Gate community should also be developed, designed with future growth potential in mind.

Goal #5: Adequate Public Services

Current public services include fire protection, augmented by the City of White Pine, and waste management via contracted services.

There's a need for better yard waste disposal options and emergency services visibility through clear addresses.

The city could benefit from a public service position combining code enforcement and community support. A City Emergency Preparedness Plan should be re-evaluated, and improvements to communication materials, including a brochure and informative website, are recommended.

5) Action Items

This is an abbreviated list of the items that have been discussed.

Maintain city appearance:

1. Contract out periodic landscape work.
2. Repair or replace street signs
3. Fence area behind the fire station.
4. Paint and expand mail and parcel boxes in the mail center.
5. Contract for street cleaning, annually or semi-annually.
6. Contract for annual or semi-annual yard and tree debris
7. Make sure every residence has a visible street number as required by county emergency services.

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8. Work on requirements for expanding the city's Urban Growth Boundary. (see Transportation)
9. Electronic sign for city hall announcements

Promote and grow:

1. Expand website. Further plan for a city webcam.
2. Create an "opt-in" electronic emergency contact list for residents
3. Create a city brochure with a city map, directory, and emergency contacts.
4. Encourage more contact with District 3 county representatives.
5. Work toward having a dedicated building inspector.

Recreation and Green Space:

1. Invite outside speakers, government, and cultural events.
2. Research land within the city boundaries that can be used for public lake access, piers, boat docking, and outside activities.
 1. Land purchase may be required.
 2. Make more use of the land surrounding the community center.
 3. Consider alternatives to restaurants, for example, food trucks.
 4. City Park with amenities

Transportation:

1. Make developing a solid 5-year road plan a priority.
2. Must have a major and master road plan to have any chance at expanding our Urban Growth Boundary.
3. Define the future of Irongate Road and how it affects the expansion of the west side of the city.

Public Services:

1. Encourage volunteers to help with administrative tasks for the fire department.
2. Create an "opt-in" electronic emergency contact list for residents
3. Revisit the CERT national emergency training for interested citizens. It is an excellent program with no cost to the city.
4. Consider Deer Crossing signs.
5. Speed mitigation efforts to maintain safe driving speeds through main thoroughfares
6. Recognition for volunteers

Finance: How to pay for the things we would like to have.

1. Modest increase in property taxes
2. Reestablish commercial areas for tax generation
3. Expanded building fees or property transfer fees
4. Grants (contract with a professional grant writer)
5. Investors
6. Low-interest loans
7. All proposals to include the cost of maintenance, manpower, and equipment.

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Appendix I

In conjunction with the completion of an Action Plan with Timelines, will be the appointment of a Master Project Planner (MPP). The role of the MPP is to assign committees for the management and execution of each project.

Appendix II

2023 Tennessee Code

Title 13 - PUBLIC PLANNING AND HOUSING (§§ 13-1-101 — 13-30-120)

Chapter 4 - MUNICIPAL PLANNING (§§ 13-4-101 — 13-4-403)

Part 2 - MUNICIPAL PLAN (§§ 13-4-201 — 13-4-203)

Section 13-4-201 - General plan for physical development

TN Code § 13-4-201 (2023)

It is the function and duty of the commission to make and adopt an official general plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any area outside of its boundaries which, in the commission's judgment, bears relation to the planning of the municipality. The plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive and explanatory matter, shall show the commission's recommendations for the physical development of the area of the municipal planning jurisdiction and identify areas where there are inadequate or nonexistent publicly or privately owned and maintained services and facilities when the planning commission has determined the services are necessary in order for development to occur, and may include, among other things, the general location, character and extent of streets, bridges, viaducts, parks, parkways, waterways, waterfronts, playgrounds, airports and other public ways, grounds, places and spaces, the general location of public buildings and other public property, the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned, for water, light, power, sanitation, transportation, communication and other purposes; also the removal, relocation, widening, extension, narrowing, vacating, abandonment, change of use or extension of any of the foregoing public ways, grounds, places, spaces, buildings, properties or utilities; also a zoning plan for the regulation of the height, area, bulk, location and use of private and public structures and premises and of population density; also the general location, character, layout and extent of community centers and neighborhood units; also the general location, character, extent and layout of the replanning of blighted districts and slum areas. The commission may from time to time amend, extend, or add to the plan or carry any part of the subject matter into greater detail.