



NEWS RELEASE

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City Council Adopts FY 2015 Budget

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – The Murfreesboro City Council adopted the proposed FY 2015 budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15 with no increase in property tax rates, funding of a 3.5 percent step increase for all eligible full-time employees and continued high level of public services for over 118,000 citizens. The city maintains a focus on prioritized spending by holding spending growth to 4.3 percent from the FY 2013-14 budget. The new \$127.4 million budget takes effect July 1, 2014.

With Thursday night's passage, the city administration has not only delivered on a budget without an increase in the property tax rate for the 16th consecutive year, but also continued commitment on four primary City Council goals: 1) Safe and Livable Neighborhoods; 2) Strong and Sustainable Financial and Economic Health; 3) Service Excellence with a Focus on Customers; and 4) Engaging Our Community.

"Murfreesboro continues to be a leader in Tennessee and the nation in providing services to residents while attracting economic growth and investment," said Mayor Shane McFarland. "It's exciting to see this community returning to a high level of residential growth with new subdivisions and additional site plans for business and commercial development."

The return to growth demands funding that supports safe neighborhoods. Among the significant initiatives is the hiring of three new police officers for the Directed Patrol Unit, which focuses on attacking crime in our neighborhoods. Other **Priority 1** projects that support Safe and Livable Neighborhoods include the following:

- Implementing the transition from First Responder to Basic Life Support (BLS) medical service provided by the Murfreesboro Fire & Rescue Department.
- Relocation of the Police Department to a new headquarters on Highland Avenue to begin with interior demolition of the building near the old hospital and the building of a public safety training facility on Coleman Farm.
- Implementing transition to a new police & fire radio communications system including four new communication towers.

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“It is important to note that the FY 2015 budget focuses heavily on planning for the future of Murfreesboro,” said City Manager Rob Lyons. “With a Comprehensive Plan consultant selected and the project now in its initial stages, the city is moving forward on a plan to encourage community input on what citizens want Murfreesboro to become in the next 20 years.”

Priority 2 projects and initiatives that support Strong and Sustainable Financial and Economic Health include the following:

- Contributing to MTSU's new \$147 million science building by providing \$333,333 to the budget as part of an overall \$1 million dollar 3-year commitment.
- Partnering with MTSU and Christy Houston Foundation on a \$5.8 million indoor tennis complex at Old Fort Park.
- Constructing the extension of Joe B. Jackson Parkway to Highway 231.
- Converting the city health insurance provider to Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Tennessee. The City enhanced its plan design by eliminating the upfront deductible and only requiring co-insurance for labs and certain diagnostic tests.

Priority 3 projects and initiatives that support Excellent Services with a Focus on Customer Service include the following:

- Continued improvement of customer service with Customer Service Principles, city employee customer service training, a city employee Service Award Program, and a customer service survey form to initiate feedback on city performance.
- Renovating Sports*Com by adding approximately 3,000 square feet to the existing complex.
- Repaving \$2 million in city streets from State gasoline taxes.
- Constructing new headquarters for Rover, the city's public transportation system.

Priority 4 projects and initiatives that support Engaging Our Community include the following:

- Using Facebook, Twitter, City TV, and other technology as well as neighborhood meetings to engage the public in development of the comprehensive plan.
- Conducting neighborhood meetings on critical issues.
- Holding the third session of the Citizens Academy to give citizens first-hand knowledge of the city and city services.
- Engaging city employees with a classification and compensation study.

The FY 2015 budget adopts a tax rate of \$1.2015, down from \$1.2703 in FY 2014 due to reappraisals. Property tax revenues are projected to be \$36,337,111, an increase of \$1,015,253 from FY 2014.

A copy of the FY 2015 budget is available on the City's website at www.murfreesborotn.gov/2015budget.

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