



NEWS RELEASE

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Murfreesboro 2035: Our Future Begins Now **Chapter 1 of *Murfreesboro 2035, 'Planning Context,'* unveiled**

MURFREESBORO, Tenn. – The City of Murfreesboro presents Chapter 1, *Planning Context*, to the community Tuesday as part of a participatory process to develop its 20-year comprehensive plan. The presentation will be delivered to a public gathering at Oakland Middle School Auditorium, Dec. 9, 2014. The 65-page draft report provides historical context, demographic indicators and current conditions that have impacted the past and will continue to shape Murfreesboro's future.

"We are excited to roll out the first chapter to the community. The background information contained in *Planning Context* provides the appropriate context and assumptions to support the needs assessment and long-range planning decisions throughout the comprehensive planning process," said City Manager Rob Lyons. "With a bold vision, the 20-year plan seeks to strengthen the City's position as both an innovator of growth and as a steward of its rich historical, cultural and physical landscape."

Chapter 1, *Planning Context*, includes the following:

- An **Introduction** about the planning process, principles and outcomes, including community engagement and outreach.
- A **Community Profile** providing regional context, physical setting, history, comparison communities, income, racial and ethnic diversity, and other socioeconomic qualities.
- **Future chapter previews:** (2) Growth Capacity and Infrastructure, (3) Mobility, (4) Land Use and Character, (5) Housing and Neighborhoods, (6) Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources, (7) Economic Development.

What are some of Murfreesboro's greatest challenges? Citizens are participating in the on-going conversation spearheaded by Texas-based Consultant Kendig Keast Collaborative (KKC), a national planning firm. Issues such as population growth, traffic congestion, sidewalks, multi-family housing development, urban sprawl, mobility, white-collar jobs, small town character, and preserving downtown are some concerns being voiced by citizens.

According to Chapter 1, Murfreesboro grew by more than 35,000 residents over the past 14 years, and it is expected to keep the fast pace in the near and mid-term. Population projections forecast significant population growth in Murfreesboro to an estimated 228,000 by 2035. While population projections are an important decision-making tool to determine the potential pace and scale of the community's growth, long-term forecasting can be challenging, especially in accounting for unknown circumstances that may arise.

Future planning decisions will impact Murfreesboro's quality of life, community character, and growth capacity. A *Murfreesboro 2035* webpage has been established at www.Murfreesborotn.gov/murfreesboro2035 to provide citizens with a copy of Chapter 1 and other updated information about the comprehensive plan projects, documents, schedules and meeting notices. Simply click the link below the homepage "Spotlight" to visit the Boro 2035 webpage.

"As Chapter 1 of the planning document illustrates, this community engagement process should be empowering for the public, engaging people in the process, and maintaining their continued participation," said Mayor Shane McFarland. "This plan will help us work together to think beyond the status quo, prepare for our future, and address Murfreesboro's infrastructure needs for many years to come."

Hundreds of Murfreesboro citizens have been doing just that, engaging questions in an Online Discussion Forum www.murfreesboro2035.com to provide input for the 20-year comprehensive plan. With Chapter 1 drafted, KKC is currently working on Chapter 2, *Growth Capacity*, and Chapter 3, *Mobility*. Chapter 2, *Growth Capacity*, which reviews the City's capacity for growth related to water, sewer and natural resources, will be presented to the community, January 27, 2015, in an interactive workshop-type setting. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan Task Force is meeting, Monday, Dec. 8, at the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce to review Chapter 1. The task force serves as the first line of review and feedback in developing the comprehensive plan.

"The community of Murfreesboro is facing a critical crossroads in its history and future," said Bret Keast, owner of consulting firm Kendig Keast Collaborative. The growth of the past decade demonstrates the City is an attractive place, but going forward the big question is how do residents want to transform the community from a vision of what residents want it to be to a specific identity that leaves a strong impression."

Development subconsultants include Neel-Schaffer, Inc., focusing on transportation planning and stormwater drainage-related issues, and Smith Seckman Reid, Inc. focusing on utilities infrastructure capacities and improvements. Neel-Shaffer, Inc. is a national engineering firm with offices in Murfreesboro. Smith Seckman Reid, Inc. is a national engineering firm headquartered in Nashville.

The plan is expected to be finalized by May 2016.

For City News online, visit www.Murfreesborotn.gov.

Photo Attached Captions:

1. *Murfreesboro 2035: Our Future Begins Now.jpg*