



## PlanET Collaborative Forms to Advance Regional Competitiveness

A valuable outcome of PlanET's three-year effort was the building of relationships among dozens of local jurisdictions and organizations. Mayors, city and county officials, citizens, and business people began to think and plan regionally. Water, air, and even people flow between counties-so too should efforts to ensure a future of economic prosperity.

ETcompetes was born from this way of thinking. ETcompetes is a collaborative of organizations, businesses, local governments, and individuals from across the East Tennessee region. The group convenes to share ideas, coordinate projects, and align resources in a way that will advance regional competitiveness.

As PlanET moved from the planning stage to implementation, project leaders and citizens recognized the need to continue fostering cross-jurisdictional relationships. The challenge, as they saw it, was to find a way to build on the regional momentum generated by PlanET.

ETcompetes will bring together key constituent groups from the East Tennessee region and partner regions statewide to discuss implementation strategies that will ensure communities address shared challenges and capitalize on shared opportunities.

A sampling of the activities that ETcompetes offers:

- **ETspeaks** - Hosting regional, state, and national experts to teach best practices and illustrate ways the region can work collaboratively to address challenges and opportunities
- **ETindex.org** - Providing a platform for sharing and disseminating information so better, fact-based decisions are made

ETcompetes will be supported by several key organizations interested in ensuring the work of PlanET does not sit on a shelf. These organizations include Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization, Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission, Knoxville-Oak Ridge Innovation Valley, and East Tennessee Quality Growth.

As the coalition evolves, more information about ETcompetes and its work will be available online at [www.planeasttn.org](http://www.planeasttn.org). Stay tuned!

## PlanET Playbook Offers Vision, Guidance for East Tennessee's Future

The PlanET Playbook is centered around eight goals that advance East Tennessee's regional prosperity and a growth framework focused on strengthening the existing communities in our area.



Plan East Tennessee (PlanET) was an ambitious three-year planning process that actively engaged citizens, local governments, and businesses in imagining a more prosperous future for East Tennessee and charting a course to get there. The process yielded more than forty resources focused on developing community-based solutions to shared regional challenges. The cornerstone of those resources is the PlanET Playbook.

A compilation of strategies gathered during an intensive public outreach campaign, the Playbook will serve as a guide for communities as they plan for the future. Strategies in the Playbook are voluntary recommendations that any community can undertake to create more prosperous people and places.

The five-county region comprising Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Union counties grew by 300,000 people in the past 50 years and is forecast to grow that much again by 2040. And with those new neighbors will come an estimated 240,000 new jobs. The public outreach effort asked this central question: how do we accommodate that much growth and become more economically competitive in the years ahead?

During a series of public meetings, online town halls, and working group sessions, participants agreed on a shared vision for the future. Subsequent community meetings, surveys, and workshops generated goals and strategies to achieve that vision. The Playbook brings it all together with eight goals and more than 300 strategies that connect the vision to specific action.

The PlanET Playbook-along with the more than 40 other resources-is available on the PlanET website, [www.planeasttn.org](http://www.planeasttn.org).

## ETcompetes Launches Online Community Profile: ETindex

Data relating to economy and quality of life in the Knoxville region are easily accessible in a new website featuring interactive charts, maps and downloadable data. ETindex.org provides 87 indicators to help monitor trends in the East Tennessee area.



During the three-year planning effort known as Plan East Tennessee (PlanET) staff gathered a tremendous amount of information about the region with the intent of making that information available to the public. ETcompetes-the entity that will take the results of PlanET forward-is proud to announce the launch of ETindex.org, a user-friendly website

stocked with community facts and figures.

### New on our website

There are a number of new products available on our website to help your community move from planning to implementation.

#### PlanET Playbook

*Our regional roadmap to prosperity, competitiveness and health*

#### Greenway Guidelines for East Tennessee

*Concepts for supporting great places, healthy people and more transportation choices*

#### Demonstration Projects

*Community-based solutions to shared regional challenges*

#### Follow PlanET:



The PlanET regional partnership includes: Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Union Counties. For more information: (865) 215-2500 or [contact@planeasttn.org](mailto:contact@planeasttn.org)



The goal of the East Tennessee Index is to provide a common source of data and analysis on topics critical to the discussion, collaboration, and improvement of the region's quality of life. With a foundation based on shared information, regional leaders can work together to address challenges and build on strengths.

Want to know how tourism affects the local economy? Or the average time area workers spend getting to and from work? How about the number of days the air in the region is unhealthy?

All are examples of the nearly 90 indicators available on the ETIndex.org website.

Community indicators tell the region's story by measuring strengths and challenges, and focused efforts to improve quality of life can be backed up with local data. The 87 indicators on the ETIndex.org site track critical aspects of the region's economy, health, housing markets, and environment. Each measure includes a description, an analysis of trends, a chart that visually displays those trends, and data tables for the counties. Comparisons of the region to the state and nation are also available. The indicators will be updated annually.

ETIndex.org was launched by the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission and the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization, with support and advice from several local groups:

- The United Way of Greater Knoxville brings together community resources to improve the lives of residents by helping them achieve self-sufficiency.
- Knoxville-Oak Ridge Innovation Valley is a regional economic development partnership managed by the Knoxville Chamber.
- Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), a department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, conducts research on national and state economic trends for the university, state agencies, and public and private organizations.
- Cornerstone Foundation of Knoxville, a private group whose activities are focused on the Greater Knoxville geographic area, identifies priorities and effective actions that help the area reach its full potential as a community.

To learn more about ETIndex, visit [www.etindex.org](http://www.etindex.org). If you would like to schedule a personal overview of the Index, please contact MPC staff at (865) 215-2500 or [Indicators@etindex.org](mailto:Indicators@etindex.org).

This project was developed with assistance from the Center for Governmental Research (CGR), a nonprofit research and consulting firm that has created several community indicator projects across the country.



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PlanET | 400 Main St., Suite 403 | Knoxville | TN | 37902