

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

For more information, contact: Michael Skipper at (615) 862-7204 or skipper@nashvillempo.org, or Terri H. Sterling, APR, at (615) 945-4794

September 17, 2008

Growing population, high fuel prices underscore need for coordinated planning

Nashville Area MPO and local agencies invite public to participate in developing land use and transportation plan for Robertson, Sumner and Wilson Counties

Nashville, TN --- Community workshops are set for late September and early October to find out what citizens think about growth and development options for areas within Robertson, Sumner and Wilson Counties. "This is an opportunity for those curious to see what the region might look like in 20 years based on existing trends, and to actively participate in shaping that future into something that may be much more desirable than where we may be headed," says Michael Skipper, Director of the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Community and regional planners will host workshops, as part of the Tri-County Transportation Land Use Study, at the following times / locations:

ROUND 1: Challenges and Opportunities

Tuesday, September 30 - Springfield, TN

First Methodist Church
511 South Oak Street
Begins at 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 1 - Gallatin, TN

Vol State Community College
Wood Campus Building
Begins at 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 2 - Lebanon, TN

Wilson County Fairgrounds
Education Building
Begins at 5:30 p.m.

ROUND 2: The Importance of Quality Growth

Monday, October 6 - Hendersonville, TN

Hendersonville High School
123 Cherokee Road
Begins at 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 7 - Springfield, TN
Springfield City Hall
405 N Main Street
Begins at 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 9 - Lebanon, TN
Cumberland University
Baird Chapel
Begins at 5:30 p.m.

Kicked off in late 2007, the Tri-County Transportation & Land Use Study study is a first-of-its-kind effort in the region to bring local governments, citizens, and businesses together across jurisdictional boundaries to talk about significant growth issues. The MPO will use the effort to generate ideas for the regional transportation plan. Local governments expect to use the effort to develop or improve upon their own comprehensive plans.

The upcoming public outreach effort includes two workshops to be held in each of the three counties that are participating in the planning effort. Meetings will be held at two different locations to be as convenient as possible for area citizens to attend. Each meeting will last about an hour and a half.

“We strongly encourage people to ‘save the date’ and plan to participate in the discussion,” Skipper said. “We need to know what citizens want to see for their community, today and in the future, in order to develop a regional transportation plan that benefits everyone. Linking transportation and land use issues is critically important, and this effort goes a step further to provide improved coordination of local planning activities across county and city boundaries. Community growth plans play a key part in ensuring a high quality-of-life for the region, and the coordination of these plans is becoming increasingly important as our communities continue to grow closer together.”

The first series of meetings will include results of preliminary research showing how recent trends and current growth policies will drive future land development patterns. The analysis will show how close those growth predictions reflect community-wide goals. The second series of meetings will recap results from the first round and give citizens a chance to learn about the various land use and transportation strategies that might be available to planners.

“We can draw certain conclusions from predicting the future based on historical trends and existing policies,” said Skipper. “We can get a sense of how well that future might meet our goals and objectives for mobility, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability to name a few. If we want a different outcome, we can outline certain steps, actions and decisions that can be made to change course.”

The Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is the regional transportation planning agency for Davidson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, Wilson and parts of Maury and Robertson counties. Through the Nashville Area MPO, local partners develop and manage the region’s transportation plan and 4-year transportation improvement program. MPO plans and programs identify and prioritize transportation needs for federal and state funding. Find out more about the MPO at www.nashvillempo.org.

####