



2026 Strategic Summit

Friday, February 20, 2026
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

McMinn Higher Education Center
Facilitated by Southeast Tennessee Development District (SETD)

8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:15 a.m.	Welcome & Introductions
9:15 – 9:30 a.m.	<u>Review of Previous and Current Accomplishments</u> • Review of FY 2024-25 Previous Year's Accomplishments • Review of Feb. 2025 Strategic Summit Priorities and their Outcomes • Review of FY 2025-26 Current Program of Work
9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	<u>Athens in Context for Future Planning</u> • City and County Population Growth Chart and City Demographic Data • U.S. Population Projection, Consumer Sentiment, and Delinquency Rate Charts • City School Enrollment Growth Chart • City Single-Family Home Building Permit Issuance Chart • Number of City Sanitation Customers and Collection Chart • Parks & Recreation Program Participation Chart • Local Sales Tax Collection Charts • City Hotel/Motel Tax Collection Chart (4%) • Cash Balances & Investment Sheet of all Funds as of January 2026 • LGIP Interest Rate Chart as of January 2026 • Adjacent City and County Total Property Tax Rates for 2025
10:00 – 10:45 a.m.	<u>What Should the City's Future Planning Strategy Be Based on Current Context?</u> (Including a Seven-Year CIP)
10:45 – 11:00 a.m.	Break
11:00 – 12:00 p.m.	<u>Departmental Presentations to Discuss Specific Budget Priorities for FY 2026-27 and Specific Long-Term Projects Based on the Seven-Year CIP</u> • Parks & Recreation / SE TN Trade & Conference Center • Police Department • Fire Department
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 3:00 p.m.	<u>Departmental Presentations to Discuss Specific Budget Priorities for FY 2026-27 and Specific Long-Term Projects Based on the Seven-Year CIP</u> • Community Development / Codes Enforcement / Cemeteries • Information Technology • Tourism (Hotel/Motel Tax Fund) • Public Works / Sanitation / Capital Projects • HR / Finance / Purchasing
3:00 – 3:15 p.m.	Break
3:15 – 4:30 p.m.	Discussion and List of Specific Budget Priorities for FY 2026-27 and Specific Long-Term Projects for the Seven-Year CIP

FY 2024-25 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Partnered with McMinn Regional Humane Society to provide services at the city's Animal Shelter through an updated agreement.
- Sponsored the annual Veterans Day Parade on a permanent basis.
- Held the annual Strategic Summit at Tennessee College of Applied Technology, facilitated by the Southeast Tennessee Development District (SETD), to discuss and outline the general goals for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Completed a traffic safety action plan to identify problematic and unsafe traffic areas throughout the city using a federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant.
- Wrote a \$1M Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to improve Knight Park, N. Jackson Street, and N. White Street. Grant application was not successful.
- Approved a homeless camping ordinance.
- Updated portions of the City Code.
- Repaired the government access channel 95 and updated its content for better citizen and visitor communication.
- Continue to update and modernize the city's website for better citizen communication.
- Continued the discussion of creating a historic overlay district for the downtown area.
- Acquired routing software/hardware for garbage trucks to increase operational efficiency.
- Installed a replacement generator for city hall.
- Installed decorative fencing at Cedar Grove Cemetery.
- Installed a Safe Haven baby box at Fire Station Headquarters using grant funds.
- Selected an architect to begin the design of a new fire station #3 to be located on Elizabeth Street.
- Selected an architect to begin the planning for the renovation and expansion of City Hall.
- Leased the old Ingleside School to Tennessee Wesleyan University.

FY 2024-25 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Gave the old Westside School to the City Board of Education and contributed \$1M for renovations.
- Repaired the splash pad at Regional Park so all water functions are working.
- Modernized the concession stands point-of-purchase equipment at Regional Park and Ingleside Park for better control and pricing of concession items for revenue enhancement.
- Repaired the pavilion and solar panel at Echo Park.
- Completed Ingleside Park improvements consisting of updated tennis courts and pickleball courts.
- Partnered with TDOT to resurface W. Madison Street, W. Washington Street, N. White Street, and N. Jackson Street and restriped the parking spaces around the courthouse for better traffic flow and pedestrian safety.
- Purchased various vehicles and equipment including two replacement police vehicles and equipment, leaf vacuum machine, bucket truck, and two snowplows for Public Works.
- Issued approximately 20 single-family home building permits.



Splash Pad at Regional Park



2025 STRATEGIC SUMMIT

Friday, February 21, 2025

Tennessee College of Applied Technology

1635 Technology Way, Athens, TN 37303

Facilitated by Southeast Tennessee Development (SETD)

Opportunities TOP PRIORITIES as a result of voting (ranked by vote)

- 1. Turf Fields – and Parks & Rec office located in the park area**
- 2. Firehall – 3rd Fire station**
- 3. Add additional dedicated traffic officer – strictly for traffic**
- 4. Full time IT Tech (immediate need)**
- 5. Homeless Shelter**
- 6. EMS Service located at Station 2 (immediate need)**
- 7. Fire Marshall**
- 8. Expansion of Conference Center**
- 9. Pool Replacement**
- 10. Amphitheater**

All - SHORT TERM Opportunities – not ranked in any order – complete list

- Turf Fields**
- Pool Replacement**
- Adding (1) additional police officer dedicated to traffic only**
- Fire Marshall**
- Full time IT Tech**
- EOL Hardware Refresh**
- Windows Deployment & Imaging Software**
- Continued Contractor Budget**
- Security Cam Funds**
- Stormwater Coordinator**
- Paving Money**
- Equipment Needs**
- Nursing Mother' Space**

All – LONG TERM Opportunities – not ranked in any order – complete list

- **EMS Service**
- **Adequate Staffing of Fire Department Positions – i.e., Ladder Truck 24/7 staff add 2-staff to cover**
- **Restrooms at the Fire Training Center/Tower**
- **Strategic Recruitment of Sporting Tournaments**
- **Police Firing Range**
- **Eureka Trail – extension to downtown – needs grant dollars and would take place in phases**
- **Recreation Center**
- **Downtown Improvements – will happen in phases**
- **Improving Housing Stock – available housing & new construction**
- **Infrastructure Improvements – Comprehensive Plan**
- **Recruitment of Younger Families to the Area**

Strategic Topics for Continued Discussion

- 1. Develop a Citywide Comprehensive Staffing Plan**
- 2. Develop a FOCUSED 5-year Plan to Implement and Apply the current plans we already have**
- 3. Infrastructure Comprehensive Plan**
- 4. Downtown Improvement Plan**
- 5. Looking Ahead – guidance per Mike Keith**
 - a) General Fund – FUTURE dollars \$\$\$ in 5-10 years ???**
 - b) Property Tax Rate – in the next 5-10 years ???**
 - c) Funding for Other Priorities – planning ahead**
 - d) Impact on Revenues? Impact on Expenditures ??**



CITY OF ATHENS

FY 2025-26 PROGRAM OF WORK

Updated Feb. 13, 2026

No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
City Manager's Office			
1	Prepare a seven-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to plan/coordinate future projects/costs.	City Manager / Dept. Heads	On Oct. 13, 2025 work session for review. On Oct. 20, 2025 City Council Advisory Committee meeting for feedback, and on Oct. 23, 2025 Rec. Advisory Board meeting for feedback. Will be discussed during 2026 Strategic Summit
2	Prepare/conduct the annual Strategic Summit scheduled for Feb. 20, 2026, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, at McMinn Higher Ed. Center, facilitated by SETD.	City Manager / Dept. Heads	Booked, and waiting for the Summit.
3	Plan the renovation and expansion of the current City Hall facility, \$40,000 for planning.	City Manager / Project Manager	Council consented during Dec. 9, 2024 work session and approved during Dec. 17, 2024 regular session to obtain an appraisal of a downtown building. Appraisal was discussed during the Jan. 13, 2025 work session and Jan. 21, 2025 regular session. No action taken. This topic was discussed during the Feb. 10, 2025 work session and authorized staff to bring back additional data. Council voted to cease all further negotiations with both property owners on March 18, 2025. Discussed further during April 7, 2025 work session and April 15, 2025 regular session and approved to hire architect to begin the planning of new construction and renovations. Discussed further during the May 12, 2025 work session and May 20, 2025 regular session. Approved Allen & Hoshall to prepare planning documents for renovations and expansion. Initial meetings were held collectively and individually on June 4, 2025. Floor plans and renderings were discussed further during Aug. 20, 2025 staff meeting. On Sept. 8, 2025 work session and Oct. 13, 2025 work session for further discussion. On Oct. 21, 2025 regular session for further discussion and no motion was made. Project is completed.

No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
City Manager's Office (continued)			
4	Have a feasibility study prepared to complete/expand the SE TN Trade & Conference Center using Hotel/Motel Tax Funds, \$60,000.	City Manager	RFQ prepared, bid deadline was Sept. 23, 2025. Reviewing 4 responses.
5	Develop a citizen satisfaction survey and a Parks & Recreation amenities survey in-house to obtain citizen sentiment/comments about city provided services and wanted recreational amenities.	City Manager's Office	Preparing.
6	Keep the website updated to include retail marketing and retirement information.	City Manager / Communications Coordinator	Go live was Aug. 22, 2025. Fine tuning and maintaining.
7	Replace HVAC units at City Hall using Capital Improvement Funds, \$580,000.	City Manager	Bid opening was Sept. 29, 2025. On Oct. 13, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Oct. 21, 2025 regular session. Completion during Feb. 2026.
Community Development			
8	Complete creating the downtown historic overlay district.	Community Dev. Director	HPB has discussed this topic previously, their regular meeting on Aug. 7, 2025 had a speaker from Sweetwater, HPB <i>may</i> make recommendations in the future.
9	Continue dilapidated/unfit structure enforcement per city code 13-302. Of the 9, one was demolished by owner, one was remodeled, one had action plan, and 6 were on bid to be demolished by city. Bid was approved during Feb. completion during March 2026. Began an additional 7 structure enforcements (1506 Adams St, 12 Alford St, 507 Bank St, 704 Haley St, 1504 View St, 408 Pope Ave, and 1402 Hammerhill Rd). Hearings were held on Nov. 19, 2025. Began an additional 7 structure enforcements (1615 Betts St., 1413 W. Madison, 800 Ohio Ave., 604 Railroad Ave., 1701 Railroad Ave., 642 Sunview Dr., and 305 Young St.) Hearings were held on Jan. 8, 2026. Final hearing will be April 4, 2026 to hear the no-shows from the Nov. 19, 2025 and Jan. 8, 2026 hearings.	Community Dev. Director / City Manager	Completing two enforcement orders previously approved and filed in Court (206 Stansberry St. and 2019 Hammerhill Rd.). Began 9 additional structure enforcements (815 Central Ave, 102 Euclid Ave, 206 Rose Dr, 121 Sage St, 206 Sharp St., 1110 Old Ingleside Rd, 512 Tellico, 1217 Clayton, and 104 Frankfort). Council discussed changing the hearing process on July 31, 2025. Made clarification of who is certified. City attorney prepared and distributed the 9 hearing notices. Hearings were held on Sept. 9, and Oct. 7, 2025 for the no-shows. City attorney mailed the 9 orders. In the 90-day waiting period to have owners clean up or demolish, or Jan. 7, 2026.

No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
Fire Department			
10	Prepare design plans, develop construction drawings, bid out, and begin construction of Fire Station #3 using Capital Improvement Funds, \$3,200,000.	Fire Chief / Project Manager	Council authorized staff during Jan. 21, 2025 regular session to hire architect to design fire station #3. RFQ prepared and distributed. Received 12 proposals on deadline date of April 3, 2025. Proposals evaluated and the top 4 selected for in-person interviews. Interviews held on April 23, 2025 and a top firm selected (Wold). On May 12, 2025 work session for award consideration and May 20, 2025 regular session for contract approval. Approved Wold. Initial planning meeting was June 17, 2025, second planning meeting held June 23, 2025, third meeting was July 28, 2025. On Aug. 11, 2025 work session and Aug. 19 regular session for consideration. On September 8, 2025 work session and Sept. 16, 2025 regular session for further discussion. Approved proceeding with construction documents and bidding. Bidding expected to occur during late April 2026.
11	Replace the HVAC units at Fire Station #2 using Capital Improvement Funds, \$20,000.	Fire Chief	Bid opening was Sept. 29, 2025. On Oct. 13, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Oct. 21, 2025 regular session. Completion during Feb. 2026.
12	Replace garage door openers at Fire Station HQ.	Fire Chief	Completed.
13	Acquire water tank skid, radio chargers, trailer, uniform cabinets, cabinet for trucks, and 4-way hydrant valve.	Fire Chief	Completed.
14	Acquire replacement Sparky costume.	Fire Chief	Completed.
15	Acquire signage for new training facility per city sign design standards.	Fire Chief	
Hotel/Motel Tax Fund			
16	Assist Nooga Lights, LLC in hosting/advertising a Christmas light show event at Regional Park, \$30,000 and installing new electrical connections for the event using Capital Improvement Funds, \$15,000.	Communications Coordinator	AUB installed new electrical connections needed for this event at Regional Park. Nooga Lights was not able to fulfill the 2025 terms due to a lack and delay of supplies from overseas manufacturers. Instead, installed lights at Market Park and Cook Park pavilions. Going out to bid for another provider.
17	Develop a city branding strategy/logo for tourism promotion, \$20,000.	Communications Coordinator	Being prepared by Kellum Creek.
18	Develop a sign standard and design/install welcome and wayfinding signs throughout the city, \$85,000.	Communications Coordinator	Sign standards being prepared by Kellum Creek.

No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
Information Technology			
19	Purchase various computer equipment and services to update the city's IT network including Channel 95 (\$285,000).	IT Director	On July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. Installation is completed except for Channel 95 equipment.
20	Add/replace security cameras at various parks including Regional Park, Ingleside Park, and Heritage Park, replace the outdated government access channel equipment, and replace computer equipment in various offices (\$147,000).	IT Director	Ordered security cameras, Ingleside Park and Heritage Park completed. Received PEP grant for cameras.
Parks & Recreation Department			
21	Install artificial turf on the 5 infields at Regional Park using Hotel/Motel Tax Funds (\$200,000) and Capital Improvement Funds (\$1,300,000).	Parks & Rec. Director / Project Manager	On July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. NTP issued July 21, 2025. Completed.
22	Renovate the house at Regional Park for Parks & Recreation offices using Capital Improvement Funds, \$275,000.	Parks & Rec. Director / Project Manager	Proposal from Allen & Hoshall on July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. NTP issued July 17, 2025. On Sept. 8, 2025 work session and Sept. 16 regular session for consideration. Approved to proceed with construction drawings and bidding. Bid opening was Dec. 18. Evaluated 8 bids received. On Jan.12, 2026 work session for consideration and Jan. 20, 2026 regular session for approval. All bids were rejected. Completed.
23	Improve Heritage Park including renovation of baseball field, adding walking trail, ADA compliance, and install replacement playground, \$1,175,000 using LPRF grant (50%) and city funds (50%).	Parks & Rec. Director / Project Manager	State approved construction plans. Bid deadline was July 31, 2025. On Aug.11, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Aug. 19, 2025 regular session. NTP issued on Sept. 22, 2025. Construction has begun. Anticipated completion is Summer 2026.
24	Replace the main gate at Regional Park with an electric gate using Capital Improvement Funds, \$35,000.	Parks & Rec. Director	Gate specifications prepared, bid deadline was Sept. 9, 2025. On Oct. 13, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Oct. 21, 2025 regular session. Completion during March 2025.

No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
Parks & Recreation Department (continued)			
25	Complete Market Park per the master plan using Capital Improvement Funds, \$250,000 and install Level 2 EV chargers from a TVA grant.	Parks & Rec. Director / Project Manager	Kimley Horn is working on schematic designs, updated layout, priority phases, and cost estimates. Plan was reviewed by Recreation Advisory Board, Main Street, and Friendly City Festivals on Aug. 14, 2025 and Council Advisory Committee on Oct. 20, 2025. On Nov. 10, 2025 work session and approved on Nov. 18, 2025 regular session to proceed with Phase I. Phase I being designed.
26	Replace the blue metal roof of the concession stand/restrooms at Regional Park using Capital Improvement Funds, \$40,000.	Parks & Rec. Director	No action.
27	Replace tennis/pickleball court lighting fixtures and add pedestrian lighting at Ingleside Park using Capital Improvement Funds, \$195,000.	Parks & Rec. Director / Project Manager	Obtained quotes from purchasing cooperatives to consider for the Nov. 10, 2025 regular session and approved on Nov. 18, 2025 regular session. All court lighting fixtures have been installed. Waiting for pedestrian lighting. Completion during March 2026.
28	Acquire trailer, bushhog, air compressor, paint machine, chalk machine, bases, new tables for Cook Park, pitching screens, and park signage per the city's sign design standards.	Parks & Rec. Director	All items have been delivered except for park signage.
29	Acquire a replacement slide for Ingleside Pool, \$6,000.	Parks & Rec. Director	No action.
30	Acquire a replacement pick-up truck using Fleet Management Funds, \$40,000.	Parks & Rec. Director	Purchasing off state contract.
31	Perform general repairs and cleaning to the SE TN Trade & Conference Center, \$125,000.	Parks & Rec. Director	No action.
32	Acquire floor cleaning machine and replacement tables for the SE TN Trade & Conference Center, \$12,500.	Parks & Rec. Director	Completed.
33	Obtain cost estimates/wording/location for Revolutionary War, WWI, and WWII memorials for Veterans Park.	Parks & Rec. Director	On July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. Memorials installed during Oct. 2025. Completed.
34	Install new park benches on Cook Drive (3), Veterans Park (7), and Ingleside Park (3), \$15,000.	Parks & Rec. Director	On July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. All concrete poured and 13 benches have been installed. Completed.

No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
Police Department			
35	Acquire five new police vehicles using Fleet Management Funds, \$400,000.	Police Chief	On July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. 4 vehicles delivered and in service, waiting for delivery of the other 1.
36	Acquire the equipment needed for the five new police cars (\$80,000) and acquire new in-vehicle printers (\$24,000).	Police Chief	See #34 above.
37	Acquire 360-degree crime scene scanner using Drug Funds, \$18,000.	Police Chief	Completed.
38	Determine feasibility of constructing a firing range or having a contract with the local gun club's range.	Police Chief	Under consideration.
Public Works Department			
39	Prepare design and construction drawings to connect and pave View Street using Capital Improvement Funds, \$305,000.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	Proposal from Gresham Smith Engineers to design/prepare construction drawings on July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. NTP issued on July 18, 2025. Will bid with N. Jackson Street paving in early 2026 and completion during Spring 2026.
40	Resurface 9 city streets totaling 3.94 miles using STBG-L funds, \$999,000 and Capital Improvement Funds, \$1,068,000 for a total of \$2,067,000. • Mt. Verd Rd. from Clearwater Rd to city limits (.34) Completed. • Sharp Rd. from Velma Rd. to Railroad Ave (.21) • Tellico Ave. from Congress to Astrid St (.83) • Dennis St. from Congress to Decatur Pike (.62) • Woodward Ave. from N. Jackson St. to Ingleside Ave (1.07) • Forrest Ave. from Ingleside Ave. to Madison Ave (.29) • Guille St. from Ingleside Ave. to Eastanallee Ave (.12) • Glendale Ave. from Park St. to Cedar Springs Rd (.29) • Cedar Springs Rd. from Glendale Ave. to Elizabeth St (.17).	Public Works Director / Project Manager	City Council approved the 9 list of streets during April 2022, Gresham Smith Engineers completed final design/construction drawings and submitted to TDOT for approval. TDOT approved during June, 2025. Bid deadline was July 23, 2025, 3 bids received. On Aug. 11, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Aug. 19, 2025 regular session. Preconstruction meeting held Sept. 12, 2025. Mt. Verd Road completed. Remaining streets completion Spring 2026.
41	Improve/stabilize/realign N. Jackson St. in front of City Hall using Capital Improvement Funds, \$480,000.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	Gresham Smith Engineers has conducted geotechnical analysis, prepared design plans, and construction cost estimates. Will bid with View Street paving in early 2026.
42	Have Stancell Electric implement Decatur Pike corridor traffic signal retiming study using Capital Improvement Funds, \$193,000.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	Equipment purchase and installation on Sept. 8, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Sept. 16, 2025 regular session. Completed.

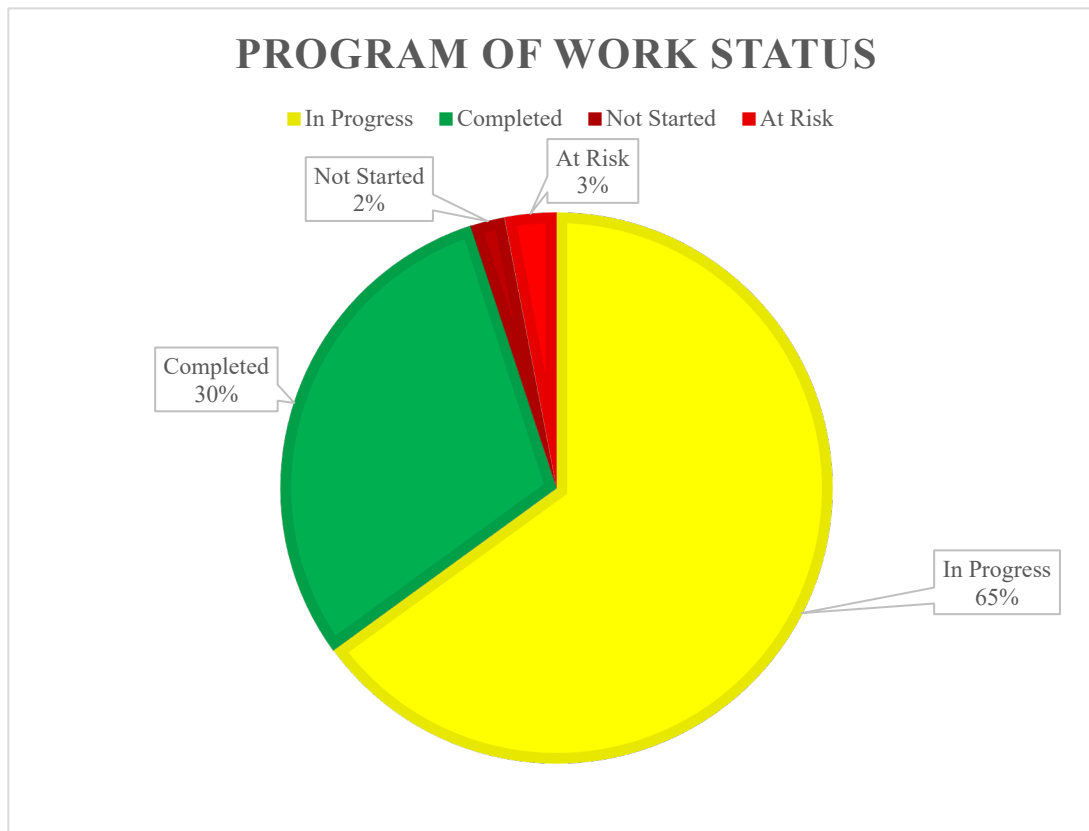
No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
Public Works Department (continued)			
43	Improve the road and railroad intersection of W. Madison, Rocky Mount, and Old Riceville Road using Railroad Grade Crossing Program Grant, \$600,000.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	Design completed. Project contract received and executed by city and TDOT. Bid deadline was Nov. 17, 2025. On Dec. 8, 2025 work session for consideration and approved Dec. 16, 2025 regular session.
44	Prepare an electronic inventory/data base of major city storm water assets of location, size, and condition to determine stormwater needs. Then design and construct needed improvements, \$2,503,000 using ARPA grant funds (85% grant/15% local). This study is a precursor to creating a storm water utility.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	Gresham Smith Engineers has collected all data. Bid opening was Sept. 9, 2025, Bid approved on Sept. 16, 2025 regular session. Project must be completed by Sept. 2026. Precon meeting held Oct. 10, 2025. Anticipated completion July 2026.
45	Improve intersection of Ingleside Ave. / Tellico Ave. using state Rural Safety Action grant, \$927,000.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	Waiting for TDOT to receive federal funding.
46	Purchase/install routing software/hardware for garbage trucks, \$44,948 over three years.	Public Works Director / Sanitation Coordinator	Council consented during Dec. 9, 2024 work session and approved during Dec. 17, 2024 regular session. Vendor is configuring software and all data being validated. Deployment during March 2026.
47	Purchase replacement leaf vacuum machine, \$146,000 using Fleet Management Fund.	Public Works Director	On March 10, 2025 work session for consideration and approved during March 18, 2025 regular session. Machine ordered. Waiting for delivery in July 2026.
48	Acquire replacement pick-up truck using Fleet Management Funds, \$45,000,	Public Works Director	On July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. Truck ordered and delivered. Completed.
49	Acquire replacement flatbed truck using Fleet Management Funds, \$75,000.	Public Works Director	On July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. Truck delivered. Completed.
50	Acquire two traffic signal controllers and trailer mounted sign board for Traffic Control Division, \$33,000.	Public Works Director	Completed.
51	Continue the design of Green Street improvements including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, retiming of traffic signals for pedestrian safety using TDOT MMAG grant, \$117,000 and Capital Improvement Funds, \$13,000.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	RFQ was prepared for engineering services, 5 responses received, 3 were asked for full proposals. Recommended firm on March 10, 2025 work session for consideration and approved during March 18, 2025 regular session. Currently obtaining environmental clearance. Construction is expected to begin in 2026 and be completed in 2027.
52	Complete the last 2,000 feet of sidewalk construction around MCHS.	Public Works Director	Obtaining 3 construction easements and eliminating 1 obstruction.

No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
Public Works Department (continued)			
53	Acquire a floor cleaning machine for the Animal Shelter, \$3,500.	Public Works Director	Completed.
54	Acquire replacement garbage totes, lids, and dumpsters for Sanitation, \$64,000.	Public Works Director	On Aug. 11, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Aug. 19, 2025 regular session. Dumpsters and lids delivered, waiting for delivery of totes.
55	Survey Hammerhill Road property owners to determine feasibility of donating or selling their property for new sidewalk.	Public Works Director	Obtained list of legal property owners, prepared survey, and distributed. Survey closed on Aug. 5, 2025. 10 responses received. Results presented during Aug. 11, 2025 work session. Placing in the CIP.
Other Projects			
56	Develop schematic designs for the downtown area and priorities using Capital Improvement Funds, \$50,000.	Capital Projects Manager / City Manager	Proposal from Kimley Horn on July 7, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on July 15, 2025 regular session. NTP issued on July 17, 2025. Kick off meeting was Aug. 21, 2025. On-going.
57	Contribute \$35,000 to the city Board of Education for a playground at the new school complex using Capital Improvement Funds.	Finance Director	Received invoice (\$34,819.50) from City Board of Education and paid. Completed.
58	Demolish North City School using Capital Improvement Funds, \$360,000.	City Manager	Council discussed selling, demolishing, leasing property Dec. 9, 2024 work session and approved demolition during Dec. 17, 2024 regular session. Council discussed rescinding demolition vote during Jan. 13, 2025 work session and Jan. 21, 2025 regular session. Motion failed. This topic was discussed on Feb. 10, 2025 work session and Feb. 18, 2025 regular session. Approved to demolish. Bid opening was April 29, 2025 and ten bids received. On May 12, 2025 work session for award consideration and May 20, 2025 regular session for bid approval. Approved E. Luke Green to demolish. Project start date was July 14, 2025. Completed.
59	Complete Mt. Verd Industrial Park improvements using city, county, and ARC funds, \$1,900,000.	EDA Director	Bid opening was Aug. 14 2025. On Sept 8, 2025 work session for consideration and approved on Sept. 16, 2025 regular session. EDA Director gave an update on July 7, 2025. Precon meeting held Oct. 7, 2025, NTP issued Nov. 3, 2025. Anticipated completion is Spring 2026.

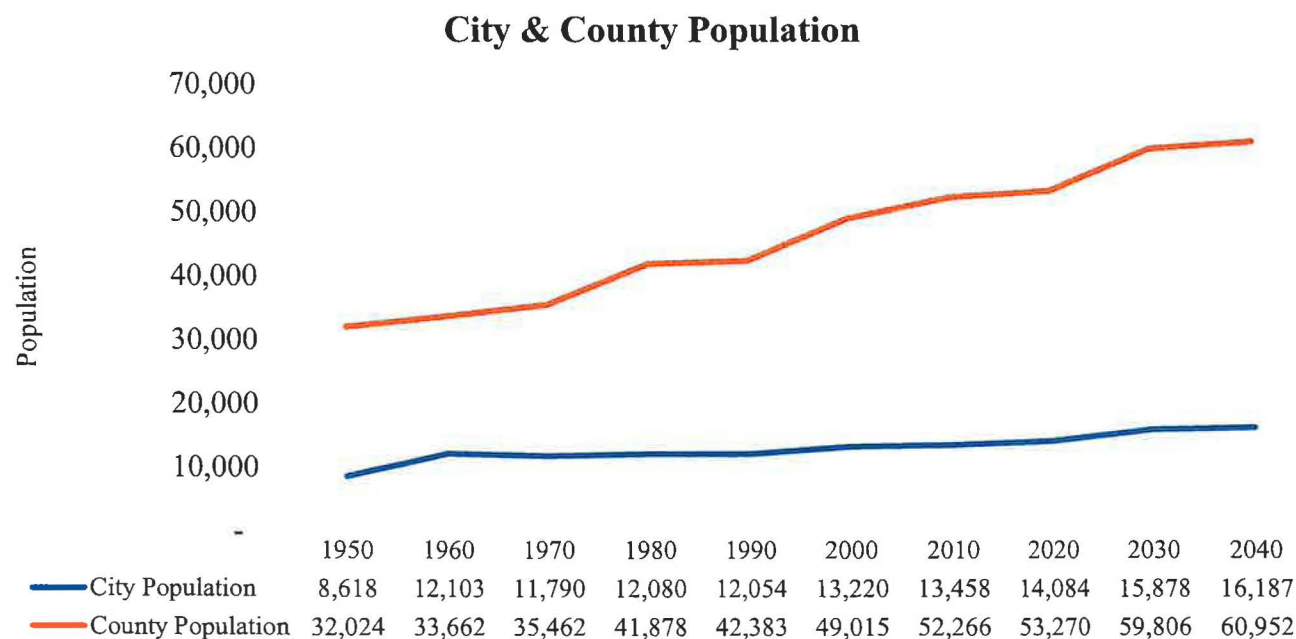
No.	Program/Cost/Funding Source	Responsible Party	Status
Other Projects (continued)			
60	Acquire the 2.93-acre property for the entrance to the Redfern Industrial Park as authorized by Resolution 2022-31 using Capital Improvement Funds. Road design and construction drawings, bid out, and build will be in next budget year.	Public Works Director / Project Manager	City Attorney acquired property. Completed.
61	Sell the 1.08-acre Parker Property located on Decatur Pike, \$249,000 minimum bid based on residential appraisal or best offer.	Purchasing Assistant	Bid deadline was July 22, 2025. No bids received. On Aug. 11, 2025 work session and Aug. 19, 2025 regular session for further discussion. Approved to rezone property from B-3 to R-2 and re-market. Property has been rezoned and repairs made. Obtained new residential appraisal. Bid opening was Jan. 13, 2026. One bid received. On Jan. 20, 2026 regular session for consideration and approved bid for \$100,000. City attorney transferred property. Completed.
62	Acquire downtown property for Market Park expansion.	City Manager	Council approved acquisition during Aug. 19, 2025 regular session, obtained appraisal and partial Phase I environmental assessment. Found environmental issues.
63	Perform air quality assessment, ductwork assessment, and cleaning of ductwork for City Hall.	Purchasing Assistant	Obtaining cost proposals.

Key

	Status	No. of Projects/Total Projects	Percentage
	In Progress	41/63	65%
	Completed	19/63	30%
	Not Started	1/63	2%
	At Risk	2/63	3%



CITY/COUNTY POPULATION



The city's 2025 population is 15,300, an increase of 8.6% from 2020.

The county's 2025 population is 57,700, an increase of 8.3% from 2020.

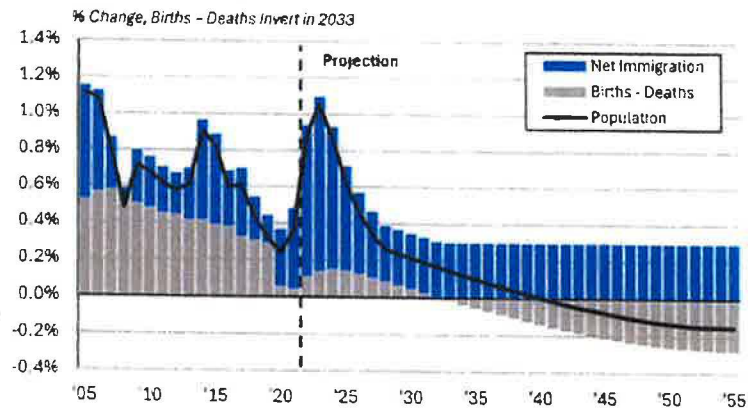
Selected City Demographic Data

- Owner-occupied housing unit rate: 58.1% as compared to the state at 67.0%.
- Median value of owner-occupied housing units: \$197,300 as compared to the state at \$256,800 (U.S. Census Bureau).
- Median home value: \$253,425 (Zillow).
- Number of housing units: 6,470.
- Median household income: \$53,151 as compared to the state at \$67,097.
- Per capita income: \$31,659 as compared to the state at \$37,866.
- Persons in poverty: 18.4% as compared to the state at 13.5%.
- Median age: 41 as compared to the state at 39.1.

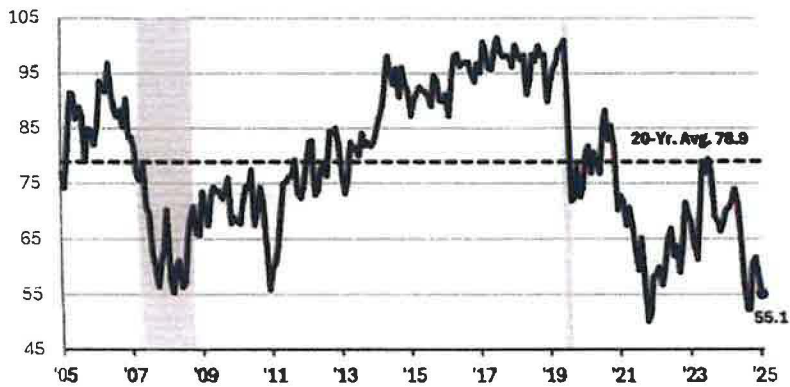
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau and Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Tennessee.
Zillow, World Population Review.com

U.S. Population Projection, Consumer Sentiment, and Delinquency Rates

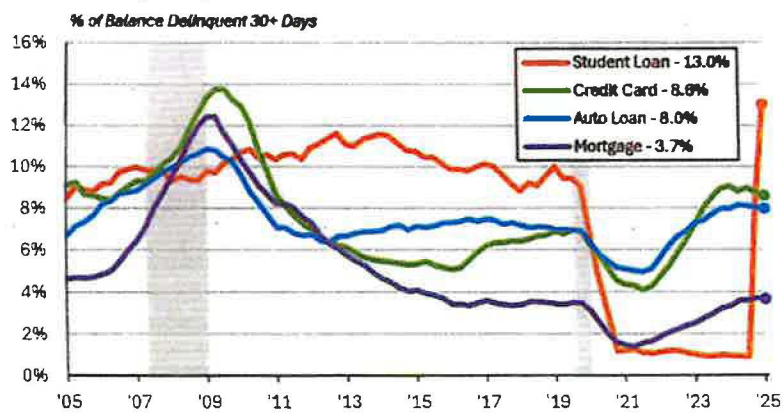
Population Projection



Consumer Sentiment

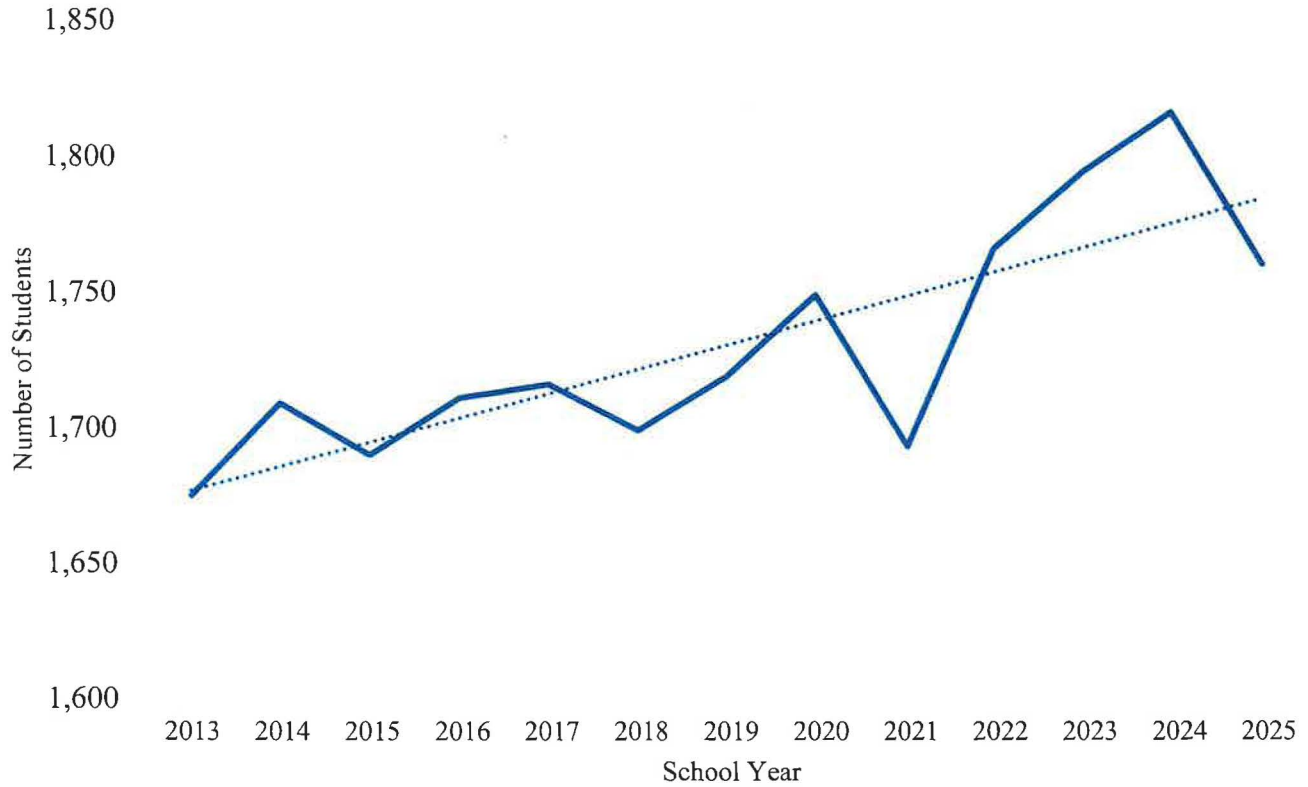


Delinquency Rates



CITY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

City School Enrollment Pre-K - 8th Grade

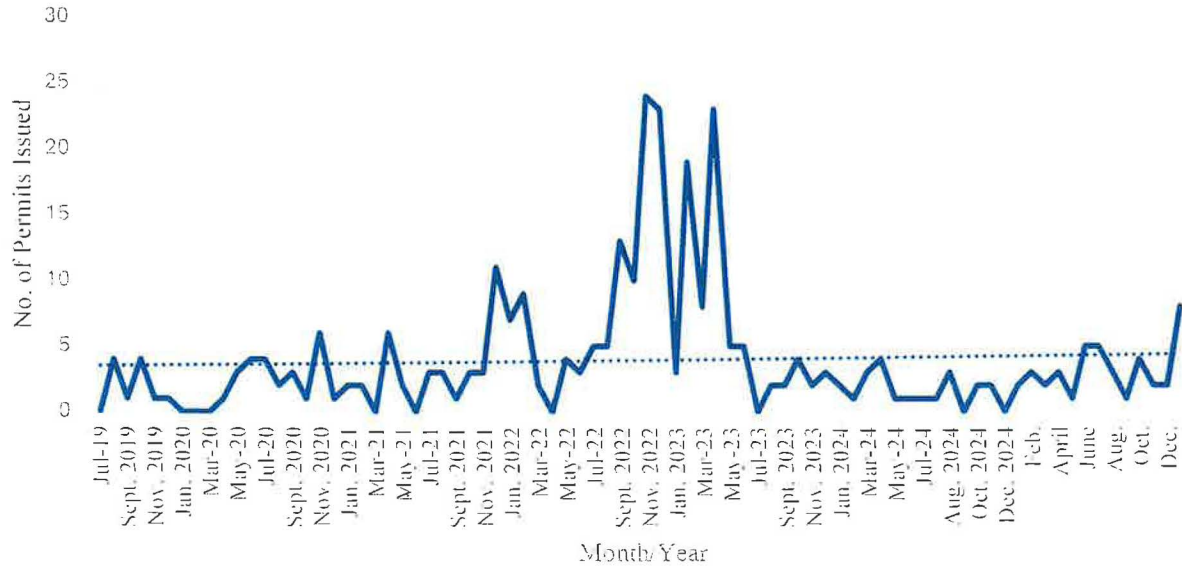


Year	City School Enrollment	Percentage Change
2013	1,675	
2014	1,709	2.03%
2015	1,690	(1.11%)
2016	1,711	1.24%
2017	1,716	0.29%
2018	1,699	(0.99%)
2019	1,719	1.18%
2020	1,749	1.75%
2021	1,693	(3.20%)
2022	1,766	4.31%
2023	1,794	1.59%
2024	1,816	1.23%
2025	1,760	(3.08%)

Source: Athens Board of Education

SINGLE FAMILY HOME BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED

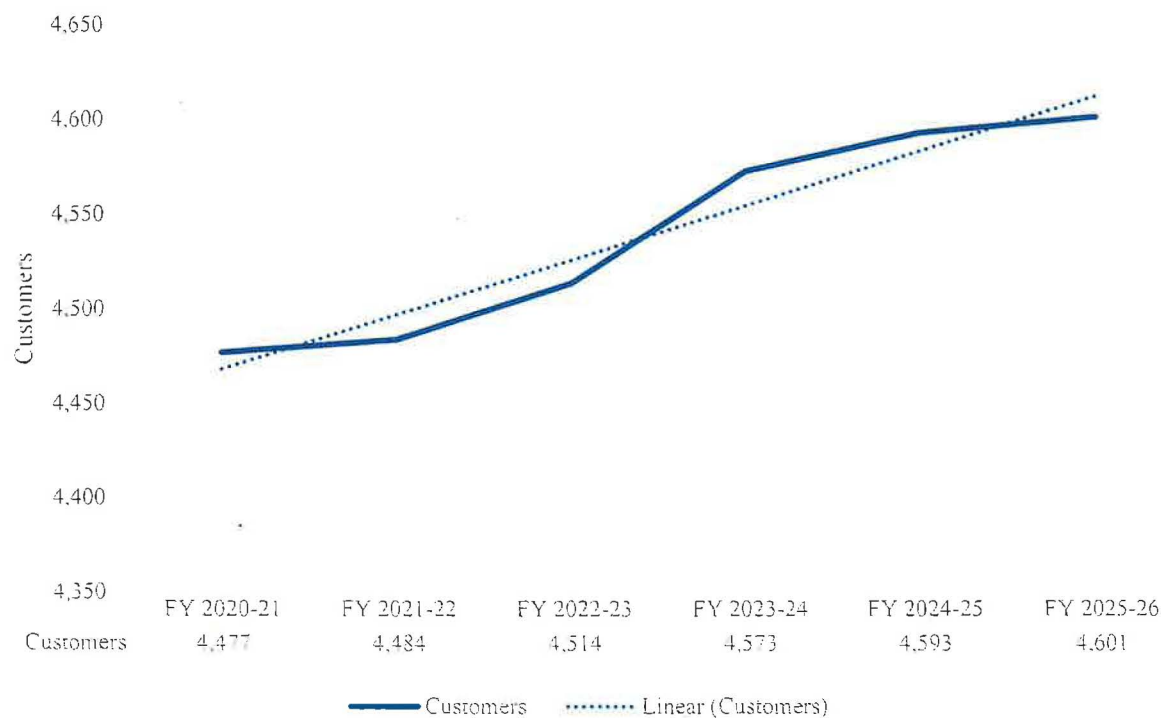
Single Family Home Building Permits Issued



Source: Community Development Dept.

SANITATION FUND 907

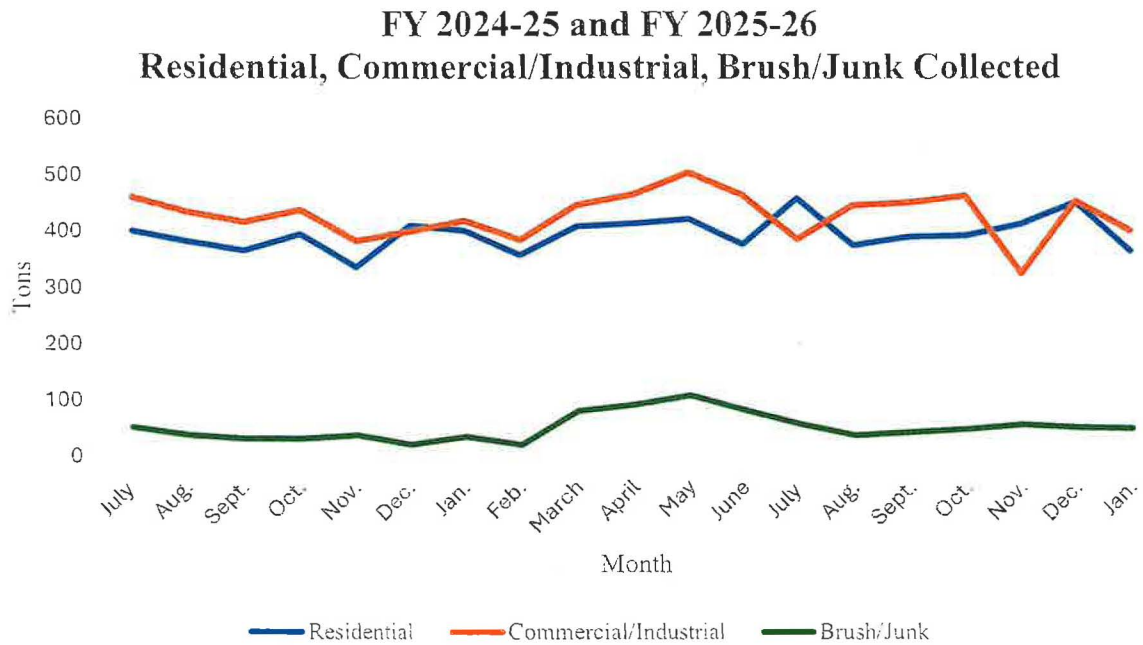
Number of Sanitation Customers



Month	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
July	4,485	4,458	4,486	4,535	4,592	4,607
August	4,494	4,485	4,506	4,550	4,610	4,608
September	4,494	4,475	4,498	4,545	4,592	4,591
October	4,471	4,473	4,502	4,555	4,588	4,620
November	4,465	4,493	4,505	4,570	4,587	4,593
December	4,462	4,467	4,508	4,575	4,578	4,588
January	4,492	4,490	4,512	4,582	4,613	4,603
February	4,475	4,493	4,514	4,594	4,579	
March	4,481	4,484	4,511	4,589	4,594	
April	4,454	4,509	4,529	4,580	4,593	
May	4,488	4,482	4,528	4,615	4,600	
June	4,465	4,498	4,566	4,585	4,592	
Avg.	4,477	4,484	4,514	4,573	4,593	4,601

Source: Athens Utilities Board

SANITATION COLLECTED



	FY 2024-25			FY 2025-26		
Month	Residential	Commercial/Industrial	Brush/Junk	Residential	Commercial/Industrial	Brush/Junk
July	402	462	53	461	389	60
August	383	436	39	377	448	39
Sept.	367	418	33	392	453	45
Oct.	396	440	33	394	465	50
Nov.	338	385	39	414	327	58
Dec.	412	402	23	453	455	53
Jan.	403	421	37	366	403	51
Feb.	360	387	23			
March	411	449	83			
April	416	468	94			
May	424	507	111			
June	379	467	85			
Total Tons Collected	4,691	5,242	653	2,857	2,940	356
Avg. Tons Per Month	391	437	54	408	420	51

Source: Public Works Dept.



ATHENS PARKS & RECREATION

PARTICIPATION GROWTH OVER THE YEARS

▶ **Youth Basketball**

Little League

Adult Softball ◀

2012	77
2015	98
2018	106
2019	110
2021	148
2022	184
2023	178
2024	200
2025	257

Growth: 233%

2012	175
2015	288
2018	291
2019	303
2021	312
2022	352
2023	391
2024	450
2025	430

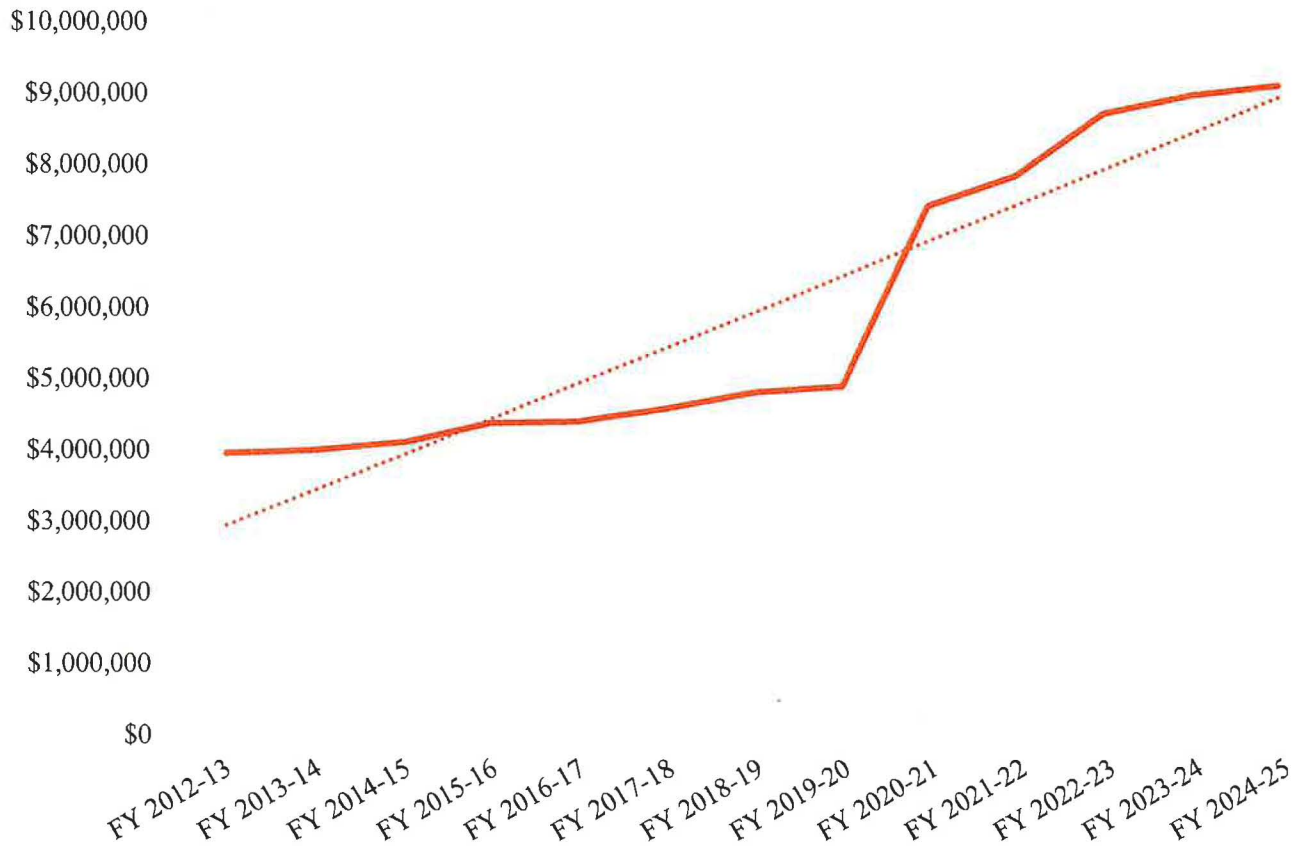
Growth: 145%

2012	8
2015	6
2018	0
2019	5
2021	12
2022	15
2023	16
2024	15
2025	18

Growth: 88%

LOCAL SALES TAX COLLECTIONS

Local Sales Tax Collections



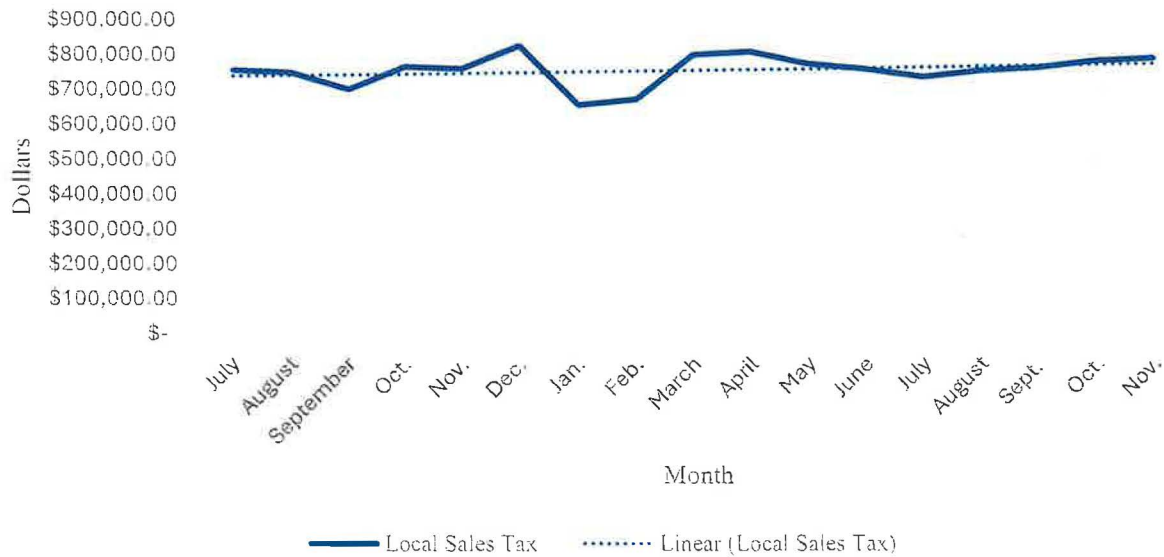
Fiscal Year	Local Sales Tax	Percentage Change
FY 2012-13	\$3,963,723	
FY 2013-14	\$4,009,132	1.15%
FY 2014-15	\$4,121,597	2.81%
FY 2015-16	\$4,391,883	6.56%
FY 2016-17	\$4,411,095	0.44%
FY 2017-18	\$4,592,782	4.12%
FY 2018-19	\$4,821,329	4.98%
FY 2019-20	\$4,903,778	1.71%
FY 2020-21	\$7,427,784	51.47%
FY 2021-22	\$7,844,750	5.61%
FY 2022-23	\$8,714,638	11.09%
FY 2023-24	\$8,968,364	2.91%
FY 2024-25	\$9,102,748	1.50%

Source: Annual Audit

Note: The city sales tax rate increased from 2.00% to 2.75% beginning FY 2020-21.

LOCAL SALES TAX COLLECTION

FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26 Local Sales Tax Collection



Month	FY 2024-25	Percentage Change from Previous Month	FY 2025-26	Percentage Change from Previous Month/Year
July	755,777		736,800	(2.97%) / (2.5%)
August	749,676	(0.81%)	754,105	2.35% / 0.6%
Sept.	701,633	(6.41%)	762,129	1.1% / 8.6%
Oct.	766,762	9.28%	781,298	2.5% / 1.9%
Nov.	761,494	(0.68%)	788,296	0.90% / 3.5%
Dec.	827,792	8.7%		
Jan.	657,793	(20.5%)		
Feb.	673,300	2.3%		
March	800,607	18.9%		
April	809,852	1.2%		
May	774,784	(4.3)		
June	759,317	(2.0%)		
Total Collected	\$9,038,787		\$3,822,628	
Budgeted	\$8,800,000		\$9,200,000	
% Collected	102.7%		41.5%	
Avg. Per Month	\$753,232		\$764,526	

Source: Tennessee Dept. of Revenue

HOTEL/MOTEL TAX COLLECTION



Month	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
July	\$42,213	\$37,261	\$40,027	\$38,892
August	34,852	34,639	41,377	35,665
Sept.	31,695	32,663	34,385	32,589
Oct.	28,144	32,705	35,469	33,737
Nov.	46,946	37,985	49,470	42,013
Dec.	33,579	46,923	53,880	32,638
Jan.	27,417	27,836	28,248	28,346
Feb.	23,656	30,932	30,317	
March	27,421	31,681	30,751	
April	37,083	40,571	48,902	
May	42,955	40,408	52,623	
June	34,490	38,176	42,622	
Annual Total	\$410,451	\$431,780	\$488,071	\$243,880
Avg. Per Month	\$34,204	\$35,982	\$40,673	\$34,840

Source: Athens Finance Department

CITY OF ATHENS
 FINANCIAL REPORT
 CASH BALANCES AND INVESTMENT SHEET
 2025-2026

	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
GENERAL	15,865,000	15,280,000	15,019,000	15,145,000	15,440,000	17,235,000	17,002,000
EMP MED BENEFIT	305,000	306,000	307,000	308,000	309,000	0	0
SCHOOL DEBT SER	4,142,000	4,237,000	4,324,000	4,418,000	4,479,000	4,367,000	4,253,000
CITY DEBT SER	114,000	114,000	114,000	114,000	45,000	445,000	446,000
CAP IMP	13,936,000	13,924,000	13,869,000	13,824,000	13,317,000	13,178,000	12,392,000
FLEET	8,433,000	7,176,000	7,050,000	6,968,000	6,980,000	7,007,000	7,052,000
SAN	1,474,000	2,736,000	2,413,000	2,399,000	2,415,000	2,444,000	2,450,000
DRUG	208,000	186,000	190,000	197,000	202,000	204,000	218,000
CONFERENCE	168,000	172,000	174,000	173,000	175,000	171,000	166,000
2021 GO BOND	1,077,000	1,081,000	1,085,000	1,088,000	1,092,000	937,000	939,000
HOTEL/MOTEL TAX	954,000	973,000	1,001,000	1,035,000	1,078,000	1,115,000	1,146,000
TOTAL CASH & INV	46,676,000	46,185,000	45,546,000	45,669,000	45,532,000	47,103,000	46,064,000

Local Government Option for American Rescue Plan Funds

How it works

The State Treasurer operates the State Pooled Investment Fund which includes the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). The legislation providing for the establishment of the LGIP (Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 9, Chapter 4, Part 7) authorizes investment in the LGIP for local governments and other political subdivisions.



Past rates (annualized rates by month)

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
January	3.71%	4.42%	5.35%	4.25%	.04%	.07%	1.69%
February		4.34%	5.32%	4.51%	.08%	.05%	1.67%
March		4.29%	5.32%	4.64%	.19%	.04%	1.37%
April		4.28%	5.31%	4.71%	.37%	.02%	.85%
May		4.28%	5.32%	4.91%	.68%	.01%	.51%
June		4.28%	5.33%	5.06%	.97%	.01%	.38%
July		4.28%	5.33%	5.16%	1.38%	.02%	.17%
August		4.27%	5.27%	5.25%	1.94%	.02%	.14%
September		4.20%	5.15%	5.33%	2.45%	.02%	.12%
October		4.10%	4.94%	5.39%	2.95%	.03%	.11%
November		3.97%	4.74%	5.40%	3.45%	.03%	.10%
December		3.84%	4.56%	5.38%	3.89%	.04%	.09%

* Posted rates for July 2020 through February 2021 were updated April 13, 2021. For information regarding the adjustment, view [Correction of Annualized Rates by month for the SPIF/LGIP](#)

ADJACENT COUNTIES' & CITIES' TOTAL PROPERTY TAX RATES FOR 2025

McMinn County / 1.08230	
Athens / 1.00780	2.09010
Calhoun / 0.33450	1.41680
Englewood / 0.80030	1.88260
Etowah / 1.27470	2.35700
Niota / 0.86390	1.94620
Sweetwater / 0.93460	2.01690
Monroe County / 1.52280	
Madisonville / 0.59950	2.12230
Sweetwater / 0.93460	2.45740
Tellico Plains / 0.31340	1.83620
Vonore / 0.35040	1.87320
Meigs County / 1.68850	
Decatur / 0.34490	2.03340
Polk County / 1.68950	
Benton / 0.55000	2.23950
Copperhill / 0.76870	2.45820
Ducktown / 0.59220	2.28170
Roane County / 1.45230	
Harriman / 0.70240	2.15470
Kingston / 0.82340	2.27570
Oak Ridge / 1.37840	2.83070
Oliver Springs / 0.72797	2.18027
Rockwood / 0.62650	2.07880
Loudon County / 1.76830	
Lenoir City / 0.94550	2.71380
Loudon / 1.19000	2.95830
Bradley County / 0.99220	
Charleston / 0.26550	1.25770
Cleveland / 1.26320	2.25540

Source: Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury

2026 Strategic Summit

What Should the City's Future Planning Strategy Be Based on Current Context?

Executive Summary

The city of Athens's future planning strategy must be grounded in clear demographic, economic, and fiscal realities. An analysis of current **demographic** data consisting of population-related indicators including historical population growth, public school enrollment, sanitation customers, garbage collection amounts, and residential building permits issued indicate that while Athens has experienced modest population growth, long-term population increases are projected to be minimal due to limited housing availability, slow residential development activity, and broader national demographic trends showing declining population growth and an aging population. These conditions, absent intentional intervention, constrain natural growth and require the city to be deliberate and disciplined in its approach to growth and service delivery.

As a result, the city's planning strategy, based on demographic data, should be to:

- attract/incentivize a broad mix of housing types at multiple price points
- avoid premature expansion of public services and staffing levels not supported by housing growth
- emphasize maintaining/improving existing infrastructure such as roads and sidewalks, facilities, parks, vehicles, and technology systems and ensure utilities are available
- ensure existing public services are delivered at high quality and efficiently including outsourcing existing services to the private sector where appropriate
- review and eliminate programs that do not demonstrate a clear return on investment
- enhance the city's gateways, major travel corridors, and downtown aesthetics to attract private investments

On the **economic** side, the city's economic performance has been strong. Local sales tax and hotel/motel tax collections have increased at amounts that significantly outpaced population growth, signaling the city is increasingly functioning as a regional economic hub. In addition, since the city has installed artificial turf on the five baseball/softball in-fields at Regional Park, regional tournaments for 30 weeks per year are expected to stimulate sales tax and hotel/motel tax collections as well as additional retail, hospitality and restaurant development on the I-75 exit 49 corridors.

As a result, the city's planning strategy, based on economic data, should be to:

- leverage its growth as a regional destination hub by aggressively recruiting retail, commercial, and restaurant developments
- strengthen its position as a sports tourism hub by installing artificial turf and LED lighting on the soccer fields to attract regional and statewide soccer tournaments and evaluating the feasibility of completing the SE TN Trade & Conference Center as a long-term economic catalyst

Importantly, the city is well positioned to financially implement this well-developed strategy. The city maintains strong financial reserves across multiple funds, benefits from a favorable Aa3 bond rating to lower borrowing costs (see Moody's rating report in sleeve) and has a comparatively low property tax rate relative to neighboring jurisdictions. These factors provide flexibility to invest strategically, manage risks, and phase projects responsibility without imposing undue tax burdens.

All combined, these findings point to a prudent and data-driven strategic approach for future planning that is focused on quality of life, fiscal sustainability, targeted economic growth, and strategic capital investment. The accompanying seven-year Capital Improvement Plan translates these general strategies into an actionable long-term plan with defined projects, specific cost estimates, and funding strategies to guide the city's planning decisions through the next decade.

City Population Growth Factors

The **city's population** increased from 13,458 in 2010 to 14,084 in 2020, an increase of 626 people or 4.65% over ten years. The city's 2025 population is estimated to be 15,300, an increase of 1,216 people or 8.63% since 2020. The city's 2030 population is expected to be 15,878, an increase of 578 people or 3.77%.

The **city's public-school enrollment** mirrors the population increase. City school enrollment increased from 1,690 in 2015 to 1,749 in 2020, an increase of 59 students or 3.49% over five years. City school enrollment for 2025 is estimated to be 1,760, an increase of only 11 students or 0.63% over five years.

The number of **city sanitation customers** increased from 4,485 in July 2020 to 4,603 in January 2026, an increase of only 118 customers or 2.6% over five+ years. Sanitation collections also mirror the number of customer increases.

- **Residential** garbage collection increased from 4,677 tons during FY 2020-21 to 4,691 tons during FY 2024-25, an increase of only 0.30% over five years.
- **Commercial/industrial** garbage collection increased from 5,098 tons during FY 2020-21 to 5,242 tons during FY 2024-25, an increase of 2.82% over five years.
- **Brush/junk** collection increased from 531 tons during FY 2020-21 to 653 tons during FY 2024-25, an increase of 23% over five years.

Single family home building permits issued averaged about two permits per month since FY 2020-21 taking into consideration the outlier during FY 2022-23 when DR Horton built 142 homes that year.

The **U.S. population** is projected to substantially decrease over the next few decades which will impact the city's overall growth.

Strategy Based on Population Growth

Taking into consideration historical and projected city population figures, historical city public-school enrollment figures, historical city sanitation customers and garbage collection figures, and historical single family home building permits issued, all these growth factors point to a very small increase in city population during the upcoming years. Even though several new residential developments have been recently approved or being approved (Davis Place The Preserve (41 houses), Cedar Springs (preliminary plat of 89 houses has expired), Lee Drive/Fox Den (66 houses), and Belle Chase (7 houses), these developments are slow to develop, and no additional residential developments are in the works. Future population projections for the city are expected to be very minimal taking into consideration that the U.S. population projection is trending significantly downward and overall age is trending dramatically upward.

Based on this data pointing to a very low future population growth, the city's strategy should be to:

- ✓ attract/incentivize all types of residential home builders and at different price points including market-rate apartments/townhome builders, senior housing builders, and single-family home builders to the appropriate zoned areas within the city that have utility capacity using a streamlined/quick/clear/predictable permitting process. One idea could be to actively pursue a developer to construct appropriate homes on the city-owned North City School 10.28 acre property that is zoned R-2 (Medium Density Residential)
- ✓ provide existing public services at a higher quality and only expand public services commensurate with additional housing units if those additional housing units occur
- ✓ shed existing city services/programs that do not provide a clear return on investment

City Population Growth Factors (continued)

Strategy Based on Population Growth (continued)

- ✓ outsource city services to the private sector where it makes economic sense or the city is having difficulty providing those services efficiently
- ✓ renovate existing city facilities and parks in accordance with a master plan to keep those facilities in good working condition for the future, replace existing outdated vehicles and equipment, enhance the city's existing stormwater system for safety, resurface/improve existing streets/traffic signals, complete existing sidewalk gaps and install new sidewalks for better walkability, and keep the city's IT infrastructure updated, modern, and safe
- ✓ make city gateways, main travel corridors, and the downtown area more attractive to developers and tourists
- ✓ do not add or increase any service capacities/facilities/employees or acquire additional vehicles or major equipment if no additional housing units are forecasted
- ✓ be mindful of offering economic/financial incentives to attract new industrial developments and jobs if those new employees need housing the city does not have, forcing those new employees to live and shop outside the city and not increasing the city's property tax or sales tax base
- ✓ determine the needs of TWU students as those needs relate to the city to satisfy that student experience and expectations

These strategies would result in a higher quality of life for existing city residents, protect the city's budget from senseless and unproductive increases, add needed housing, and would build confidence so private developers would invest in the community, without or minimal additional tax burdens.

City Economic Growth Factors

The city's **local sales tax** collections have increased from \$7,427,784 in FY 2020-21 to \$9,102,748 in FY 2024-25, an increase of 22.5% over five years significantly outpacing population growth spending. For FY 2025-26, sales tax collections are higher than in the same month as the previous year. It appears the city is becoming a regional economic hub.

The city's **hotel/motel tax** collections (4%) have increased from \$410,451 in FY 2022-23 to \$488,071 in FY 2024-25 without additional room capacity or increasing the tax rate, an increase of 18.9% over 3 years significantly outpacing population growth. For FY 2025-26, hotel/motel tax collections are lower than in the same month as the previous year. But overall, it appears the I-75 exit 49 area is becoming a popular and convenient spot for tourists and will be even more popular once the baseball/softball tournament season begins at Regional Park with new artificial turf.

The **interest rate** the city earns on its excess funds at the TN LGIP has decreased from 5.35% in January 2024 to 3.71% in January 2026, a decrease of 30.6% over two years resulting in lower interest earned on excess city funds, which is a budgetary issue. The **30-year fixed rate mortgage** has also decreased from 6.69% in January 2024 to 6.15% in December 2025, a decrease of 8.07% over two years resulting in more affordable mortgage payments and incentive for home builders to construct additional housing.

On the downside, **consumer sentiment** is very low with a rating of 55.1 and a 20-year average of 78.9. Student loans, credit card payments, auto loans, and mortgage **delinquency rates** are increasing.

City Economic Growth Factors *(continued)*

A bright side is the significant **participation increases in Parks & Recreation sports programs** of youth basketball, little league, and adult softball even in the face of slow population growth due to the attraction of participants outside the city and county. In addition, installing artificial turf on the five baseball/softball infields at Regional Park will greatly increase regional and state-wide tournament play/sports tourism beginning in February 2026 resulting in additional revenue for the Parks & Recreation department in tournament fees and concession sales along with anticipated increases in general city-wide sales taxes and hotel/motel taxes. In addition, by hosting thousands of players and spectators during most weekends each February to November, that heightened level of activity could be the catalyst for attracting additional restaurants and hotels to the I-75 exit 49 area.

One potential project that could greatly enhance the city's economic development base and pay dividends in the future is the completion of the SE TN Trade & Conference Center in Regional Park. By completing this conference center project in conjunction with the baseball/softball artificial turf installation/sports tourism and possible future installation of artificial turf and LED lights at the soccer fields, Regional Park could become an economic powerhouse destination for sports tourism and regional/state-wide conferences all at one location that would surely get recognition from the restaurant and hotel industries.

Strategy Based on Economic Growth

Taking into consideration increasing local sales tax and hotel/motel tax collections that are outpacing general population growth, lower interest rates, lower mortgage rates, and the installation of artificial turf at Regional Park, the city's strategy should be to:

- ✓ recognize that the city is a regional economic hub namely for people coming from the west and aggressively attract more retail and commercial businesses and restaurants to the area, primarily on the Decatur Pike, I-75 exit 49, and Congress Parkway corridors
- ✓ establish and protect Athens as a sports tourism destination with the completion of artificial turf on the baseball/softball infields at Regional Park, further maintain and enhance the city's sports tourism initiatives, and attract more restaurants and hotels around the Regional Park area to serve the ever-increasing number of participants and spectators that are anticipated
- ✓ charge higher sports registration fees for out-of-city participants as a fairness issue to reflect the fact that in-city participants pay property taxes to maintain the fields/facilities while out-of-city participants do not but contribute to the sales tax base.
- ✓ determine the feasibility of completing the SE TN Trade & Conference Center as an economic development tool but mindful that operational, maintenance, and debt costs will affect the city's budget going forward
- ✓ follow the declining interest rates and borrow money as necessary to fund city projects
- ✓ work with the local EDA to market the various industrial parks to attract industrial prospects to increase job opportunities for local residents but recognizing that new workers will have a difficult time locating suitable housing within the city.
- ✓ keep a good working relationship with all major employers within the city and provide support for their public service needs

Strategy Affordability

To fund the above-mentioned strategies, the city has the financial resources to do so. According to the FYE June 30, 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, the General Fund unassigned fund balance was \$15,759,791 (including transfers) or 80.47% of General Fund expenditures, slightly over the city policy amount of 75%. As of January 2026, the General Fund has over \$17M in reserves, the Capital Improvement Fund has over \$12M in reserves, the Fleet Management Fund has \$7M in reserves, the Sanitation Fund has over \$2M in reserves, the 2021 GO Bond Fund earmarked for specific projects has almost \$1M in reserves, and the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund has over \$1M in reserves. In addition, the city enjoys a favorable Aa3 bond rating that would reduce the cost of borrowing. Furthermore, compared to adjacent counties' and cities' total property tax rates, Athens enjoys a relatively low property tax rate that, even if increased, would still be lower or the same as the surrounding communities.

Seven-Year Strategic Plan

A Seven-Year and Long-Range Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has been developed to incorporate these general strategies into a specific working plan including cost estimates and funding sources.



**SEVEN YEAR
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FY 2026-27 to FY 2032-33**

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Benefits of Having a Capital Improvement Program

A comprehensive and well-crafted capital improvement program (CIP) is an important element of sound financial management and long-term planning for all local governments. Specifically, a CIP, simply outlines a recommended schedule of needed public facility improvements to be made over a multi-year time frame such as five years, their associated costs, and funding sources. The benefits of developing and maintaining a CIP are numerous including:

- Providing for the orderly and planned replacement of major capital facilities and equipment for the benefit of citizens, industry, and visitors.
- Ensuring continuity that major capital facilities and equipment will be replaced in the face of changing political and managerial leadership.
- Strengthening long-range financial planning by knowing when expensive capital projects are to be budgeted.
- Proving to grant agencies that the city government has carefully vetted capital projects and obtained public input on community needs.
- Assisting in proper planning and timing of capital projects so projects can be coordinated and the right people and consultants in place to design and construct the projects.
- Enhancing the city's credit rating by demonstrating to the rating agencies the city has engaged in long-term capital planning.
- Providing the city with a positive public relations tool to show the taxpayers that their local government has carefully and proactively planned for the future replacement of public facilities and equipment.

Resources Used to Create the City's CIP

This CIP was created from previously completed master plans and in-depth city staff input regarding their capital needs for the upcoming seven fiscal years and beyond. Specifically, those completed master plans consist of the following:

- City of Athens Signal Timing & Operations Study (2019)
 - Study of Congress Parkway/Decatur Pike corridor and Green Street/White Street corridor regarding traffic signal timing and pedestrian improvements
- Downtown Master Plan (2020)
 - Streetscape improvements, façade improvements, wayfinding signage, and brand identity
- Comprehensive 20 Year Land Use Master Plan Update 2017-2037 (2020)
 - Land use plans, guidelines, and policies
- City of Athens Mobility Plan (CMP) (2021)
 - Transportation network (streets, bicycle paths, and sidewalks) deficiencies and opportunities including sidewalk gaps that need to be filled, new sidewalks/crosswalks, street and intersection improvements, and traffic signalizations
- McMinn County Recreation Master Plan including the Cities of Athens, Etowah, Niota and the Towns of Calhoun and Englewood (2021)
 - General master plan of existing conditions of all city parks and recommendations for improvements

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Resources Used to Create the City's CIP *continued*

- City of Athens Strategic Plan (2022)
 - General strategic plan consisting of issues about quality of life, infrastructure/services, internal culture, downtown, economic development/business culture, TWU/TCAT/CSCC relationships, public education system, housing, collaboration with other governmental agencies, and smart growth and survey results of top five community needs
- Athens Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan (2023)
 - Sidewalks, sidepaths, and greenways pedestrian projects, bicycle lanes, and intersection improvement projects including Eureka Trail extensions.
- City of Athens Traffic Safety Action Plan (TSAP) (2025)
 - Specific master plan of needed transportation safety improvements along Congress Parkway, Dennis Street, Decatur Pike, Old Riceville Road, and Green Street

The CIP should be reviewed annually in conjunction with the annual budget preparation process to ensure the capital projects as listed remain the city's top priorities.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2026-27

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Community Development	Resurface Hammond Cemetery Drive	R	\$45,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Fire Dept.	Begin and complete Fire Station #3 construction. <i>Will require on-going annual expenses including personnel and operational costs</i>	N	7,500,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Debt
Fire Dept.	Replace service truck	R	60,000	Fleet Fund
Fire Dept.	Replace pumper (\$1,200,000). Order this year with \$100,000 deposit but delivered within 24+/- months	R	100,000	Fleet Fund
Information Technology	Replace internal computer wiring at City Hall	R	30,000	General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Information Technology	Replace end-of-life network switches and end-user hardware	R	110,000	General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Information Technology	Virtual server software migration	R	20,000	General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Information Technology	Continue to add/replace security cameras at the parks	N/R	40,000	Grants/General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Information Technology	Add security cameras at rear of Public Works Facility	N/R	10,000	General Funds
Information Technology	Replace Municipal Court software	R	42,000	General Funds
Information Technology	Upgrade point of sale concession equipment at Regional Park	R	15,000	General Funds
Information Technology	Upgrade council chambers livestream video system	R	30,000	General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Parks & Recreation	Install dugout covers for Regional Park softball/baseball fields (8)	N	90,000	Capital Improvement Funds
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Market Park per master plan - Phase 2 (resurface parking area)	N/R	1,200,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Extend Eureka Trail from current trailhead to Prof Powers Park and improve trail head at entrance to Prof Powers Park	N/R	960,000	Grants, Capital Improvements Fund, County Funds
Parks & Recreation	Resurface lake loop trail at Regional Park	R	75,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Install aerator at large lake at Regional Park to improve water quality	N	12,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Update all park master plans including how to use the recently acquired 12 acres at Regional Park and 10 acres N. City School property.	N/R	85,000	Capital Improvement Funds, General Funds, Grants

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2026-27 *(continued)*

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Police Dept.	Replace vehicles/equipment (5)	R	\$400,000	Fleet Fund
Public Works	Complete Green Street improvements per grant application	R	625,000	MMAG Grant
Public Works	Complete Mayfield, Regional Park, and Cook Drive stormwater project per grant application	N	700,000	ARP Funds
Public Works	Complete the downtown street / pedestrian / sidewalk / signage / landscaping improvements master plan	N	50,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Create a Storm Water Master Plan, Storm Water Utility Fund, and fee schedule to fund future stormwater projects and coordinator	N	10,000	ARP Funds
Public Works	Local street resurfacing program (every other year): Portions of Elk St., Oak St., Spring Place Blvd., Burkett Witt Blvd., Gliden St., Bellview Rd., Jones St., Moore St., Alton St., Lee Erwin Rd., Redfern Dr., Million St., Knoxville, Ave., Northwestern Ave., Lawson St., Pine St., Riddle St.	R	1,000,000	General Fund and Reserves
Public Works	Annual sidewalk installation / repair program: <u>Engineering/ROW:</u> Hammond Drive W. Madison <u>Construction:</u> MCHS Loop Eastanallee Ave.	N	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Upgrade traffic signal @ Alford, Park, Velma, and Dupitt	R	100,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Street patching machine for Street Maintenance Division	N	100,000	Fleet Management Fund
Hotel/Motel Fund	Mayfield Park development by adding Mayfield themed items	N	20,000	Hotel/Motel Tax Fund
Total for FY 2026-27			\$13,929,000	

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2027-28

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Community Development	Resurface Sullins Cemetery Drive	R	\$20,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Fire Dept.	Equipment for new aerial truck that will be delivered during this year	N	200,000	Fleet Fund
Fire Dept.	LifePak cardiac monitors/AEDs	N	120,000	General Fund
Information Technology	Implement text message retention software	N	15,000	General Fund
Information Technology	Replace end-of-life network switches and hardware	R	22,000	General Fund
Information Technology	Upgrade training room video conference system	N	10,000	General Funds/Capital Project Funds
Information Technology	Continue to add/replace security cameras at the parks	N/R	30,000	Grants, General Funds
Parks & Recreation	Convert all baseball/softball field light fixtures at Regional Park to LED	R	300,000	Capital Project Funds, Hotel/Motel Tax Funds
Parks & Recreation	Convert all outside softball field light fixtures at Prof Powers Park & Fisher Field to LED.	R	100,000	Capital Project Funds, Hotel/Motel Tax Funds
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Market Park per master plan – Phase 3 (landscaping & sidewalks)	N/R	475,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Ingleside Park per master plan - Phase 1	R	1,500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation SE TN Trade & Conference Center	Design conference center expansion per master plan to host regional and state-wide events. <i>Will require on-going annual expenses including personnel and operational costs</i>	N	800,000	Debt, Capital Improvement Fund, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund/ Public/Private Partnership, County
Police Dept.	Replace vehicles/equipment (5)	R	400,000	Fleet Funds
Public Works	Install downtown street / pedestrian / sidewalk / signage / landscaping improvements per master plan - Phase 1	R	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Local street resurfacing program funding	R	500,000	General Fund
Public Works	Annual sidewalk installation / repair program: <u>Engineering/ROW:</u> Dupitt St., Congress Parkway <u>Construction:</u> Hammond Dr., W. Madison, Maple St., Rocky Mt. Road	N/R	500,000	Grant, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Upgrade traffic signal @ Ingleside and S. Jackson	R	100,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Acquire various property for regional stormwater detention	N	450,000	Storm Water Utility Fund
Public Works	Replace Leveck Street stmwr pipe	R	150,000	Storm Water Utility
Total for FY 2027-28			\$6,192,000	

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2028-29

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Community Development	Resurface Cedar Grove Cemetery Drive	R	\$125,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Fire Dept.	Replace pumper (\$1,200,000). Ordered with \$100,000 deposit during FY 2026-27 but delivered this year	R	1,100,000	Fleet Fund
Information Technology	Replace end-of-life end-user hardware	R	10,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Information Technology	Continue to add/replace security cameras at the parks	N/R	30,000	Grants/General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Information Technology	Install digital signage at various internal locations	N	15,000	General Funds/Capital Project Fund
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Ingleside Park per master plan - Phase 2		1,500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation SE TN Trade & Conference Center	Conference Center expansion per master plan - Phase 1. <i>Will require on-going annual expenses including personnel costs and operational costs</i>	N	8,000,000	Debt, Capital Improvement Fund, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund/ Public/Private Partnership, County
Parks & Recreation	Add security lighting at Eco Park	N	7,500	General Fund
Police Dept.	Replace vehicles/equipment (5)	R	425,000	Fleet Fund
Public Works	Install downtown street / pedestrian / sidewalk / signage / landscaping improvements per master plan - Phase 2	R	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Annual sidewalk installation / repair program: <u>Engineering/ROW:</u> <u>Construction:</u> Dupitt Street, Congress Parkway	N	500,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Local street resurfacing program (every other year): Portions of Bryson Rd., East Ave., Avalon St., Hutsell Rd., Wood Creek Circle, Chester St., Berger St., Lynman St., Dennis St., Athenian St., Layman Rd., Kilgore St., Jackson St.	R	1,000,000	General Fund and Reserves
Public Works	Upgrade traffic signal @ Rocky Mount Road (2)	R	100,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Stormwater improvements on Layman Road	N	350,000	Stormwater Utility Fund
Total for FY 2028-29			\$13,662,500	

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2029-30

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Fire Dept.	Replace staff vehicle	R	\$65,000	Fleet Fund
Information Technology	Replace end-of-life end-user hardware	R	15,000	General Funds
Information Technology	Continue to add/replace security cameras at the parks	N/R	30,000	Grants/General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Information Technology	Install vendor management software	N	20,000	General Funds
Parks & Recreation SE TN Trade & Conference Center	Conference Center expansion per master plan - Phase 2. <i>Will require on-going annual expenses including personnel costs and operational costs</i>	N	8,000,000	Debt, Capital Improvement Fund, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund/ Public/Private Partnership, County
Police Dept.	Replace vehicles (5)	R	425,000	Fleet Fund
Public Works	Install downtown street / pedestrian / sidewalk / signage / landscaping improvements per master plan - Phase 3	R	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Street resurfacing program using state funds: Tellico Ave., Rocky Mt. Rd., Forrest Ave., Old Riceville Rd.	R	1,500,000	STBL, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Annual sidewalk installation / repair program: <u>Engineering/ROW:</u> <u>Construction:</u>	N	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Upgrade traffic signal @ McMinn, Keith, and Cook Drives	R	100,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Tellico Ave. regional detention property	N	250,000	Storm Water Utility Fund
Total For FY 2029-30			\$11,405,000	

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2030-31

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Fire Dept.	Replace fire truck (\$1,500,000). Order this year with \$150,000 deposit and delivery in 24+/- months	R	\$150,000	Fleet Fund
Fire Dept.	Replace staff vehicle	R	65,000	Fleet Fund
Information Technology	Replace end-of-life end-user hardware	R	10,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Information Technology	Replace end-of-life data center hardware	R	300,000	Capital Improvement
Information Technology	Continue to add/replace security cameras at the parks	N/R	30,000	Grants/General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Information Technology	Install digital signage at various locations	N	15,000	General Funds
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Prof Powers Park per master plan – Phase 1	R	850,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Grant Funds
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Knight Park / N. White St. / N. Jackson St. / College St. per master plan – Phase 1	R	850,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Grant Funds
Parks & Recreation	Install artificial turf and LED lights on soccer fields at Regional Park for economic development/sports tourism	N	3,500,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Hotel/Motel Fund
Police Dept.	Replace vehicles/equipment (5)	R	450,000	Fleet Fund
Public Works	Local street resurfacing program funding	R	500,000	General Fund
Public Works	Obtain permits from TDOT and design/install landscape and hardscapes at the city's gateway entrance on I-75 exit 49	N	400,000	Grants, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund
Public Works	Install downtown street / pedestrian / sidewalk / signage / landscaping improvements per master plan - Phase 4	R	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Annual sidewalk installation / repair program: <u>Engineering/ROW:</u> <u>Construction:</u>	N	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Upgrades traffic signal @ Dennis (2), Layman, and Lowes Streets	R	100,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	East Ave. regional detention property acquisition	N	200,000	Stormwater Utility Fund
Total for FY 2030-31			\$8,420,000	

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2031-32

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Information Technology	Annual IT improvements	R	\$50,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Information Technology	Continue to add/replace security cameras at the parks	N/R	30,000	Grants/General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Prof Powers Park per master plan – Phase 2	R	850,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Grant Funds
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Knight Park / N. White St. / N. Jackson St. / College St. per master plan – Phase 2	R	850,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Grant Funds
Parks & Recreation	Renovate Fisher Field Building		60,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Grant Funds
Public Works	Annual sidewalk installation / repair program: <u>Engineering/ROW:</u> <u>Construction:</u>	N	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Local street resurfacing program (every other year): Portions of Anton St., Jones St., Apple St., Spring Place Blvd., Stiles St., Kennsington Dr., Yale Rd., Hunters Branch Rd., North Ave., Bank St., Velma St., Fairview Ave., Haines Rd., Fisher St., Rose Dr.,	R	1,000,000	General Fund and Reserves
Public Works	Install downtown street / pedestrian / sidewalk / signage / landscaping improvements per master plan - Phase 5	R	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Total for FY 2031-32			\$3,840,000	

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2032-33

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Fire Dept.	Replace fire truck (\$1,500,000). Ordered during FY 2030-31 with \$150,000 deposit but delivered this year	R	\$1,350,000	Fleet Fund
Information Technology	Annual IT improvements	R	50,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Information Technology	Continue to add/replace security cameras at the parks	N/R	30,000	Grants/General Funds/Capital Improvement Funds
Parks & Recreation	Install artificial turf on 5 outfields at Regional Park	N	4,500,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund
Public Works	Annual sidewalk installation / repair program: <u>Engineering/ROW:</u> <u>Construction:</u>	N	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Local street resurfacing program funding	R	500,000	General Fund
Total for FY 2032-33			\$6,930,000	

Grand Total for All Seven Years	\$64,378,500	
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Imagine

If this strategic plan was diligently followed, in seven years the city would look a lot different. The city would have updated, modern, and robust IT infrastructure, high quality fire services, renovated and safe parks, resurfaced streets, new sidewalks, modern traffic signal system, efficient stormwater system with its own funding source, improved downtown, and recognized as a sports tourism powerhouse with tournament quality baseball/softball fields, soccer fields, and completed conference center at Regional Park. These civic improvements would not be free but could be funded by a combination of reserves, grants, debt, and prudent property tax increases resulting in a better quality of life for residents and attracting new private investments.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Long Range

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
City Hall	City Hall renovation & expansion	R	\$8,500,000	Capital Improvement Fund, Debt
Fire Dept.	Add storage at fire training facility	N	500,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Information Technology	Implement USB encryption software	N	8,000	General Funds
Information Technology	Implement tracking software for certificate of insurances	N	6,000	General Funds
Information Technology	Implement employee intranet	N	18,000	General Funds
Parks & Recreation	Design/construct a centralized community center with indoor basketball/pickleball courts, community rooms for rent, fitness center, concession/kitchen area, outdoor basketball courts, indoor/outdoor swimming pool, locker rooms but not compete with YMCA. <i>Will require on-going annual expenses including personnel and operational costs</i>	N	8,250,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Acquire/install holiday light decorations on Decatur Pike and Congress Parkway utility poles	N	100,000	Grants, General Funds
Parks & Recreation	Install water feature at Cook Park	N	1,400,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Add parking at Cook Park	N	100,000	Grant, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Design/acquire ROW/construct Eureka Trail from current trailhead to library along the Ostanala Creek	N	1,500,000	Grants, Capital Improvements Fund
Parks & Recreation	Design/acquire ROW/construct Eureka Trail from Prof Powers Park to Veterans Park along Ostanala Creek	N	1,500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Parks & Recreation	Design/construct an attraction at Regional Park's Overlook Hill	N	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Design/construct Redfern Industrial Park entrance and internal road for better marketability	N	950,000	Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Improve Decatur Pike from W. of Dennis St. to Dupitt St. per TSAP	R	4,000,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Improve Congress Parkway from Decatur Pike to Railroad Ave. per TSAP	R	500,000	Coordinate with TDOT

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Long Range *(continued)*

Department	Capital Item	New or Replacement	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Public Works	Improve Dennis Street from W. Madison to Decatur Pike per TSAP	R	\$300,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Improve Congress Parkway from Railroad Ave. to Dollar General parking lot per TSAP	R	750,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Improve Old Riceville Road from W. Madison to Decatur Pike per TSAP	R	500,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Public Works	Relocate Recycle Center from Rocky Mount Rd. to Public Works Campus	N	750,000	Grants, Capital Improvement Fund
Total for Long Range			\$30,132,000	

Updated: Feb. 16, 2026

FY 2026-27 BUDGET CALENDAR

February 20, 2026	City Council conducts a Strategic Summit to outline specific goals for the upcoming fiscal year and long-range goals for the next five years.
February 25, 2026	Budget packages distributed to city departments and outside agencies.
March 13, 2026	All budget information is submitted to the Finance Director with copy to City Manager.
March 16-27, 2026	Finance Director compiles all budget requests and other budget information.
March 30-April 3, 2026	City Manager and Finance Director meet with department heads to review and discuss their budget requests.
April 6-May 1, 2026	City Manager and Finance Director prepare the proposed budget.
May 4, 2026	Proposed budget is submitted to the City Council.
May 6, 2026	Newspaper advertisement notifying the public of the date and time of the Budget Work Session to review the proposed budget.
May 7, 2026	Review of the proposed budget during the Budget Work Session.
May 11, 2026	Further review of the proposed budget during the May Work Session.
May 19, 2026	Further review of the proposed budget and first reading of the budget ordinance during the May Regular Session.
May 27, 2026	Newspaper advertisement notifying the public of the date and time of the state required budget public hearing and budget ordinance in accordance with TCA 6-56-206 and City Charter Article XVII.
June 8, 2026	Further review of the proposed budget during the June Work Session.
June 16, 2026	State required budget public hearing, second reading of the budget ordinance, and budget ordinance adoption during the June Regular Session.
July 1, 2026	FY 2026-27 budget in effect until June 30, 2027.

MOODY'S

INVESTORS SERVICE

Rating Action: Moody's assigns Aa3 to Athens, TN's 2021 GOULT bonds; affirms outstanding issuer rating at Aa3

14 Sep 2021

New York, September 14, 2021 -- Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 to the city of Athens, TN's \$7.7 million General Obligation Bonds, Series 2021. Concurrently, Moody's has affirmed the city's outstanding issuer rating at Aa3.

RATINGS RATIONALE

The Aa3 on both the issuer and general obligation ratings reflects the city's very strong reserve position generated through annual operating surpluses and manageable long-term liabilities. The Aa3 also reflects its growing tax base but below-average resident income and wealth levels and moderate taxpayer concentration.

RATING OUTLOOK

Moody's typically does not assign outlooks to local government issuers with this amount of debt outstanding.

FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO AN UPGRADE OF THE RATINGS

- Material growth in the local economy
- Improvement in resident income and wealth indicators

FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO A DOWNGRADE OF THE RATINGS

- Contraction of the local economy
- Decline in reserves
- Material increase in long-term liabilities

LEGAL SECURITY

The bonds shall be payable from unlimited ad valorem taxes to be levied on all taxable property within the city. For the prompt payment of principal and interest on the bonds, the full faith and credit of the issuer are irrevocably pledged.

USE OF PROCEEDS

The bonds will be used to fund the acquisition and improvements on the municipal building, public works facility, animal shelter, and fire training tower along with various infrastructure improvements.

PROFILE

Athens, TN is located in McMinn County, TN and is approximately half way between Knoxville (Aa1) and Chattanooga. The city's population, according to the 2019 American Community Survey, was 13,851.

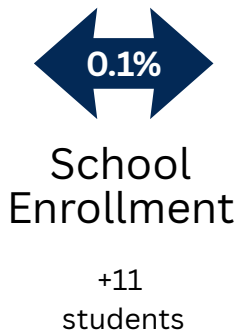
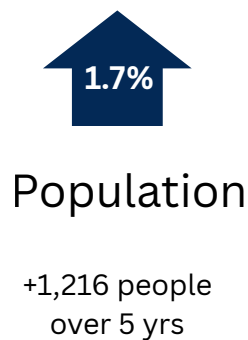
METHODOLOGY

The principal methodology used in the issuer and general obligation ratings was US Local Government General Obligation Debt published in January 2021 and available at https://www.moody.com/researchdocumentcontentpage.aspx?docid=PBM_1260094. Alternatively, please see the Rating Methodologies page on www.moody.com for a copy of this methodology.

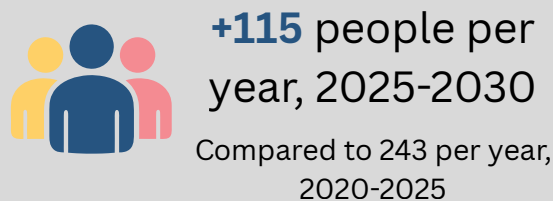
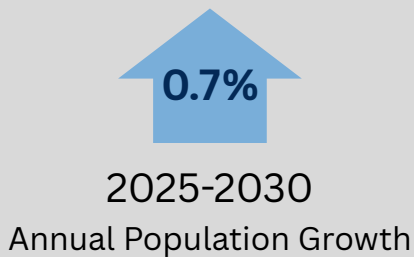
REGULATORY DISCLOSURES

For further specification of Moody's key rating assumptions and sensitivity analysis, see the sections Methodology Assumptions and Sensitivity to Assumptions in the disclosure form. Moody's Rating Symbols and

Annual Growth Rate, 2020-2025

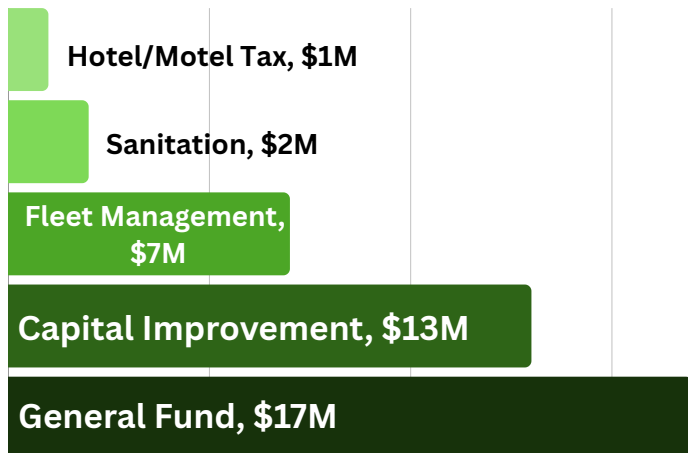


Projected Population Growth



Economic and Fiscal Performance

Reserve Funds



Sales Tax



Hotel Motel Tax



County Reports

Counties are the core geography for ALICE data: They reveal variations often masked by statewide averages, and the data is reported regularly and reliably.

ALICE IN MCMINN COUNTY

ALICE is an acronym for **A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed — households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county. While conditions have improved for some households, many continue to struggle, especially as wages fail to keep pace with the rising cost of household essentials (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and a basic smartphone plan). Households below the ALICE Threshold — ALICE households plus those in poverty — can't afford the essentials.

2023 Point-in-Time-Data

Population: 54,135 **Number of Households:** 21,471

Median Household Income: \$59,674 (state average: \$67,631)

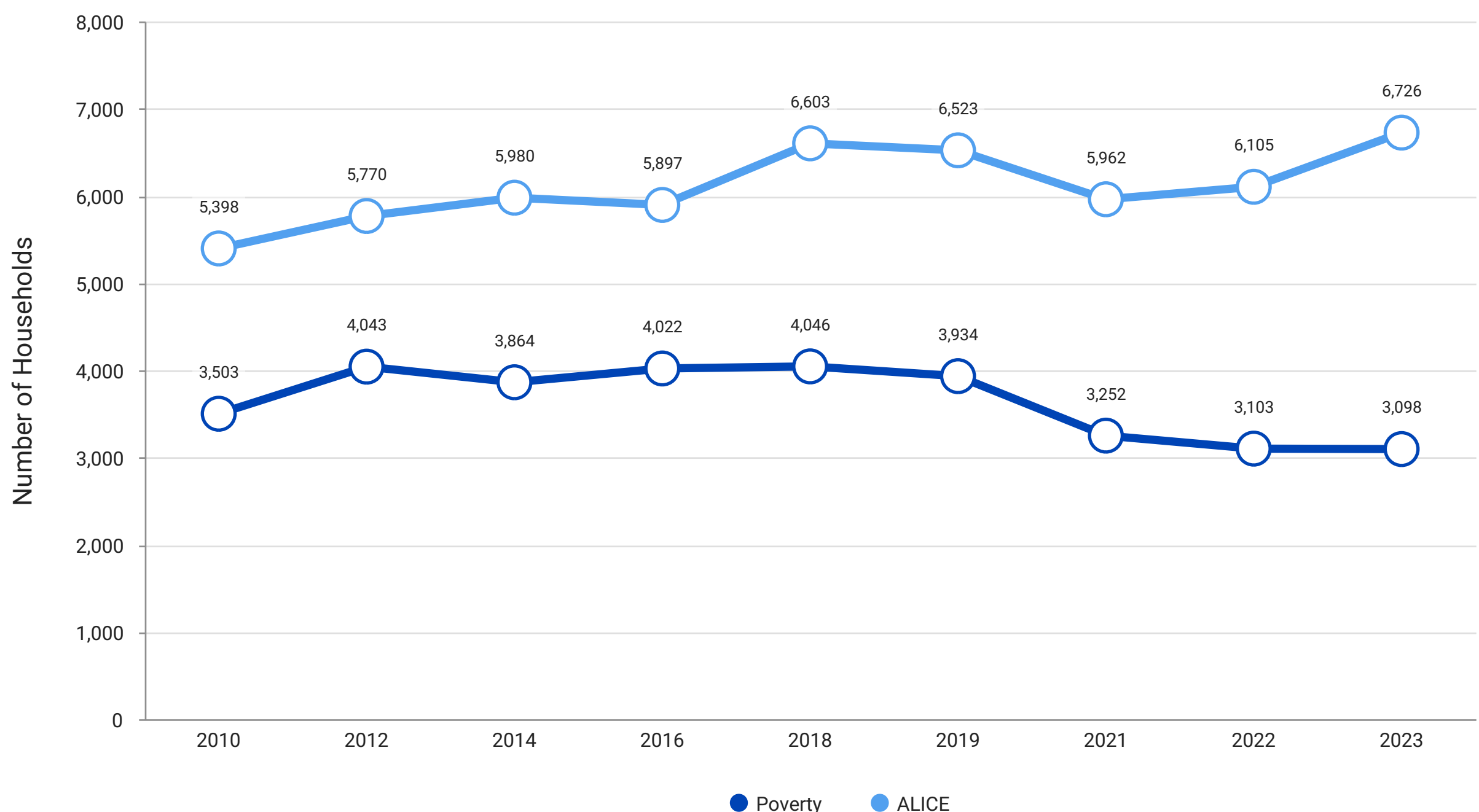
Labor Force Participation Rate:

ALICE Households: 31% (state average 30%) **Households in Poverty:** 14% (state average 14%)

Financial Hardship Has Changed Over Time in McMinn County

As circumstances change, households may find themselves below or above the ALICE Threshold at different times.

Number of ALICE and Poverty-Level Households, Tennessee, 2023

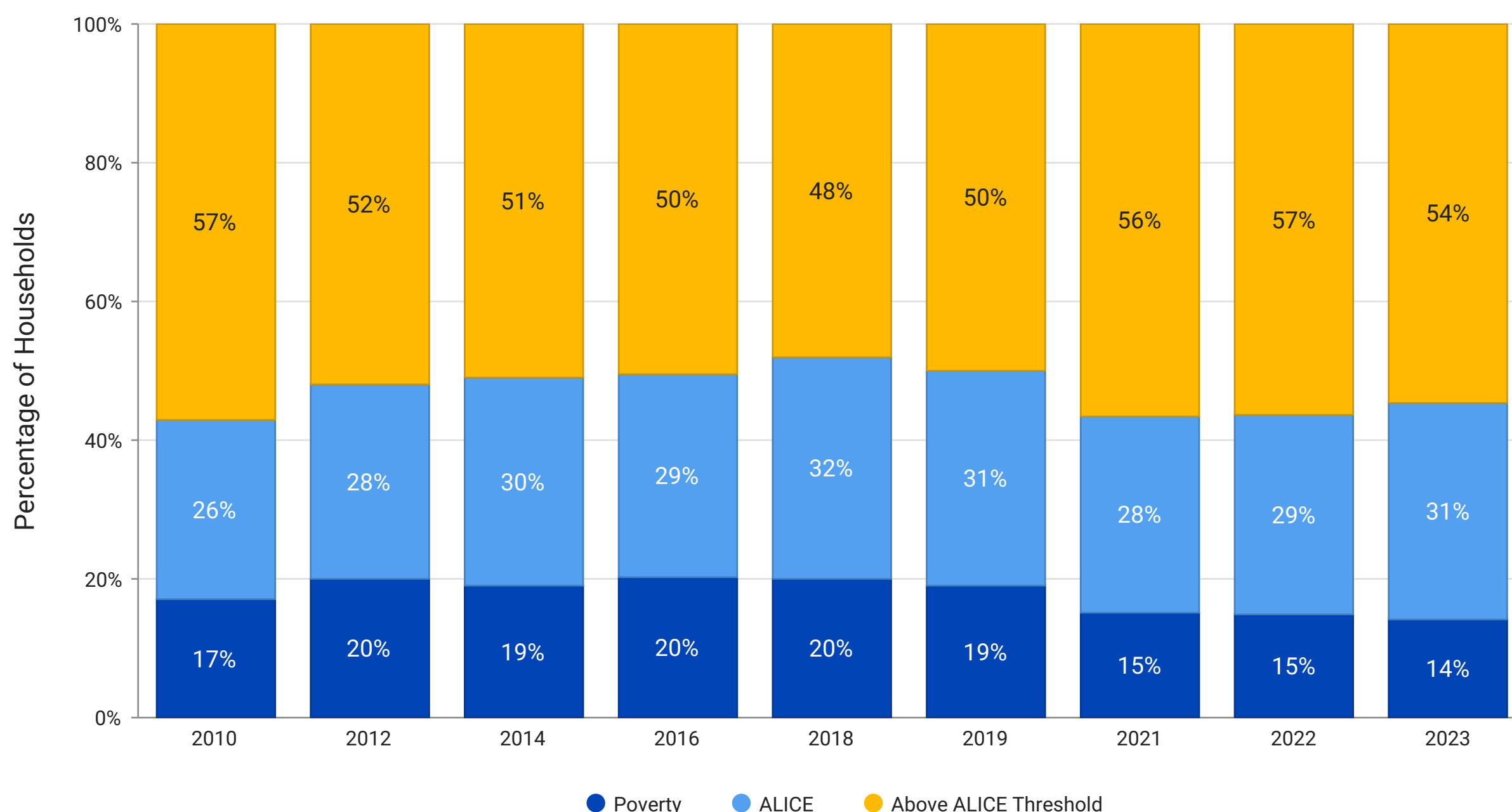


UnitedForALICE.org | @United4ALICE

By securing racial and economic equity for ALICE we can improve life for all.



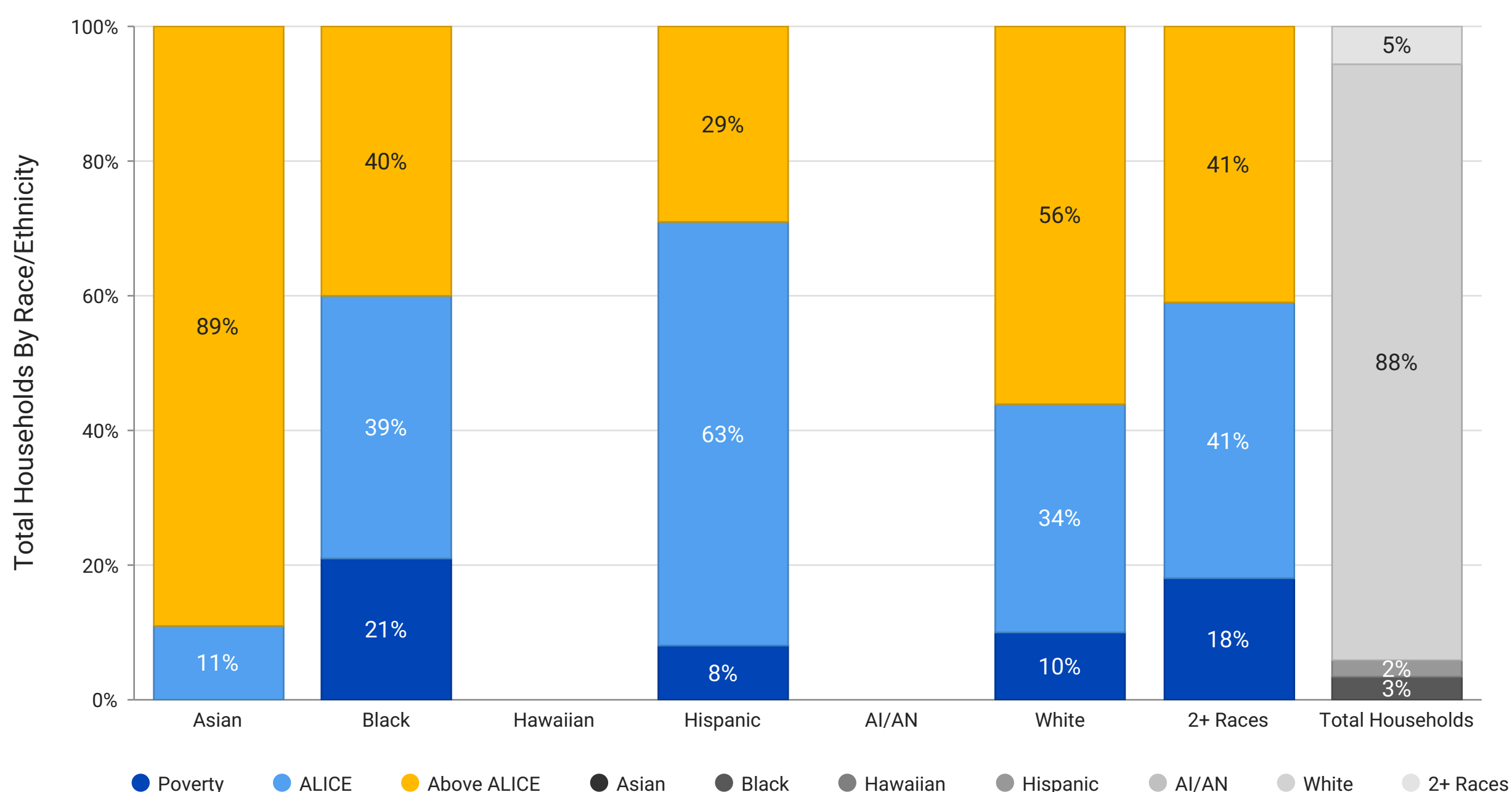
Percentage of Households, Tennessee, 2023



Financial Hardship is Not Equally Distributed

By total number, groups with the largest population of households below the ALICE Threshold tend to also be in the largest demographic groups. However, when looking at the proportion of each group that is below the ALICE Threshold, it is clear that some groups are more likely to be ALICE than others.

Households by Race/Ethnicity, Tennessee, 2023



There were also differences in financial hardship by household type and age of householder.

HOUSEHOLD TYPE

Group	% Below ALICE Threshold
Single or Cohabiting (no children)	44%
Married (with children)	23%
Single-Female-Headed (with children)	75%
Single-Male-Headed (with children)	58%

AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER

Group	% Below ALICE Threshold
Under 25 Years	66%
25 to 44 Years	34%
45 to 64 Years	44%
65 Years and Over	55%

The Cost of Basics Outpaces Wages

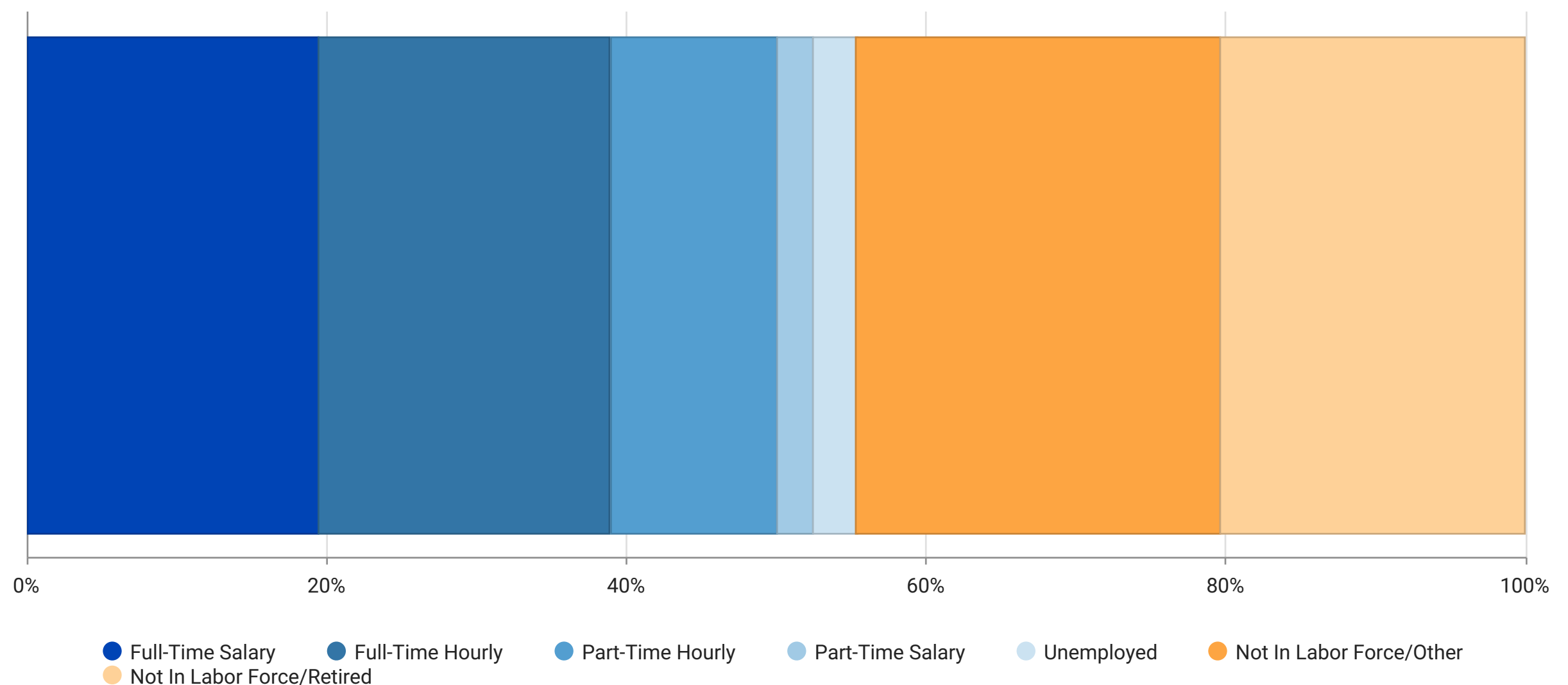
Household Survival Budget, McMinn County, Tennessee, 2023								
Monthly Costs	Single Adult	One Adult, One Child	One Adult, One In Child Care	Two Adults	Two Adults Two Children	Two Adults, Two In Child Care	Single Adult 65+	Two Adults 65+
Housing	\$735	\$788	\$788	\$788	\$923	\$923	\$735	\$788
Child Care	\$0	\$180	\$479	\$0	\$359	\$1,104	\$0	\$0
Food	\$470	\$796	\$714	\$863	\$1,447	\$1,277	\$433	\$794
Transportation	\$414	\$548	\$548	\$654	\$941	\$941	\$344	\$513
Health Care	\$193	\$487	\$487	\$487	\$842	\$842	\$512	\$1,025
Technology	\$86	\$86	\$86	\$116	\$116	\$116	\$86	\$116
Miscellaneous	\$190	\$289	\$310	\$291	\$463	\$520	\$211	\$324
Taxes	\$254	\$186	\$219	\$334	\$282	\$378	\$299	\$543
Monthly Total	\$2,342	\$3,360	\$3,631	\$3,533	\$5,373	\$6,101	\$2,620	\$4,103
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$28,104	\$40,320	\$43,572	\$42,396	\$64,476	\$73,212	\$31,440	\$49,236
Hourly Wage	\$14.05	\$20.16	\$21.79	\$21.20	\$32.24	\$36.61	\$15.72	\$24.62



The Labor Landscape is Challenging for ALICE Workers

A small portion of adults (16 years and older) in Tennessee were unemployed and a large number were working in 2023. However, a substantial portion of both full- and part-time workers are paid by the hour; these workers are more likely to have fluctuations in income and less likely to receive benefits.

Labor Status, Population 16 and Over, Tennessee, 2023



McMinn County, Tennessee, 2023

Census Places	Total Households	% Below ALICE Threshold
Athens city, Tennessee	6,031	51%
Calhoun town, Tennessee	222	58%
Englewood town, Tennessee	636	59%
Etowah city, Tennessee	1,473	61%
Niota city, Tennessee	321	54%
Riceville CDP, Tennessee	323	59%

