



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Matthew Kisber, Commissioner

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The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD) is committed to fostering higher-paying, better-skilled jobs by recruiting new industry and helping existing industry grow. The programs initiated and managed through the ECD have created a healthy and progressive business environment for the state, and has helped Tennessee rank in the top ten states with the lowest cost of doing business. This pro-business environment has resulted in an increase in the state's total workforce to more than 2.7 million.

The skilled work force, prime geographic location, outstanding transportation network, and pro-business environment have earned Tennessee a solid reputation as a premier business location. ECD works to maintain Tennessee's successful business climate and seeks to enhance community quality of life, promote job creation and business opportunities, and offer support services to entrepreneurs and new and existing industries.

History

In 1945, general reorganization of state government formed an Industrial Development Division of the Tennessee State Planning Commission. In 1953, this division was made an independent agency known as the Tennessee Industrial and Agricultural Development Commission. The work of that commission was combined six years later to form a new Department of Conservation and Commerce. In 1963, the General Assembly placed state-level industrial development under a new staff division in the Governor's Office. The division's work was incorporated by the General Assembly in 1972 into what is now the Department of Economic and Community Development.

Services

Administrative Services Division. Administrative Services manages the daily operations and procedures of the department, including fiscal, personnel, research, advertising, communications and various administrative support services. Sections within Administrative Services include, Budget and Fiscal, Human Resources, Information Technology, Internal Audit, Policy and Legal, Research, Communications and Creative Services, and the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission. This division is under the direction of the deputy commissioner, with an assistant commissioner overseeing Communications and Creative Services and an executive director overseeing the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission.

Budget and Fiscal. Budget and Fiscal provides support services to the department including budget preparation and implementation, purchasing, accounting, processing payments and drawing eligible federal funds. This section works with other divisions to develop the department's strategic plan and performance measures. It also works with other state agencies to ensure that ECD adheres to all state fiscal policies and guidelines.

Human Resources. This section is responsible for the preparation and coordination of ECD's training and affirmative action plans, the review and processing of leave and attendance reports, and the department's payroll. Human Resources administers the state's performance evaluation and sick leave bank programs, the employee relations program, and the classification and compensation plan.

Information Technology. Information Technology provides the department with cost-effective information technology resources. This section is tasked with providing purchased hardware and software; in-house developed software; technical support in all areas of information systems and technology; data collection, retention, and dissemination; security; and retirement/destruction.

Internal Audit. Internal Audit provides assurance and consulting activities designed to add value and improve the department's operations. These activities include reviewing the reliability and integrity of financial and operational information, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, safeguarding of assets, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Internal Audit also serves as the liaison to the Comptroller of the Treasury.

Policy & Legal. Policy and Legal consists of the General Counsel, Title VI Coordinator and Legislative Liaison. The General Counsel serves as an in-house attorney for the department, providing legal interpretations of statutes, rules, and regulations applicable to the department and its functions. The General Counsel also drafts and monitors contracts with the agency, advises and assists with Title VI compliance issues, and helps with legislative drafting and analysis. The Title VI Coordinator ensures each division operates in compliance with the rules and regulations of Title VI. The Legislative Liaison serves as a point-of-contact between the department and the General Assembly concerning pending legislation that impacts economic development or departmental issues. The Legislative Liaison also works closely with the Governor's Office.

Research. Research is a support arm for ECD, helping to identify, develop, maintain and disseminate the most complete, up-to-date business and economic data available. This section works to support the department's mission to foster the growth of personal income in Tennessee through the creation of higher-paying, better-skilled jobs.

Communications and Creative Services. The goal of ECD's Communications Office is to keep staff, legislators, other state and city departments, local agencies, the media, and the general public informed of ECD services, programs and activities. The Communications Office is involved in internal and external initiatives designed to assist the various publics in understanding the department's purpose and role. The Communications Office is responsible for the following functions: public awareness and community outreach efforts; media requests; internal and external Web sites; ECD's quarterly newsletter; strategic communications planning and consulting; and event planning, coordination, and execution of ECD public events. Creative Services serves as an in-house resource for providing cost-effective, high-quality graphics for ECD and other agencies of state government. The creative services staff brings a broad range of talent to ensure materials will be produced to the highest standards of quality, with special sensitivity to costs and deadlines. The department assists with logo development, brochures, flyers, promotional items, Web sites and electronic communications, media buying and placement, etc.

Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission. The purpose of the Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission is to promote and facilitate economic development in the entertainment community through the recruitment of businesses and promotion of Tennessee as a location in feature films, television productions, commercials, and other works. The commission encourages and supports the interactive growth of the film and music communities through a wide range of marketing, networking, and advertising efforts. Key activities in this section include: provide location photos and other resource information to industry professionals both locally and worldwide; publish annual Tennessee Production Directory, a listing of more than 1,000 film-related individuals and companies; publish annual Tennessee Music Directory, a listing of more than 1,500 music-related individuals and companies; recruit music and film projects and businesses to Tennessee; encourage the growth and interaction of film and music industries by supporting events; and serving as a liaison between the industry and government. The Tennessee Film, Entertainment and Music Commission also has a Board of Advisors that is involved in the activities of the commission.

Business Development Division. Business Development is directed by an assistant commissioner and consists of the following sections: Job Growth and Retention, National Recruitment, International Recruitment, JETRO, Special Projects and the Business Enterprise Resource Office (BERO).

Job Growth and Retention. This section works with existing industries to promote job growth. ECD institutes a regional approach to job growth and retention that encourages partnerships with local communities and existing industries. Each Job Development Specialist, which is located in regional offices statewide, are assigned a geographic area of the state to assist with recruitment functions including industrial site visits and cataloguing available industrial buildings and sites in an inventory database. They also meet regularly with local business leaders and officials to determine the best strategies for job growth and industrial retention and expansion.

National Recruitment. National Recruitment staff is located in Nashville and are actively involved in identifying and recruiting companies to locate in Tennessee. Team members are assigned industry clusters for intensive business recruiting that matches the needs of growing companies to available business sites located throughout the state. They organize and conduct industrial prospecting trips to key markets and promote the state's many attractions for manufacturing and service industries. The recruitment team builds solid productive relationships that bring jobs to Tennessee.

International Recruitment. International Recruitment staff coordinate the activities of four foreign offices (Canada, Europe, Japan and most recently opened, China) and works with organizations and individuals which help raise Tennessee's profile internationally, such as visiting dignitaries, diplomats, industrial trade groups, the Japan America Society of Tennessee and the SEUS / Japan Association.

JETRO. The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) is a non-profit Japanese government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping U.S. firms maximize their global potential.

Special Projects. Special Projects provides technical assistance to the recruitment and development efforts in industrial location projects involving extraordinary needs in the areas of site size, utilities, road and rail access, and environmental problems.

This section also acts as the departmental liaison for environmental matters and the maintenance of information on large industrial sites in Tennessee.

Business Enterprise Resource Office (BERO). BERO functions as the services arm to small, minority and women-owned businesses providing technical, financial and management information assistance. BERO also works closely with the Governor's Office of Diversity Business Enterprise (GoDBE) assisting small and minority businesses with procurement opportunities. BERO's main office is located in Nashville with regional offices in Memphis and Knoxville. BERO has four main objectives: 1). to serve as an information resource regarding private industry and government entities procurement and business opportunities; 2). to connect private industry, government entities and small, minority and women-owned businesses in order to create partnerships; 3). to provide bid information regarding opportunities available with private industry and government; 4). and to link private industry and government entities looking to purchase goods and/or services. BERO oversees the rural Micro Loan fund and the Tennessee Business Matchmaking program.

Community Development Division. The Community Development Division is directed by an assistant commissioner that oversees the following sections: Community and Local Planning, Program Management, Main Street Program, Three-Star Program, and the State Energy Policy.

Community and Local Planning. The Community and Local Planning office provides comprehensive planning and community development services to cities and counties throughout the state. Approximately 215 localities are served. Each locality pays a portion of the cost for the services of a professional planning staff through a contracted service agreement. Each planner serves five or six communities on average. Services are provided from the following six regional offices: Nashville, Chattanooga, Cookeville, Johnson City, Jackson, and Knoxville. Planning evaluations and program designs are prepared annually for contract communities, which guide the activities in each community. The staff assists in the preparation and revisions of all elements of a community's long-range comprehensive plan. Strategic planning and management services which address local departmental or programmatic problems are provided including annexation, plans of service, and growth management issues. Staff prepares zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, flood plain regulations and other land use control regulations, and advises localities on the enforcement and administration of these regulations. The local planning staff functions include planning research, structured training programs, and other needs identified by localities performed through community development service activities. The staff maintains personal contact with local officials and provides assistance on current day-to-day problems.

Program Management. This section administers state and federal government grant and loan programs. The state-funded programs include the FastTrack Infrastructure Development Program, which provides grants and loans to communities for job creation and economic development opportunities; the FastTrack Job Training Assistance Program, which gives grants to companies for job training opportunities; and the Job Skills Program, which provides grants to companies for job training enhancement projects. The federally funded programs include the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), which provides grants to East Tennessee communities for general community improvements; the Delta Regional Authority (DRA), which provides grants to West Tennessee communities for general community improvements; and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which provides grant opportunities to communities for public utility improvements, housing, and loans for economic development. This section also processes the BERO Micro Loan Program, which provides loans for small, rural businesses; the Small Business Energy Loan

Program, which provides loans to businesses for energy efficiency improvements; and the Local Government Energy Loan Program, which gives loans to local governments for improvements in energy efficiency. This section also maintains the Private Activity Bond cap allocations for the state of Tennessee.

Main Street Program. The Main Street program is a statewide program that provides communities with technical assistance and guidance in developing long-term strategies that promote economic development, historic preservation and growth in traditional commercial districts across Tennessee. The program requires certified Tennessee Main Street communities to meet National Accreditation standards which include broad-based community support for the program, a comprehensive work plan, a sufficient operating budget and adequate staff and volunteer support. The Main Street “Four-point Approach to Downtown Revitalization” is a comprehensive, incremental, self-help economic strategy that focuses on developing public-private partnerships to enhance community livability and job creation, while maintaining the historic character of their downtown district. Tennessee Main Street is a coordinating program of the National Main Street Center, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Three-Star Program. The Three-Star program helps urban and rural communities develop strategic economic and community development plans that meet the needs and challenges of an ever-changing economic environment. This program assists communities with the strategic planning necessary to create new employment opportunities, improve family income and develop a strong leadership base for economic development. There are four basic elements, which are essential to the success of any economic development effort: Organization Development, Community Development, Education and Work Force Development, and Economic Development. Communities are guided through the program requirements with the help of the Three-Star specialists, which are located in all the grand divisions of the state. Incentives for receiving the certification include identification on all FastTrack Infrastructure and job training applications; eligibility for matching grants (if criteria set by ECD are met); and the advantage of earning points in the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The Governor’s Three-Star Award is presented to communities each year that successfully complete this program.

State Energy Policy. State Energy Policy prepares strategic priorities for advanced energy technologies that enhance the competitiveness of Tennessee business and industry. The office promotes economic development initiatives that maintain environmental integrity and create prosperity using modern energy efficient technologies for fossil and renewable energy resources. Utilizing a network of professional associations, community organizations and federal resources, State Energy Policy staff create partnerships with communities, businesses and the education sector to implement energy policies and energy technologies. The office oversees state and federal grant programs and a broad range of energy efficiency programs to business and industry, local governments, schools and residential consumers. All programs must focus on energy efficiency measures and promote energy cost and dollar savings. Programs administered by the department include the Small Business Energy Loan Program, Biodiesel Infrastructure Grant Program, Local Government Energy Loan Program, Tennessee Energy Education Network (TEEN), Clean Cities, Feedstock Processing Demonstration Loan, Million Solar Roofs, Energy Emergency Planning, Energy Star, the Tennessee Industrial Technology Program, and Wind Prospecting in the Tennessee Valley Region. Assistance is also provided in the areas of energy efficiency code standards, alternative fuels, resource development, technology transfer, and public information and outreach.

Regional Offices

ECD's programs and services are delivered to the people of the state and to existing and prospective industry from a central office in Nashville and through regional offices with locations listed below:

Memphis

170 N. Main Street Building
12th Floor
Memphis, TN 38103
(901) 543-6733 phone
(901) 543-7905 fax

Jackson

401 Lowell Thomas State Office Building
225 Martin Luther King Drive
Jackson, TN 38301
(731) 423-5664 phone
(731) 423-6650 fax

Cookeville

621 East 15th Street, Suite C
Cookeville, TN 38501-1820
(931) 520-1094 phone
(931) 526-5230 fax

Chattanooga

540 McCallie Avenue
Suite 690
Chattanooga, TN 37402
(423) 634-6376 phone
(423) 634-6351 fax

Knoxville

10215 Technology Drive
Knoxville, TN 37932
(865) 777-4043 phone
(865) 777-4658 fax

Tri-Cities

P.O. Box 1022
Tri-City Airport Station
Blountville, TN 37617
(423) 323-1203 phone

Local Planning Offices

Central Office

William Snodgrass Tennessee Tower
10th Floor
312 Eighth Ave., N.
Nashville, TN 37243-0405
(615) 741-2211 phone
(615) 741-0607 fax

West Tennessee

Suite 420, Lowell Thomas State Office Building
225 Martin Luther King Drive
Jackson, TN 38301
(731) 423-5650 phone
(731) 426-0640 fax

Upper Cumberland

621 East 15th Street, Suite C
Cookeville, TN 38501-1820
(931) 528-1577 phone
(931) 526-5230 fax

Southeast

540 McCallie Avenue
Suite 690
Chattanooga, TN 37402
(423) 634-6446 phone
(423) 634-6351 fax

Middle Tennessee

Suite 128
446 Metroplex Drive
Nashville, TN 37211-3139
(615) 741-1534 phone
(615) 532-1896 fax

Upper East

207 North Boone Street, Suite 1200
Johnson City, TN 37604
(423) 434-6476 phone
(423) 434-6482 fax

East Tennessee

Twelve Oaks Executive Park
5401 Kingston Pike, Suite 210
Knoxville, TN 37919
(865) 594-6666 phone
(865) 594-6653 fax

Related Boards and Commissions

Tennessee Board for Economic Growth. This board serves in an advisory capacity to the department, reviewing and evaluating public, private, and academic resources to develop and facilitate a strategic vision for economic development in Tennessee.

Building Finance Committee. This committee reviews and approves applications for Certificates of Public Purpose and Necessity, required for counties and municipalities desiring to issue debt obligations for industrial parks or buildings.

Local Government Planning Advisory Committee. This committee advises the Commissioner on the administration of the Local Planning Assistance Program. It also exercises appointment and jurisdictional controls over regional planning commissions. The committee is the approving authority for county-wide growth plans under the provisions of Public Chapter 1101 of 1998, the Tennessee Growth Management Act.

Tennessee Technology Development Corporation. This entity stimulates high-technology business development in Tennessee by encouraging the formation and growth of high-technology firms, assisting high-tech entrepreneurs, attracting out-of-state technology firms to Tennessee, and fostering the state's existing science and technology base as a source of economic development.

Commissioner Matthew Kisber

Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development

Matthew Kisber was appointed commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development by Governor Phil Bredesen on January 18, 2003. Prior to this appointment, Kisber served ten consecutive terms in the state House of Representatives and as vice president of Business Development for First Tennessee Bank. In the Tennessee General Assembly, Kisber served as chairman of the powerful Finance, Ways and Means Committee, which is responsible for the state's budget. He received state and national acclaim for his leadership, developing innovative solutions to a wide range of budgetary and business development challenges. During his tenure at First Tennessee Bank, he was involved in recruiting new business relationships and expanding existing relationships for the largest Tennessee headquartered financial institution. Kisber began his career as a successful small businessman in Jackson, Tenn., with his family's business, Kisber's Department Stores. He went on to work as a photojournalist at the Jackson Sun, covering politics and other interests.

In his current role as commissioner, Kisber has worked to strengthen partnerships both domestically and internationally. His keen focus on high-level customer service has proven successful when working with local governments, chambers and other economic development groups. That customer service philosophy resulted in the formation of Tennessee's FastTrack Program, which provides timely responses and services to companies seeking to make an investment in Tennessee. Kisber oversees the Governor's Jobs Cabinet team, which brings local officials, community leaders, state agencies and other entities with job creation responsibilities together to identify challenges and opportunities for economic and community growth. Kisber received his bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University and was one of thirty-six state legislators from twenty-one states to successfully complete the inaugural program for Emerging Political Leaders at the Darden Graduate School of Business Administration at the University of Virginia. Kisber is active in various civic and cultural posts, including; cochair of Tennessee Tomorrow; board of directors for the National Center for Public Policy in Higher Education, the Tennessee Foreign Language Institute, and the Tennessee Technology Development Corporation; Governor's alternate for the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Southern Growth Policies Board; and member of the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations and the State Workforce Development Board. Kisber and his wife, Paige Lowe Kisber, reside in Nashville with their son Harrison and daughter Katherine.

