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Preview from the
2013 Community Needs Evaluation

The 2013 Community Needs Evaluation is being prepared by Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis and will be released in Spring 2014.

The 5th Annual edition will again provide demographic, social and socioeconomic profiles of Davidson County and comparative data for Tennessee and the U. S. It will describe the magnitude and patterning of poverty, as well as Evidence-Based Practices that can be used to identify updated and proven methods of social/human service delivery.

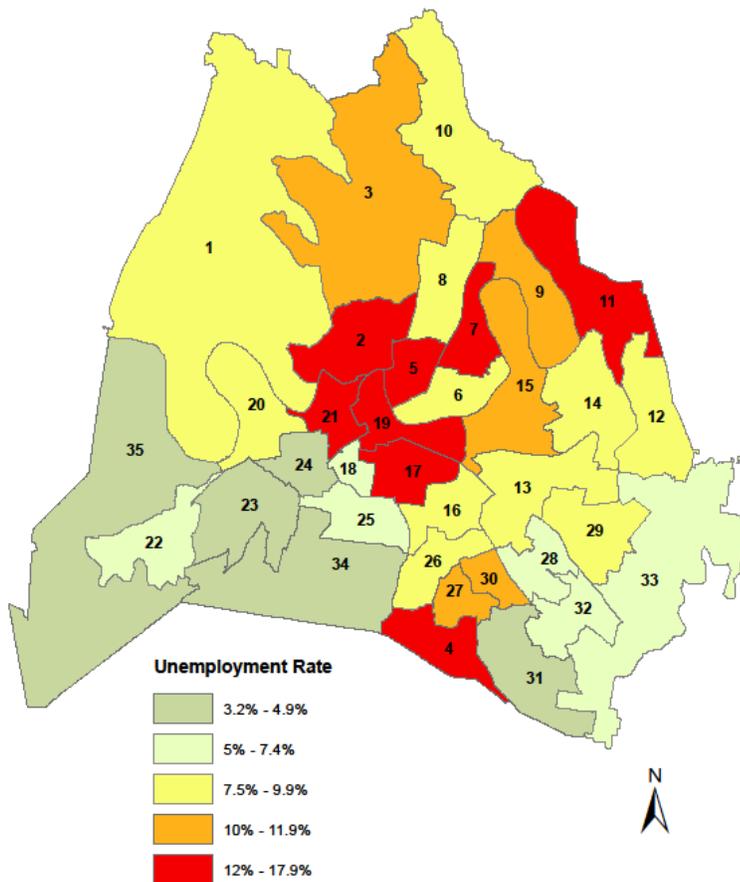
The 2013 edition will also include a section about recent multidisciplinary research that explains how the stress of poverty can impair cognitive function.

This is a brief preview of data in the 2013 Community Needs Evaluation (from the U. S. Census Bureau’s 2012 American Community Survey) about Davidson County:

1. Total population – 648,295 (313,775 males; 334,520 females)
2. Median age – 33.9
3. Over age 65 – 13.7%
4. Foreign-born population – 74,125
5. With a disability – 11.7%
6. Average size of household – 2.4
7. Households with incomes over \$100,000 – 42,835
8. Households with incomes less than \$25,000 – 70,369
9. Median household income - \$44,567, down from \$50,164 in 2007
10. All people in poverty – 18.9%; under age 18 in poverty – 29.4%

**Percentage of People Unemployed by Metropolitan Council District
Davidson County, Tennessee, 2008-2012**

Data from U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008-2012; Shapefiles from Metropolitan Planning Department; Map by Metropolitan Social Services-Planning & Coordination



Map Preview

At left is a sample of the maps that will be in the 2013 Community Needs Evaluation.

This map shows the unemployment rate by Metropolitan Council District, using data from the 2008-2012 American Community Survey from the U. S. Census Bureau.

The 2008-2012 data, released in December 2013, is the latest available from the Census Bureau.

Highlights from 2013

in Food & Nutrition, Health & Human Development, Housing & Neighborhoods, Long-Term Services & Supports (Adults) and Workforce & Economic Opportunity

Food Policy Council

The Nashville Food Policy Council (NFPC) was formed in 2010 to influence policy and regulations that may affect Davidson County's food system. The formation of the NFPC was made possible by the Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant. NFPC members represent various sectors of the food community such as farmers, restaurateurs, non-profits, government and healthy food advocates.



The 2013 work of NFPC included developing a food assessment product to gather information on the current state of the food system in Nashville and make recommendations to the Healthy Nashville Leadership Council. In addition, the NFPC was instrumental in assisting Metro Development and Housing Authority in establishing guidelines for a request for proposal that was issued to identify effective strategies in addressing food insecurity in

areas identified as food deserts. NFPC participated in a series of meetings using the Mobilizing Action through Planning and Partnerships (the strategic planning process of the Nashville Public Health Department) to identify ways to improve the local food system and make recommendations related to improving access to healthy affordable food to Davidson County residents.

<http://www.nashvitality.org/healthy/creating-healthy-places/food-policy-council.aspx>

Food Stamps

SNAP (formerly food stamps) benefits have been cut for eligible participants in Tennessee and across the country. Several efforts by local groups such as Community Food Advocates and Second Harvest Food Bank have initiated public awareness campaigns to inform the public about the cuts and suggest strategies that can enable families to stretch their food budgets.

The Food Policy Council is providing information and advocacy for these agencies affected by the cuts. As of November 2013, 128,560 people representing 63,706 households receive SNAP benefits. Community Food Advocates, a non-profit organization working to end hunger in Nashville has developed efforts to increase enrollment in the SNAP program through direct outreach, client advocacy, capacity building and effective use of the media. Second Harvest has expanded its Summer Food Program and Kids Café program partly in response to the SNAP cuts. SNAP benefits remain an important tool in reducing hunger and improving nutrition for low-income families.

http://tn.gov/humanserv/adfam/fs_stats/FSPP1113.pdf

Barnes Affordable Housing Trust Fund

At the 50TH State of Metro Address in May 2013, Mayor Karl Dean announced the creation of an affordable housing trust fund for Nashville, by ordinance passed by the Metro Council. This signaled a commitment by Metro to support the creation of more housing for low-income residents, including the “working poor.” Metro government will provide seed money of approximately \$3 million. The fund name, Barnes Fund for Affordable Housing, honors Rev. Bill Barnes who has advocated for affordable housing and other supports for citizens in need for decades.



The Fund culminates a long effort by many people. In 2001, a faith-based coalition named Tying Nashville Together studied possible funding sources and structures for such a fund. The Nashville Power Project, a group of homeless and formerly homeless advocates, produced a report that was given to elected officials. At one point, the Council asked the Planning Department to produce a report about possible strategies for Metro to implement an affordable housing trust fund.

The effort lay dormant until 2010 when a group of Vanderbilt students in the Cal Turner Program for Moral Leadership in the Professions re-energized advocates and housing providers and assembled a working group called The Barnes Trust Fund Coalition. The students studied best practices in other localities, documented research on the value of housing trust funds, and provided continuing support to the Coalition. In 2013 the group produced a

report for the Mayor's Office which resulted in legislation creating a fund, identifying initial funding, and creating a Commission to develop the process and allocate funds.

The 7-member Commission will be the governing entity of the Fund, awarding grants to fund "...renovation or construction of affordable homeownership and rental opportunities, project-based rental assistance, and other supportive efforts to encourage affordability." The Commission will select grantees and funding will be approved by the Council, targeting households earning less than 80% of the area median income of approximately \$44,500 (depending on household size). Non-profit housing developers will be eligible for grants to build affordable rental properties and single-family homes for people who are disabled, elderly, low-income, and transitioning from homelessness.

The Commission has contracted with The Housing Fund, a local non-profit affordable housing finance agency, to manage the Fund. Early in 2014, the Commission will organize its structure; develop policies, procedures, and by-laws; develop an application for housing providers; and move to begin the funding process as quickly as possible. They hope to have the process in place by June of 2014. The next step for the Coalition and the Commission is to identify an on-going source of funding.

<http://news.vanderbilt.edu/2013/06/turner-fellows-housing-fund/>

http://www.nashville.gov/mc/ordinances/term_2011_2015/bl2013_487.htm

Davidson County Continuum of Care

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) annually funds groups of housing providers for homeless people. Located in cities and regions across the U. S., these "Continuums of Care" (CoC) are tasked to develop coordinated systems of housing programs with emphasis on moving homeless people into permanent housing. The CoCs are responsible for ranking local providers using HUD and local criteria and devising a funding formula to disperse HUD funds.

In 2013, the Davidson County CoC sought to improve its decision-making process by developing local quality standards and a Performance Evaluation Committee (PEC) to formalize the local ranking process. The PEC members visited each funded agency and examined agency performance on a number of factors, including HUD-required standards and locally-developed quality measures. The resulting scores contributed to recommendations presented to the CoC Governance Committee, which made final decisions about the relative ranking of programs.

In addition to continuing to improve the performance evaluation process, the local CoC plans to develop a centralized assessment and intake process that HUD has indicated will be required in the near future. The Nashville Homelessness Commission is assisting in this development process, which will streamline movement of homeless people into housing.

<http://www.nashville-mdha.org/homelessnessPrevention.php>

Community Health Assessment

The Metro Public Health Department and Healthy Leadership Council engaged in an extensive strategic plan process during 2013 call Mobilizing for Action through Planning & Partnerships (MAPP). Committees were developed that included a diverse range of public and private participation, designed to promote broad-based partnerships, performance improvement and strategic planning in public health practice.

Reports should be available later in 2014. The visioning statement developed is "A healthy Nashville has a culture of well-being, where all people have the opportunity and support to thrive and prosper" and the MAPP process is designed to:

- Measure improvements in the community's health and quality of life
- Increase visibility of public health within the community
- Community advocates for the public's health
- Ability to anticipate and manage change effectively
- Stronger public health infrastructure, partnerships and leadership

<http://www.healthynashville.org/index.php?module=InitiativeCenters&func=display&icid=8>

Financial Assistance Providers

In 2013, Metropolitan Social Services, Rooftop and NeedLink invited representatives from organizations that provide those in need with financial assistance to discuss ways to increase communication and coordination among providers. A Financial Assistance Coalition is being developed to find ways to collect and share information to enhance the delivery of financial assistance services.

Information about program requirements was collected and shared among participating organizations. A steering committee has been formed and efforts are underway to explore creating a system to share data that would prevent duplications, capture the number of applicants and recipients citywide and identify the length of time organizations are without resources (most agencies indicated that budgetary limitations sometimes resulted in depletion of funds). As the Coalition develops, it will continue working toward the goals to improve and work in a more coordinated effort, building interagency trust, connecting clients with resources, understanding community needs, and developing more efficient systems.

Public Awareness of Suicide and Prevention

The Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) and The Tennessee Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services has coordinated the outreach and awareness of information about suicide, including recognizing the symptoms and educating the community on prevention of suicide. TSPN Members of the Network's eight regions meet monthly or bimonthly to develop and report on regional TSPN projects, review local suicide incidents, and discuss future opportunities for outreach and awareness. The meetings are open to the public.

On February 13, 2013, a new Tennessee Strategy was revised and adopted to ensure the most effective and current approach. Beginning in 2013, TSPN worked with the Davison County community and targeted the African American Faith Based Community, resulting in many faith organizations being invited to meetings and educational workshops about suicide and prevention. Information was provided to faith leaders to share with their organizations.

<http://tspn.org/tennessee-strategy-for-suicide-prevention-2#2>

<http://www.tn.gov/mental/A&D/>

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Council on Aging Community Assessment Committee identified a need to provide information and resources to Grandparents raising Grandchildren. The committee met regularly to gather data and resources in preparation for a train the trainer event targeting agencies and individuals impacted by this new trend of persons having to parent a second time. Topics that will be covered include working with the courts, financial considerations, school policies for grandparents, medical considerations and maintaining relationships with the biological parents and a list of community resources will be distributed. The event is planned for February 2014.

<http://www.councilonaging-midtn.org/programs/grandparents>



Nashville Workforce Network

The Workforce Committee of the Nashville Poverty Reduction Initiative formalized its function and rebranded itself as the Nashville Workforce Network (NWN) in March 2013. The Network retained Betty Johnson of Goodwill as Chair. The mission of NWN is to reduce the effects of poverty in Nashville by creating and maintaining collaborations, streamlining resources, building skills, and promoting economic opportunities.

There is a need to assist low-income low-skilled job seekers who face significant barriers to employment. The job seekers need to access the essential supportive services and job readiness resources in order to attain gainful employment that will support them and their families. This enhanced employment opportunity for low-skilled workers can only be effectively realized through a citywide network to promote the coordination of work-force development. There is no one single entity that can provide all the necessary workforce development activities for low-skilled job seekers facing multiple barriers. These include job readiness, understanding the needs of the employers, and the area labor market landscape. The network will add value to the capacity of individual organizations.



The Network provides professional development, networking opportunities, and data driven best practices. Throughout 2013, the network and its members provided workshops related to expungement process, which helps those with felony records to seek ways to remove this impediment to employment.

The Network leadership organized job prep sessions for job seekers in low-income neighborhoods in order to improve their chances of getting hired by area employers. In these sessions, participants learned interviewing skills, employer expectations and resume writing. The Network held a Workforce Engagement Forum event that provided members with information about current labor market information that leads them to know where the jobs are, and what skills are needed in leading sectors of the local economy.

The Network leadership organized focus group discussion with representatives from the hospitality industry who were committed in recruiting job seekers from neighborhoods with high unemployment, and recruited by members only. This was followed by a Goodwill Hospitality Job Fair intended to enhance employment opportunities for those interested in hospitality sector work.

As part of its evolution, the NWN has now three Committees:

1. Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee
2. Membership Education and Networking Committee
3. Models, Reports, and Data Committee

<http://www.nashvilleworkforcenetwork.org/>

Financial Empowerment Center

Nashville is one of five cities in the nation that have received funding for Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) programs through the Bloomberg philanthropies as part of its investment in the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund. Since opening in March 2013, the FEC has provided free one-on-one financial counseling to hundreds of Nashville residents out of two main locations as well as satellite locations, including Metro Social Services.



<http://www.nashville.gov/Mayors-Office/Priorities/Economic-Development/Financial-Empowerment-Center.aspx>

A VOICE for the Reduction of Poverty

In 2013, A VOICE for the Reduction of Poverty was formed in Nashville to promote the reduction of poverty and eradicating its devastating effects. A VOICE educates and advocates supporting policies, legislation and actions to reduce and alleviate poverty. Under the leadership of Avi Poster, Community Activist/Advocate, and Marsha Edwards, CEO/President of the Martha O'Bryan Center, A VOICE is bringing together those in the community who want to do more to reduce poverty in our community.

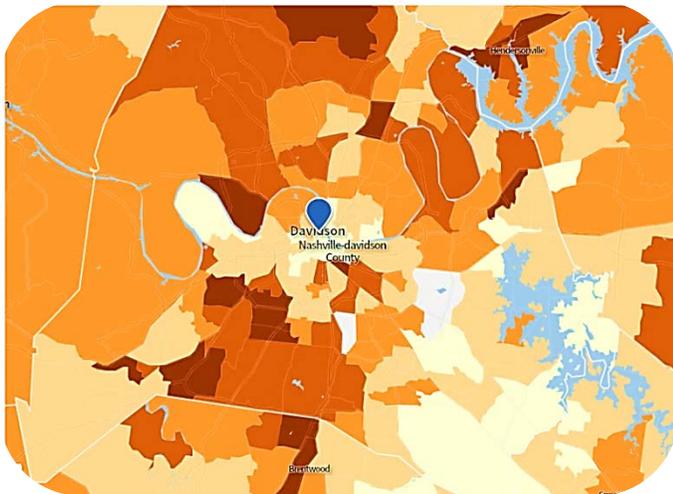
<http://www.nashvillevoice.net/>



In November 2013, A VOICE invited representatives from the Half in Ten Project of the Center for American Progress to visit Nashville. Community meetings were held to examine the public and political will to reduce poverty in Nashville in beyond as well as to learn more about the data about poverty. Photos, powerpoint presentation and video of the event are available online - <http://www.nashvillevoice.net/recent-events.html>

New Interactive Census Mapping Tool

On December 17, the U. S. Census Bureau introduced Census Explorer, a new interactive mapping tool for neighborhood level statistics, based on the 2008-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Summary, plus comparative characteristics for 1990 and 2000. The tool includes 8 statistics: Total Population; Percent 65 and older; Foreign-born population percentage; Percent of the population with a high school degree or higher; percent with a bachelor's degree or higher; labor force participation rate; home ownership rate; median household income. The map below shows an example of the percentage of people over age 65 by Census tract from the 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Summary. Comparative maps are also available to compare 1990 and 2000 for the 8 statistics.



Percentage over Age 65 By Census Tract



<http://www.census.gov/censusexplorer/censusexplorer.html>

Economic Geography/Creative Clusters Benefit Few

Over the past few decades, people in the United States have sorted themselves geographically, in what has been called the "Great Divergence." *Better and Better* (January 17, 2013, *The Economist*) explains that those with higher income, skills and education (have migrated to some cities (such as San Francisco and Boston), while less skilled and lower paid persons have gone to places in which housing and other costs are more affordable.

Some had presumed that the high skill/high pay concentration of people (“creative clusters”) increased wages and well-being for everyone who lived there, but there is increasing evidence to dispute that presumption. While the more expensive cities, populated by high skill/high pay residents, improve local amenities, others may not be able to pay for the amenities or may not be able to continue living there because of the increasing costs. In fact, increased housing costs may “deflect skilled individuals elsewhere, reducing the productivity impact of skilled clusters and potentially sowing the seeds of their demise.”

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2013/01/inequality>

“Inequality in American thus extends far beyond income to include the basic conditions that determine and reinforce avenues for upward mobility and future economic success in the long run.” – *Richard Florida*

For a number of years, urban studies theorist Richard Florida promoted the concept of the “creative class” and the assumption that it enhanced economic development, well-being and prosperity. However, in January 30, 2013, in *More Losers Than Winners in America’s New Economic Geography* (Atlantic Cities), Florida acknowledges recent preliminary findings that these improvements were not broadly shared, noting “On close inspection, talent clustering provides little in the way of trickle-down benefits.”

In describing how creative clusters (high skill/high income) have a disproportionately benefit, so that the high skill/high income people are the ones who benefit from the creative clusters because they are the only ones who can afford the cost of housing and living in these locations. Florida describes the perceived benefit to those other than those who are in the high skill/high income creative cluster members is an illusion.

Florida also acknowledged that while lower paid service and blue-collar workers make more in these knowledge/skilled/income locations, it is not enough to compensate for the additional costs of living, particularly housing. He noted that variables have been identified, but that the causal relationship has not yet been determined. When accounting for the higher cost of housing, the 33% in the high skill/high income culture class benefit, while the remaining 66% is detrimentally affected.

Referencing a study by Rebecca Diamond, the article explained that this situation may “disproportionately discourage low skill workers from living in these high wage, high amenity cities,” creating an additional level of inequality – inequality of well-being. This environment of inequality of well-being has more skilled workers who take home more money, while they also benefit from better neighborhoods, improved amenities and better schools.

<http://www.theatlanticcities.com/jobs-and-economy/2013/01/more-losers-winners-americas-new-economic-geography/4465/>

Online Zip Code Income-Education Level Tool

The *Washington Post* has an online tool to provide information about characteristics by U. S. Zip Codes. It provides the median household income and percentage of college graduates by zip code. It also ranks each Zip Code’s using a percentile based on income and college education. Among the 650 Zip Codes, Super Zips are those ranked 95 or higher, with the largest collection of Super Zips clustered around Washington, D.C. Davidson County’s 37215 was identified as a Super Zip, with a ranking of 95 (median household income \$90,899; 73% with college degrees), followed closely by 37205 (ranked 92, \$82,476 median income and 69% college graduates). Ranked much lower were Davidson County’s 37210 at 12 (median income \$25,662 and 15% college graduates); 37208 at 14 (median household income of \$22,679 (\$22,679 household income and 17% college graduates; and 37207 ranked at 16 (median household income of \$30,780 and 16% college graduates).

(Note: the geographic areas for Zip Codes were created based on U. S. mail patterns, not designed to compare population characteristics because of the uneven population. Using Zip Codes are convenient because the boundaries are familiar to most. However, using residential patterns, such as Council Districts, census tracts, etc. are more effective in comparing characteristics.)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/local/2013/11/09/washington-a-world-apart/>

Federal Fiscal Year in Review

On December 18, 2013, Brookings Institution reviewed 2013 in *Lurching from One Fiscal Battle to Another*. It discusses the issues faced in 2013 regarding the federal budget, such as the “fiscal cliff” in early 2013, continuing resolutions to fund the government through September on March 27, the federal shutdown and reopening and others.

It noted that in December 2014, a working compromise is being developed to keep the government open for the next two years, by partially mitigating the anticipated 2014 and 2015 sequesters, balanced with fee increases and long-term cuts. However, as the debt ceiling would be reached again on February 6, 2014, further action is needed, particularly a bipartisan, long-term approach.

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/fixgov/posts/2013/12/18-year-review-fiscal-battles-wallach>

TCSW 2014 Spring Conference

The Tennessee Conference on Social Welfare (TCSW) will hold its Spring Conference on March 24-26 at the Music City Sheraton in Nashville. TCSW serves as the “pre-eminent catalyst for creating and fostering broad-based networks, connecting community stakeholders and policy makers for a better Tennessee.” TCSW collaborated with numerous public and private social/human service providers and advocates. It supports best practices and public awareness of public policies, especially those affecting the most vulnerable. Advance registration is required.

<https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1374603>



“Silver Tsunami” Ahead for Governments

In December 2013, *Governing* described the beginning of the wave of retirements of Baby Boomer government employees. *The Public Employee ‘Silver Tsunami’ Looms for Governments* explained that retirement for many had been delayed by the recession but is beginning as the economy slowly recovers.

Governing used the example of the Connecticut Department of Correction, at which 40% of corrections officers will be eligible for retirement by June 2014. It notes that when longtime employees in leadership positions leave, there will be a detrimental effect as those with high levels of expertise and knowledge retire. It provided additional examples of jurisdictions with concerns that are trying to develop strategies to address these changes in the workforce, including California, Pennsylvania, Cook County (Illinois)

It noted that government employees are generally older than those in the private sector, based on a review of data from the U. S. Census Bureau’s 2012 Current Population Survey. It noted that the Center for State and Local Government Excellence reported that in 2012 46% of those eligible postponed retirement, which decreased to 38% in 2013. In addition to the anticipated impact on the government workforce, the impending increase in retirement would also affect pensions.

<http://www.governing.com/topics/mgmt/gov-governments-silver-tsunami.html>

Public Opinions on Federal Budget Cuts

On December 19, 2013, the Pew Research Center released results of a national survey conducted December 3-8, 2013 about public preferences about federal budget cuts. *In Deficit Debate, Public Resists Cuts in Entitlements and Aid to Poor*, the majority responded that it is more important to maintain spending on Social Security, Medicare and programs for the poor than to reduce the budget. Greater support was expressed for decreases in military spending to reduce the budget.

- 69% of respondents said it was more important to keep Social Security and Medicare benefits as they are, with 23% indicating that reducing the deficit was more important.
- 59% said it was more important to keep spending levels for the poor, with 33% indicating that reducing the deficit was more important.
- 40% said it was important to keep military spending at current levels, while 51% said it was more important to reduce the deficit.

A majority of each party said it was more important to continue current spending levels for Social Security and Medicare than to take steps to reduce the budget deficit (79% of Democrats, 66% of Independents and 62% of Republicans). However, among Tea Party Republicans, 73% said deficit reduction was more important than maintaining spending levels for the poor and needy, compared to 48% of non-Tea Party Republicans.

Younger age categories were more likely to support deficit reduction than to reduce military spending (64% supporting deficit reduction in ages 18-29, compared to 31% for age 65 and over. Household income was also related to priorities. While all income categories responded that it was more important to keep Social Security and Medicare benefits, there were differences for other priorities. In terms of keeping spending for poor and needy at current levels, 75% of households below \$30,000 supported maintaining spending levels, compared to 46% of households with incomes of more than \$75,000.

<http://www.people-press.org/2013/12/19/in-deficit-debate-public-resists-cuts-in-entitlements-and-aid-to-poor/>

Metropolitan Social Services – Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis

800 Second Avenue North, Nashville, Tennessee 37201

www.nashville.gov/sservices

Planning & Coordination-Social Data Analysis Staff

Dinah Gregory – 615-862-6494

Abdelghani Barre – 615-862-6459

Lee Stewart – 615-862-6975

Julius Witherspoon – 651-880-2532

Joyce Hillman – 615-862-6439

Direct Services: **615-862-6458**

Planning & Coordination: **615-862-6494**

Email Planning & Coordination:

MSSPC@nashville.gov

Coming in Spring 2014 – 5th Annual Community Needs Evaluation