

Population Projections for Development of Knoxville Regional Mobility Plan 2050

TPO Staff Recommendation

April 24, 2024

Background

The Knoxville Regional TPO is required by federal regulations to prepare and regularly update a “Metropolitan Transportation Plan” (MTP) that covers a planning horizon of at least twenty (20) years into the future. The most recent MTP, known as the “Mobility Plan 2045” was adopted in April 2021 and must be updated by May 2025. The requirement to update the MTP every four years ensures that planning assumptions are kept current. One of the key planning assumptions that goes into the development of the MTP is the forecast of the region’s expected growth in population and employment, which are key drivers of transportation demand.

TPO Staff Recommendation for Population Projection Data Source

The TPO staff reviewed two primary sources of population projection data – “2021 – 2070 Projections” from U.T. Center for Business & Economic Research (CBER) and “2023 Regional Projections” from Woods & Poole, Inc. (W&P). TPO staff recommends using the W&P source for the Mobility Plan 2050 demographic forecasts as it is similar to CBER’s forecast for population changes and it also provides projections for several other needed socioeconomic variables. Below are the population and employment forecasts from W&P starting from the base Census population estimate for 2022 and out to 2050 for all counties containing portions of the TPO Planning Area, including: Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, Roane and Sevier.

COUNTY	Population							Change 2022 -2050
	2022	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	
Anderson	78,913	79,840	81,214	82,339	83,170	83,859	84,591	5,678
Bount	139,958	143,995	150,620	157,030	163,105	169,111	175,416	35,458
Knox	494,574	506,402	525,477	543,472	559,996	575,991	592,702	98,128
Loudon	58,181	60,146	63,414	66,640	69,770	72,916	76,239	18,058
Roane	55,082	55,573	56,264	56,776	57,079	57,282	57,511	2,429
Sevier	98,789	102,515	108,778	115,043	121,217	127,495	134,155	35,366
TOTAL	925,497	948,471	985,767	1,021,300	1,054,337	1,086,654	1,120,614	195,117

COUNTY	Employment							Change 2022 -2050
	2022	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	
Anderson	49,750	49,840	51,281	52,466	53,413	54,212	54,834	5,084
Bount	66,473	69,808	75,592	81,541	87,766	94,301	101,240	34,767
Knox	306,232	317,775	339,499	360,731	381,864	402,945	424,343	118,111
Loudon	22,555	22,705	24,118	25,535	26,987	28,467	30,001	7,446
Roane	24,296	24,766	25,820	26,727	27,538	28,256	28,913	4,617
Sevier	62,834	66,311	72,500	78,975	85,817	93,102	100,899	38,065
TOTAL	532,140	551,205	588,810	625,975	663,385	701,283	740,230	208,090

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. 2023 Regional Projections and Database with adjusted employment