Videos Debuted at ETcompetes Forum
Two videos highlight how an East Tennessee resident and a long time, family-owned business have, in very different ways, adapted their skills and business to remain viable and competitive in evolving markets.

The Swing of Things: Job Retraining to Fill Demand for High Tech Workers
Mark Boody discusses Roane State’s Advanced Materials Training and Education Center (AMTEC) program which enabled him transition to a new career at Oak Ridge National Lab and fill the need for high tech workers in the region.

Bloom Where You Are Planted: Oakes Daylilies
Stewart and Ken Oakes discuss the growth of their daylily business in rural Union County. Although traditional agriculture has historically struggled in this region, through the use of the Internet and agritourism, this family run company, with strong East Tennessee roots, has grown into a national distributor of daylilies.

Maximum-Capacity Crowd, Regional Leaders Discuss Future Competitiveness at PlanET Symposium
Around 200 business, civic and government leaders were on hand last week to discuss the region's future economic competitiveness at ETcompetes!, a symposium hosted by PlanET and Knoxville-Oak Ridge Innovation Valley, Inc.

Held at the East Tennessee History Center on January 9, the event was moderated by Ted Abernathy, executive director of the Southern Growth Policies Board. He engaged panelists in a candid discussion of how East Tennessee can best position itself to compete on the national and international stages in the future.

Responding to questions submitted by attendees, the panelists shared their insights on topics ranging from preparing the region's workforce to capitalizing on East Tennessee's quality-of-life assets that are essential to attracting and keeping talent and industry in a global marketplace.

"This event proved exceptionally valuable as we seek to gain more and more community input and active involvement to establish a shared understanding and direction about where our region’s competitiveness stands now, what its assets are, and how East Tennessee can position itself to be competitive long-term at a global level," said PlanET Board of Mayors Chairman Tom Beehan.

A video of the entire event is also available online at planeasttn.org/ETcompetes.

Challenge Grant Seeks Torchbearer to Carry PlanET Forward
As Plan East Tennessee (PlanET) moves into its third and final year, leadership is looking ahead with an eye toward finding ways to ensure the project's important work continues past 2013. A "Challenge Grant" has
A Request for Proposals (RFP) has been issued to identify an entity to assume the role of convener after direct involvement of the lead planning agencies—the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission and the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization—concludes in December 2013.

The PlanET process was created to develop a long-term, regional strategy to ensure our long-term competitiveness and to maintain the things that make life in East Tennessee great. While that strategy can be created in three years, it will take much longer to carry it out. Can your organization help or be involved as a partner in ensuring that this regional dialogue continues?

Organizations interested in submitting a proposal can review the PlanET “Challenge Grant” RFP at http://www.cityofknoxville.org/purchasing/bids/0201_planet.pdf. The deadline for proposals is February 1, 2013 at 11 AM.