The second round of PlanET public forums was held April 23-28, and attendees were asked to look into the future and share what they'd like to see in their communities and the region.

About 200 local residents attended the six forums held in locations across the five-county planning area of Anderson, Blount, Knox, Loudon, and Union counties. Attendees were given three tasks: first, they worked in small groups to brainstorm about the future of the region, offering ideas related to five focus areas (economy/workforce, transportation, health, housing, and environment); second, participants chose the two most important ideas in each focus area from their small groups to submit for consideration by the full forum; and, last, they voted individually on their top three ideas in all focus areas from all ideas that were submitted.

A complete list of the ideas gathered at each forum session can be found on the PlanET website.

A few common themes emerged from the collected ideas relating to the region's future:

- A well-educated, well-trained labor force that is prepared to fill 21st century jobs is vital.
- Providing more choices in housing and transportation is important.
- Private property rights is a fundamental East Tennessee value.

Round 2 forum results will be combined with input gathered using Meeting in Box and an online town hall (MindMixer) to form a clearer picture of how local residents want their region to be in the future. That vision will be the basis for the next steps in the process.

Information on holding a Meeting in a Box and/or participating in MindMixer can be found on the PlanET website.
What do YOU Want East Tennessee to be Like in the Next Five, Ten, Twenty years? Opportunities to Participate in the Discussion Are Still Available

Taking the time to attend a public meeting is a big commitment, so PlanET offers two new and creative tools that bring input opportunities directly to you. Those opportunities are provided where you already gather as a community and through an online resource.

Meeting in Box
For civic groups, neighborhood associations, churches, or any other group, Meeting in a Box can be used to hold your own town-hall session to discuss what you want East Tennessee to be like in the future. The Meeting in a Box kit includes instructions, invitations, and worksheets, all of which can be downloaded from the PlanET website. If you need help getting started, contact Sherith Colverson, PlanET Outreach Coordinator, at sherith.colverson@planeasttn.org for more information or to arrange for a facilitator to assist you in running your meeting.

MindMixer
If you prefer the online experience, then sign up to participate in MindMixer, an online town hall. You'll answer the same questions that were asked at the forums, and you can interact with other online participants by commenting and voting on each others' ideas. Get started by going to engage.planeasttn.org.

Join a PlanET Working Group
Do you possess specialized expertise or knowledge of one of the five PlanET focus areas? June meetings of expert Working Groups are being planned to gather input about how East Tennessee can be a great place to live for our children and grandchildren.

For more information, see the Working Groups section of the PlanET website.