

There are three fundamental questions pertaining to the 2045 population projections found in the Draft Comprehensive Plan (DCP):

1. Is the projected county-wide population increase of 106,868 for Knox County reasonable?
2. Is the 75% share of projected population growth attributed to unincorporated Knox County reasonable?
3. TCA 6-58-106 (b)(2) states population growth projections shall be coordinated with the University of Tennessee. UT Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) provides projections. How well does the DCP match data from CBER?

**Question 1: is the projected increase of 106,868 for all of Knox County reasonable?**

**Mobility 2045 Plan:**

- Page 8 of the DCP states the Regional Transportation Organization 2045 Mobility Plan study was used for population projections
- Mobility 2045, Appendix C, page C-3 estimates a county-wide population of 465,289 in 2018 and projects a 2045 population of 570,352 for a gain of 105,063. 2018 was 5 years ago; a more recent baseline should be used. Chart on page C-4 is not detailed enough for precise projections.
- 2022 Quick Facts Census estimates a county-wide population of 494,574 in 2022.
- Using 2022 as baseline suggests projected county-wide growth from 2022 to 2045 of 75,778, not 106,868.

**Answer 1:** The Mobility 2045 Plan is using the old base year of 2018, results in an unreasonably high projection.

**Question 2: is the 75 % share of projected population growth attributed to unincorporated Knox County reasonable?**

**Draft Comprehensive Plan:**

- There is no methodology for the % used in assessing the unincorporated share of future population.
- Page 24 of Appendix B cites an increase of 77,000 assuming the unincorporated share of growth is 73%.
- Page 25 Appendix B cites an increase of 78,860 assuming the unincorporated share of growth is 75%. This would be 79,000 when rounded up.
- In verbal remarks to the Coordinating Committee during October and November meetings, the project team mentioned projections of 70,000 as well as 79,000 for the unincorporated county. The 70,000 does not appear in the DCP.
- Page 6 Appendix A cites unincorporated share of growth as 84% 2000 to 2010 dropping to 69% 2010 to 2020.
- Census data and estimate for unincorporated county indicates a 58.6% share of growth when comparing 2020 to 2022.

**Answer 2:** % of recent population growth in unincorporated county varies from 84% to 58.6%. The Census trendline shows the county share decreasing the last 12 years. Why does DCP use 75%?

**Question 3: How well does the DCP match data from CBER?**

**Tennessee Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research:**

- CBER projects a 2024 to 2045 county-wide increase of 84,104.
- Applying the DCP % assumptions of 75% or 73% yield projections of 63,078 or 61,396 for the unincorporated county. Applying the Census 2020 to 2022 trend of 58.6% yields a population projection of 49,285.

**Answer 3:** CBER county-wide population is less than DCP and the Mobility 2045 Plan. Also, justification for the DCP 73% or 75% unincorporated share of county-wide population increase is not evident.