



HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY MAYOR

WESTON WAMP

For Immediate Release

Contact: Haley Burton, 423-619-5311

HamiltonCountyPress@hamiltontn.gov

State of the County: Creating Opportunity Through Strong State Partnerships

State leaders highlight education, workforce, and recovery

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN (May 20, 2026) — In Mayor Wamp’s [fourth State of the County address](#), Hamilton County was highlighted as a model for opportunity, innovation, and collaboration in Tennessee, as the state experiences international attention and historic investment.

Through strong partnerships with Governor Bill Lee and Hamilton County’s state legislative delegation, the county is advancing initiatives that impact the lives of our citizens, from conservation and career pathways to addiction recovery and infrastructure.

College & Career Readiness Rates Double Under Wamp, HCS Leadership

Hamilton County Schools has increased its “Ready Graduate” rate from 39.5% to 58% in just four years—a nearly 50% increase in students graduating prepared for college or careers. The Ready Graduate rate for Black students has more than doubled during that same period, rising from 21.6% to 47.3%. [WATCH HERE](#)

Doubling Down on Career & Technical Education

- Reinvesting proceeds from the proposed sale of a county asset into career and technical education, including \$1 million for both Harrison Bay and North River Future Ready Centers as enrollment reaches record highs
- Funding for career advisors at all three Future Ready Centers—Harrison Bay, North River, and Franklin-Roberts [WATCH HERE](#)

“Outdoor Recreation Capital of Tennessee”

TDEC Commissioner David Salyers, who is responsible for Tennessee’s State Parks, called Hamilton County the “outdoor recreation capital of Tennessee...and maybe the nation,” touting its rare blend of history and natural resources as the county prepares to add its fifth state park at McDonald Farm. [WATCH HERE](#)

Overdose Deaths Down for Three Straight Years

- Overdose deaths have been nearly cut in half in recent years from a peak of 209 in 2022 to 119 in 2025
- County has led Tennessee’s first EMS-led Overdose Prevention Team, expanded jail re-entry and Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) programs, and aggressively prosecuted deadly drug dealers using opioid abatement funds entrusted to counties by the state [WATCH HERE](#)

Indoor Youth Sports Complex Proposed for East Ridge

- Taking the first formal step towards a proposed indoor sports facility at Camp Jordan through the creation of a sports authority with the City of East Ridge [WATCH HERE](#)
- Recent [KemperSports study](#) projects tens of thousands of hotel stays and millions in economic impact while supporting local families and boosting sports tourism

Deputy Governor: New Incubator Opens Door to American Dream

Commissioner Stuart McWhorter called the Incubator’s relocation next to the downtown technical school “creative and innovative,” saying it will expand opportunity to the American Dream. He added Hamilton County may have the most “upside and opportunity” in TN for entrepreneurship and business recruitment. [WATCH HERE](#)

Exit 13 in Ooltewah “In the Works”

TDOT Commissioner Will Reid says Exit 13 has been added to the planned I-75 widening project after community and stakeholder input—a major step toward long-awaited traffic relief for Ooltewah. The project is already in design, included in the state’s 10-year plan, and headed for Federal Highway review in 2027. [WATCH HERE](#)

Sen. Watson Commends Mayor’s Bold Leadership

State Senator Bo Watson said Mayor Wamp has been “willing to look change in the face and attack it.” He added the mayor’s ability to approach challenges from a different perspective has served the people of Hamilton County well. [WATCH HERE](#)



Mayor Wamp joined by Deputy Gov. McWhorter & state leaders at the State of the County address.

*(Left to Right: Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) **David Salyers**, Deputy Governor and Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (TNECD) **Stuart McWhorter**, Commissioner of Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) **Will Reid**, State Senator **Bo Watson**, and Hamilton County Mayor **Weston Wamp**.)*

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