

Nashville, Tennessee

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Nashville is the capital of the U.S. state of Tennessee and the county seat of Davidson County.^[5] Nashville is the second largest city in Tennessee, after Memphis, and is the fourth largest city in the Southeastern United States. It is located on the Cumberland River in the north-central part of the state. The city is a center for the music, healthcare, publishing, banking and transportation industries, and is home to numerous colleges and universities. Reflecting the city's position in state government, Nashville is home to the Tennessee Supreme Court's courthouse for Middle Tennessee. It is known as a center of the music industry, earning it the nickname "Music City".

Since 1963, Nashville has had a consolidated city-county government which includes six smaller municipalities in a two-tier system. Thirty-five of 40 members are elected from single-member districts; five are elected at-large. According to the 2013 American Community Survey estimates, the consolidated county population stood at 658,602;^[2] not including the semi-independent municipalities, the population was 634,464.^[4] The 2013 population of the entire 13-county Nashville metropolitan area was 1,757,912, making it the largest metropolitan statistical area in the state.^[3] The 2013 population of the Nashville–Davidson–Murfreesboro–Columbia combined statistical area, a larger trade area, was 1,876,933.^[6]

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Nashville, Tennessee

Consolidated city-county

Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County



From top left: 2nd Avenue, Kirkland Hall at Vanderbilt University, the Parthenon, the Nashville skyline, Nissan Stadium, Dolly Parton performing at the Grand Ole Opry, and Ryman Auditorium



Flag



Seal

Nickname(s): Music City, Athens of the South



Location of the consolidated city-county in the state of Tennessee.



Location in the United States

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Coordinates: 36°10′00″N 86°47′00″W	
Country	United States
State	Tennessee
County	Davidson
Founded	1779
Incorporated	1806
Named for	Francis Nash
Government	
 • Mayor	Karl Dean (D)
Area ^[1]	
 • Consolidated	525.94 sq mi (1,362.2 km ²)
 • Land	504.03 sq mi (1,305.4 km ²)
 • Water	21.91 sq mi (56.7 km ²)
Elevation	597 ft (182 m)
Population (2013) ^{[a][2][3][4]}	
 • Consolidated	658,602
 • Density	1,300/sq mi (480/km ²)
 • Metro	1,757,912
 • Balance	634,464
Demonym	Nashvillian
Time zone	CST (UTC-6)
 • Summer (DST)	CDT (UTC-5)
ZIP codes	37201-37250
Area code(s)	615 and 629
Interstates	I-40, I-24, I-65, and I-440
Waterways	Cumberland River
Public transit	Nashville MTA
Regional rail	Music City Star
Website	www.nashville.gov (http://www.nashville.gov/)

History

The town of Nashville was founded by James Robertson, John Donelson, and a party of Overmountain Men in 1779, near the original Cumberland settlement of Fort Nashborough. It was named for Francis Nash, the American Revolutionary War hero. Nashville quickly grew because of its strategic location, accessibility as a port on the Cumberland River, a tributary of the Ohio River; and its later status as a major railroad center. By 1800, the city had 345 residents, including 136 African American slaves and 14 free blacks.^[7] In 1806, Nashville was incorporated as a city and became the county seat of Davidson County, Tennessee. In 1843, the city was named the permanent capital of the state of Tennessee.

By 1860, when the first rumblings of secession began to be heard across the South, antebellum Nashville was a very prosperous city. The city's significance as a shipping port made it a desirable prize as a means of controlling important river and railroad transportation routes. In February 1862, Nashville became the first state capital to fall to Union troops. The state was occupied by Union troops for the duration of the war. The

Battle of Nashville (December 15–16, 1864) was a significant Union victory and perhaps the most decisive tactical victory gained by either side in the war; it was also the final major military action of the war, which afterwards became almost entirely a war of attrition consisting largely of guerrilla raids and small skirmishes, with the Confederate forces in the Deep South almost constantly in retreat.



Nashville riverfront shortly after the Civil War

Within a few years after the Civil War, the city had reclaimed its important shipping and trading position and also developed a solid manufacturing base. The post–Civil War years of the late 19th century brought new prosperity to Nashville and Davidson County. These healthy economic times left the city with a legacy of grand classical-style buildings, which can still be seen around the downtown area.

20th century to present

About 1950 the state legislature approved a new city charter that provided for election of city council members from single-member districts, rather than at-large voting. This change was supported because at-large voting diluted the minority population's political power in the city. They could seldom gain a majority of the population to support a candidate of their choice.

Apportionment under the single-member districts meant that some districts had black majorities. In 1952 after passage of the new charter, two African Americans were elected to the city council, the first to gain office since 1911, after disenfranchisement had been achieved by the state government. Both men were attorneys.

The years after World War II were a time of rapid suburbanization as new housing was built outside the city limits. This resulted in a demand for many new schools and other support facilities, which the county found difficult to provide. At the same time, suburbanization had resulted in a declining tax base in the city, although many suburban residents used unique city amenities and services which were supported only by city taxpayers. After years of discussion, a referendum was held in 1958 on the issue of consolidating city and county government. It failed to gain approval although it was supported by elected leaders of both jurisdictions: County Judge Beverly Briley of Davidson and Mayor Ben West of Nashville.^[8]

Following the failure of the referendum, Nashville annexed some 42 square miles of suburban jurisdictions in order to expand its tax base. This increased uncertainty among residents, and created resentment among many suburban communities. Under the second charter for metropolitan government, which was approved in 1962, two levels of service provision were proposed: the General Services District and the Urban Services District, to provide for a differential in tax levels. Residents of the Urban Services District had a full range of city services. The areas that comprised the General Services District, however, had a lower tax rate until full services were provided.^[8] This helped reconcile aspects of services and taxation among the differing jurisdictions within the large metro region.

In 1963, Nashville consolidated its government with Davidson County, forming a metropolitan government. The membership on the Metro Council, the legislative body, was increased from 21 to 40 seats. Of these, five members are elected at-large and 35 are elected from single-member districts, each to serve a term of four years.^[8]

Since the 1970s, the city and county have experienced tremendous growth, particularly during the economic boom of the 1990s under the leadership of then-Mayor and later-Tennessee Governor, Phil Bredesen. He made urban renewal a priority, and fostered the construction or renovation of several city landmarks, including the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, the downtown Nashville Public Library, the Bridgestone Arena, and Nissan Stadium.

Nissan Stadium (formerly Adelphia Coliseum and LP Field) was built after the National Football League's (NFL) Houston Oilers agreed to move to the city in 1995. The NFL team debuted in Nashville in 1998 at Vanderbilt Stadium, and Nissan Stadium opened in the summer of 1999. The Oilers changed their name to the Tennessee Titans and finished the season with the Music City Miracle and a close Super Bowl game in which the St. Louis Rams' win was secured in the last play.

In 1997 Nashville was awarded a National Hockey League NHL expansion team; this was named the Nashville Predators. Since the 2003/04 season, the Nashville Predators have made the playoffs every season except for two.

Today, the city along the Cumberland River is a crossroads of American culture, and one of the fastest-growing areas of the Upland South.

Geography

Topography

Nashville lies on the Cumberland River in the northwestern portion of the Nashville Basin. Nashville's elevation ranges from 385 feet (117 m) above sea level at the Cumberland River to 1,160 feet (350 m) above sea level at its highest point.^[9]

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 527.9 square miles (1,367 km²), of which 504.0 square miles (1,305 km²) of it is land and 23.9 square miles (62 km²) of it (4.53%) is water.

Climate

Nashville has a humid subtropical climate (Köppen *Cfa*),^[10] with generally cool to moderately cold winters, and hot, humid summers. Monthly averages range from 37.7 °F (3.2 °C) in January to 79.4 °F (26.3 °C) in July, with a diurnal temperature variation of 18.2 to 23.0 °F (10.1 to 12.8 °C). In the winter months, snowfall does occur in Nashville, but is usually not heavy. Average annual snowfall is about 6.3 inches (16 cm), falling mostly in January and February and occasionally March and December.^[11] The largest snow event since 2000 was on January 16, 2003, when Nashville received 7 inches (18 cm) of snow in a single storm; the largest on record was 17 inches (43 cm), received on March 17, 1892.^[12] Rainfall is typically greater in November and December, and spring, while August to October are the driest months on average. Spring and fall are generally warm but prone to severe thunderstorms, which occasionally bring tornadoes—with recent major events on April 16, 1998; April 7, 2006; February 5, 2008; April 10, 2009; and May 1–2, 2010. Relative humidity in Nashville averages 83% in the mornings and 60% in the



A satellite image of Nashville

afternoons,^[13] which is considered moderate for the Southeastern United States.^[14] In recent decades, due to urban development, Nashville has developed an urban heat island (UHI); especially on cool, clear nights, temperatures are up to 10 °F (5.6 °C) warmer in the heart of the city than in rural outlying areas. The entire Nashville region lies within USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 7a.^[15]

Nashville's long springs and autumns combined with a diverse array of trees and grasses can often make it uncomfortable for allergy sufferers.^[16] In 2008, Nashville was ranked as the 18th-worst spring allergy city in the U.S. by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America.^[17]

The coldest temperature ever recorded in Nashville was −17 °F (−27 °C) on January 21, 1985, and the highest was 109 °F (43 °C) on June 29, 2012.^[18]

Climate data for Nashville (Nashville Int'l), 1981–2010 normals, extremes 1871–present ^[b]													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record high °F (°C)	78 (26)	84 (29)	89 (32)	91 (33)	96 (36)	109 (43)	107 (42)	106 (41)	105 (41)	94 (34)	85 (29)	79 (26)	109 (43)
Average high °F (°C)	46.9 (8.3)	51.8 (11)	61.0 (16.1)	70.5 (21.4)	78.2 (25.7)	86.0 (30)	89.3 (31.8)	89.0 (31.7)	82.4 (28)	71.7 (22.1)	60.3 (15.7)	49.5 (9.7)	69.7 (20.9)
Average low °F (°C)	28.4 (−2)	31.6 (−0.2)	39.0 (3.9)	47.5 (8.6)	56.8 (13.8)	65.4 (18.6)	69.5 (20.8)	68.4 (20.2)	60.7 (15.9)	48.9 (9.4)	39.4 (4.1)	31.3 (−0.4)	48.9 (9.4)
Record low °F (°C)	−17 (−27)	−13 (−25)	2 (−17)	23 (−5)	34 (1)	42 (6)	51 (11)	47 (8)	36 (2)	26 (−3)	−1 (−18)	−10 (−23)	−17 (−27)
Average precipitation inches (mm)	3.75 (95.3)	3.94 (100.1)	4.11 (104.4)	4.00 (101.6)	5.50 (139.7)	4.14 (105.2)	3.64 (92.5)	3.17 (80.5)	3.41 (86.6)	3.04 (77.2)	4.31 (109.5)	4.24 (107.7)	47.25 (1,200.1)
Average snowfall inches (cm)	2.6 (6.6)	2.3 (5.8)	0.9 (2.3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	trace	0 (0)	0.5 (1.3)	6.3 (16)
Avg. precipitation days (≥ 0.01 in)	10.3	10.3	10.7	10.8	11.7	10.0	10.2	8.4	7.5	8.0	9.8	11.2	118.9
Avg. snowy days (≥ 0.1 in)	2.1	2.3	0.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	0	1.0	6.2
Avg. relative humidity (%)	70.4	68.5	64.6	63.2	69.5	70.4	72.8	73.1	73.7	69.4	70.2	71.4	69.8
Mean monthly sunshine hours	139.6	145.2	191.3	231.5	261.8	277.7	279.0	262.1	226.4	216.8	148.1	130.6	2,510.1
Percent possible sunshine	45	48	52	59	60	64	63	63	61	62	48	43	56
Source: NOAA (relative humidity and sun 1961–1990), ^{[11][19][20]} Weather.com ^[21]													

Cityscape

The downtown area of Nashville features a diverse assortment of entertainment, dining, cultural and architectural attractions. The Broadway and 2nd Avenue areas feature entertainment venues, night clubs and an assortment of restaurants. North of Broadway lie Nashville's central business district, Legislative Plaza, Capitol Hill and the Tennessee Bicentennial Mall. Cultural and architectural attractions can be found throughout the city.

Three major interstate highways (I-40, I-65 and I-24) converge near the core area of downtown, and many regional cities are within a day's driving distance.

Nashville's first skyscraper, the Life & Casualty Tower, was completed in 1957 and started the construction of high rises in downtown Nashville. After the construction of the AT&T Building (commonly known to locals as the "Batman Building") in 1994, the downtown area saw little construction until the mid-2000s. Many new residential developments have been constructed or are planned for various neighborhoods in the city. A new high rise office building, The Pinnacle, was recently opened in 2010.^[22]

Many civic and infrastructure projects are either being planned, in progress, or recently completed. A new MTA bus hub was recently completed in downtown Nashville, as was the Music City Star pilot project. Several public parks have been constructed, such as the Public Square. Riverfront Park is scheduled to be extensively updated. The Music City Center, a convention center project, is a 1,200,000 square foot (110,000 m2) convention center with 370,000 square feet (34,000 m2) of exhibit space. It opened in May 2013.



Demographics

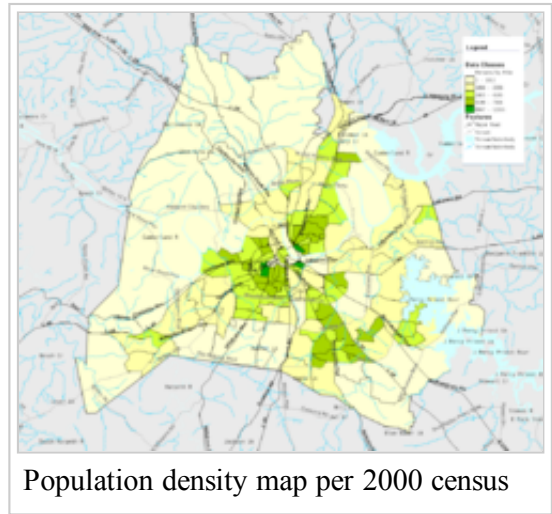
Racial composition	2010 ^[27]	1990 ^[28]	1970 ^[28]
White	60.5%	73.8%	80.1%
—Non-Hispanic	56.3%	73.2%	79.5% ^[29]
Black or African American	28.4%	24.3%	19.6%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	10.0%	0.9%	0.6% ^[29]
Asian	3.1%	1.4%	0.1%

The data below is for all of Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County, including other incorporated cities within the consolidated city–county (such as Belle Meade and Berry Hill). See Nashville-Davidson (balance) for demographic data on Nashville-Davidson County excluding separately incorporated cities.

According to the 2009 American Community Survey, there were 628,434 people residing in the city. The population density was 1,204.2 inhabitants per square mile (464.9/km²). There were 282,452 housing units at an average density of 560.4 per square mile (216.4/km²).^[30]

At the 2010 census, the racial makeup of the city was 60.5% White (56.3% non-Hispanic white), 28.4% African American, 0.3% American Indian and Alaska Native, 3.1% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, 2.5% from two or more races. 10.0% of the total population was of Hispanic or Latino origin (they may be of any race).^[31] The non-Hispanic White population was 79.5% in 1970.^[28]

Historical population		
Census	Pop.	%±
1810	1,100	—
1820	3,410	210.0%
1830	5,566	63.2%
1840	6,929	24.5%
1850	10,165	46.7%
1860	16,988	67.1%
1870	25,865	52.3%
1880	43,350	67.6%
1890	76,168	75.7%
1900	80,865	6.2%
1910	110,364	36.5%
1920	118,342	7.2%
1930	153,866	30.0%
1940	167,402	8.8%
1950	174,307	4.1%
1960	170,874	−2.0%
1970	448,003	162.2%
1980	477,811	6.7%
1990	510,784	6.9%
2000	569,891	11.6%
2010	628,434	10.0%



There were 254,651 households and 141,469 families (55.6% of households). Of households with families, 37.2% had married couples living together, 14.1% had a female householder with no husband present, and 4.2% had a male householder with no wife present. 27.9% of all households had children under the age of 18, and 18.8% had at least one member 65 years of age or older. Of the 44.4% of households that are non-families, 36.2% were individuals and 8.2% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.38 and the average family size was 3.16.^[32]

2010	626,681	10.0%
Est. 2013	658,602 ^[2]	5.1%
Sources: ^{[2][23][24][25]}		
Notes: ^[26]		

The age distribution was 22% under 18, 10% from 18 to 24, 33% from 25 to 44, 24% from 45 to 64, and 11% who were 65 or older. The median age was 34.2 years. For every 100 females there were 94.1 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 91.7 males.^[33]

The median income for a household in the city was \$46,141, and the median income for a family was \$56,377. Males with a year-round, full-time job had a median income of \$41,017 versus \$36,292 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$27,372. About 13.9% of families and 18.2% of the population were below the poverty line, including 29.5% of those under age 18 and 9.9% of those age 65 or over.^[34] Of residents 25 or older, 33.4% have a bachelor's degree or higher.^[2]

Because of its relatively low cost of living and large job market, Nashville has become a popular city for immigrants.^[35] Nashville's foreign-born population more than tripled in size between 1990 and 2000, increasing from 12,662 to 39,596. The city's largest immigrant groups include Mexicans, Kurds,^[36] Vietnamese, Laotians, Arabs, and Somalis. There are also smaller communities of Pashtuns from Afghanistan and Pakistan concentrated primarily in Antioch.^[37] Nashville has the largest Kurdish community in the United States, numbering approximately 11,000.^[38] In 2009, about 60,000 Bhutanese refugees were being admitted to the U.S., and some were expected to resettle in Nashville.^[39] During the Iraqi election of 2005, Nashville was one of the few international locations where Iraqi expatriates could vote.^[40] The American Jewish community in Nashville dates back over 150 years, and numbered about 7,800 in 2002.^[41]

Metropolitan area

As of 2013, Nashville has the largest metropolitan area in the state of Tennessee, spanning 13 counties and an estimated population of 1,757,912.^[3] The Nashville metropolitan statistical area encompasses 13 of 41 Middle Tennessee counties: Cannon, Cheatham, Davidson, Dickson, Hickman, Macon, Robertson, Rutherford, Smith, Sumner, Trousdale, Williamson, and Wilson.^[42] The 2013 population of the Nashville-Davidson–Murfreesboro–Columbia combined statistical area was estimated at 1,876,933.^[6]

Economy

As the "home of country music", Nashville has become a major music recording and production center. All of the Big Four record labels, as well as numerous independent labels, have offices in Nashville, mostly in the Music Row area.^[43] Nashville has been home to the headquarters of guitar company Gibson since 1984. Since the 1960s, Nashville has been the second-largest music production center (after New York) in the U.S.^[44] As of 2006, Nashville's music industry is estimated to have a total economic impact of \$6.4 billion per year and to contribute 19,000 jobs to the Nashville area.^[45]

Although Nashville is renowned as a music recording center and tourist destination, its largest industry is health care. Nashville is home to more than 300 health care companies, including Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), the largest private operator of hospitals in the world.^{[46][47]} As of 2012, it is estimated that the health care industry contributes US\$30 billion per year and 200,000 jobs to the Nashville-area economy.^[48]

The automotive industry is also becoming increasingly important for the entire Middle Tennessee region. Nissan North America moved its corporate headquarters in 2006 from Gardena, California (Los Angeles County) to Franklin, southwest of Nashville. Nissan also has its largest North American manufacturing plant in Smyrna, Tennessee. Largely as a result of the increased development of Nissan and other Japanese economic interests in the region, Japan moved its former New Orleans consulate-general to Nashville's Palmer Plaza.

Bridgestone has a strong presence with their North American headquarters located in Nashville, with manufacturing plants and a distribution center in nearby counties.

Other major industries in Nashville include insurance, finance, and publishing (especially religious publishing). The city hosts headquarters operations for several Protestant denominations, including the United Methodist Church, Southern Baptist Convention, National Baptist Convention USA, and the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

Nashville is also known for some of their famously popular Southern confections, including Goo Goo Clusters (which have been made in Nashville since 1912).^[49]

Fortune 500 companies with offices within Nashville include Dell,^[50] HCA and Dollar General.

In 2013, the city ranked No. 5 on *Forbes'* list of the Best Places for Business and Careers.^[51]

Top employers

According to the city's 2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, the top employers in the city are:^[52]



Signs welcoming motorists into Nashville on major roadways include the phrases "Music City" and "Home Of The Grand Ole Opry".

#	Employer	# of Employees
1	Vanderbilt University and Medical Center	23,021
2	Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County Government and Public Schools	18,508
3	State of Tennessee	18,200
4	U.S. Government	12,177
5	Nissan North America	8,500
6	HCA	7,000
7	Saint Thomas Health	6,500
8	Randstad U.S.	3,400
9	Shoney's	3,000
10	Kroger	2,863

Culture

Much of the city's cultural life has revolved around its large university community. Particularly significant in this respect were two groups of critics and writers who were associated with Vanderbilt University in the early twentieth century: the Fugitives and the Agrarians.

Popular destinations include Fort Nashborough and Fort Negley, the former being a reconstruction of the original settlement, the latter being a semi-restored Civil War battle fort; the Tennessee State Museum; and The Parthenon, a full-scale replica of the original Parthenon in Athens. The Tennessee State Capitol is one of the oldest working state capitol buildings in the nation, while The Hermitage is one of the older presidential homes open to the public.

Dining

Although best known for its music, Nashville is a city filled with many dining destinations. Some of the more popular types of local cuisine include hot chicken, hot fish, barbecue, and meat and three. Thanks, in part, to Nashville's foodie culture, the city was ranked as the 13th "snobbiest" city in America according to *Travel + Leisure* magazine.^[53]

Entertainment and performing arts

Nashville has a vibrant music and entertainment scene spanning a variety of genres. The Tennessee Performing Arts Center is the major performing arts center of the city. It is the home of the Tennessee Repertory Theatre, the Nashville Opera, the Music City Drum and Bugle Corps, and the Nashville Ballet. In September 2006, the Schermerhorn Symphony Center opened as the home of the Nashville Symphony.

As the city's name itself is a metonym for the country music industry, many popular tourist sites involve country music, including the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Belcourt Theatre, and Ryman Auditorium. Ryman was home to the *Grand Ole Opry* until 1974 when the show moved to the Grand Ole Opry House, 9 miles (14 km) east of downtown. The *Opry* plays there several times a week, except for an annual winter run at the Ryman.

Numerous music clubs and honky-tonk bars can be found in downtown Nashville, especially the area encompassing Lower Broadway, Second Avenue, and Printer's Alley, which is often referred to as "the District".^{[54][55]}

Each year, the CMA Music Festival (formerly known as Fan Fair) brings thousands of country fans to the city. The Tennessee State Fair is also held annually in September.

Nashville was once home of television shows such as *Hee Haw* and *Pop! Goes the Country*, as well as The Nashville Network and later, RFD-TV. Country Music Television and Great American Country currently operate from Nashville. The city was also home to the Opryland USA theme park, which operated from 1972 to 1997 before being closed by its owners (Gaylord Entertainment Company) and soon after demolished to make room for the Opry Mills mega-shopping mall.



Ryman Auditorium, the "Mother Church of Country Music"

The Contemporary Christian music industry is based along Nashville's Music Row, with a great influence in neighboring Williamson County. The Christian record companies include EMI Christian Music Group, Provident Label Group and Word Records.

Music Row houses many gospel music and Contemporary Christian music companies centered around 16th and 17th Avenues South.

Although Nashville was never known as a jazz town, it did have many great jazz bands, including The Nashville Jazz Machine led by Dave Converse and its current version, the Nashville Jazz

Orchestra, led by Jim Williamson, as well as The Establishment, led by Billy Adair. The Francis Craig Orchestra entertained Nashvillians from 1929 to 1945 from the Oak Bar and Grille Room in the Hermitage Hotel. Craig's orchestra was also the first to broadcast over local radio station WSM-AM and enjoyed phenomenal success with a 12-year show on the NBC Radio Network. In the late 1930s, he introduced a newcomer, Dinah Shore, a local graduate of Hume Fogg High School and Vanderbilt University.



Kirk Whalum visiting the audience at a riverfront concert in 2007

Radio station WMOT-FM in nearby Murfreesboro, which formerly programmed jazz almost exclusively and still does so on the weekends, aided significantly in the recent revival of the city's jazz scene, as has the non-profit Nashville Jazz Workshop, which holds concerts and classes in a renovated building in the north Nashville neighborhood of Germantown. Fisk University also maintains a jazz station, WFSK.

Nashville has an active theatre scene, and is home to several professional and community theatre companies. Nashville Children's Theatre, Tennessee Repertory Theatre, the Nashville Shakespeare Festival, the Dance Theatre of Tennessee and the Tennessee Women's Theater Project are among the most prominent professional companies. One community theatre, Circle Players, has been in operation for over 60 years.

Tourism

Perhaps the biggest factor in drawing visitors to Nashville is its association with country music. Many visitors to Nashville attend live performances of the Grand Ole Opry, the world's longest running live radio show. The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum is another major attraction relating to the popularity of country music. The Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, the Opry Mills regional shopping mall and the *General Jackson* showboat, are all located in what is known as Music Valley.

Civil War history is important to the city's tourism industry. Sites pertaining to the Battle of Nashville and the nearby Battle of Franklin and Battle of Stones River can be seen, along with several well-preserved antebellum plantation houses such as Belle Meade Plantation, Carnton plantation in Franklin, and Belmont Mansion.^[56]

Nashville has several arts centers and museums, including the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art, the Tennessee State Museum, the Johnny Cash Museum, Fisk University's Van Vechten and Aaron Douglas Galleries, Vanderbilt University's Fine Art Gallery and Sarratt Gallery, and the full-scale replica of the Parthenon.

Major annual events

Event	Month held and location
Nashville Film Festival	A weeklong festival in April that features hundreds of independent films. It is one of the largest film festivals in the Southern United States.
Nashville Fashion Week	A city-wide event typically held in March or April, this is a celebration of Nashville's fashion and retail community featuring local, regional and national design talent in fashion events and shows. ^[57]
Country Music Marathon	Marathon and half marathon held in April with runners from around the world. In 2012, participation surpassed 30,000 runners.
Iroquois Steeplechase	Annual steeplechase horse racing event held in May at Percy Warner Park.
CMA Music Festival	A four-day event in June featuring performances by country music stars, autograph signings, artist/fan interaction, and other activities for country music fans.
Nashville Pride	A festival held in June at Public Square Park that fosters awareness of and for the LGBT community and culture in Middle Tennessee. The 2015 festival drew an estimated 15,000-20,000 people, possibly making it the event's largest gathering since the festival began. ^[58]
Let Freedom Sing!	Held every Fourth of July at Riverfront Park, featuring a street festival and live music, and culminating in one of the largest fireworks shows in the country. ^[59] An estimated 280,000 people attended the 2014 celebration. ^[60]
Tomato Art Festival	Held each August in East Nashville.
African Street Festival	Held in September on the campus of Tennessee State University.
Live on the	

Green Music Festival	A free concert series held in August and September at Public Square Park by local radio station Lightning 100.
Tennessee State Fair	The State Fair held in September at the State Fairgrounds, which lasts nine days and includes rides, exhibits, rodeos, tractor pulls, and numerous other shows and attractions.
Celebrate Nashville Cultural Festival	A free event held the first Saturday in October at Centennial Park, it is Middle Tennessee's largest multicultural festival and includes music and dance performances, ethnic food court, children's area, teen area, and marketplace.
Nashville Oktoberfest	A free event held in the historic Germantown neighborhood since 1981.
Southern Festival of Books	A festival held in October, featuring readings, panels, and book signings.
Country Music Association Awards	Award ceremony normally held in November at the Bridgestone Arena and televised to a national audience.
Veterans Day Parade	A parade running down Broadway on 11/11 at 11:11.11 am since 1951. Features include 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Tennessee National Guard, veterans from wars past and present, military plane fly-overs, tanks, motorcycles, first responder vehicles, marching bands and thousands of spectators. ^[61]

Nicknames

Nashville is a colorful, well-known city in several different arenas. As such, it has earned various sobriquets, including:

- **Music City, USA:** WSM-AM announcer David Cobb first used this name during a 1950 broadcast and it stuck. It is now the official nickname used by the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau. Nashville is the home of the Grand Ole Opry, the Country Music Hall of Fame, and many major record labels.^[62] This name also dates back to 1874, where after receiving and hearing a performance by the Fisk Jubilee Singers, Queen Victoria of England is reported as saying that "These young people must surely come from a musical city."^[63]
- **Athens of the South:** Home to twenty-four post-secondary educational institutions, Nashville has long been compared to the ancient city of learning, site of Plato's Academy. Since 1897, a full-scale replica of the Athenian Parthenon has stood in Nashville, and many examples of classical and neoclassical architecture can be found in the city.^[64] The term was popularized by Philip Lindsley (1786–1855), President of the University of Nashville, though it is unclear whether he was the first person to use the phrase.
- **The Protestant Vatican**^[65] or **The Buckle of the Bible Belt:** Nashville has over 700 churches,^[66] several seminaries, a number of Christian music companies, and is the headquarters for the publishing arms of the Southern Baptist Convention (LifeWay Christian Resources), the United Methodist Church (United Methodist Publishing House) and the National Baptist Convention (Sunday School Publishing Board). It is also the seat of the National Baptist Convention, the National Association of Free Will Baptists, the Gideons International, the Gospel Music Association, and

- Thomas Nelson, the world's largest producer of Bibles.^[67]
- **Cashville:** Nashville native Young Buck released a successful rap album called *Straight Outta Cashville* that has popularized the nickname among a new generation.^[68]
 - **Little Kurdistan:** Nashville has the United States' largest population of Kurdish people, estimated to be around 11,000.^{[38][69]}
 - **Nash Vegas** or **Nashvegas**^[70]

Nashville has additionally earned the moniker "The Hot Chicken Capital",^[71] becoming known for the local specialty cuisine hot chicken.^{[72][73]} The Music City Hot Chicken Festival is hosted annually in Nashville and several restaurants make this spicy version of southern fried chicken.^[74]

Sports

Nashville hosted a team called the Nashville Rebels which participated in the 1938 American Football League, and two Arena Football League teams named the Nashville Kats: one that ran from 1997 to 2001 until they were sold to Atlanta and renamed as the Georgia Force; and another expansion franchise that competed from 2005 to 2007. Nashville also hosts the second longest continually operating race track in the United States, the Fairgrounds Speedway. Three Little League baseball teams from Nashville (one in 1970; one in 2013; and, one in 2014) have qualified for the Little League World Series. A team from neighboring Goodlettsville qualified for the 2012 series, giving the metropolitan area teams in three consecutive years to so qualify.

Professional

Nashville has several professional sports teams, of which two, the Nashville Predators of the NHL and the Tennessee Titans of the NFL, play at the highest professional level of their respective sports. Nashville is also home to the NCAA college football Music City Bowl and the Fairgrounds Speedway, a NASCAR Whelen All-American Series racetrack.



Nissan Stadium

Club	Sport	League	Venue	Established
Tennessee Titans	Football	National Football League	Nissan Stadium	1960
Nashville Predators	Hockey	National Hockey League	Bridgestone Arena	1997
Nashville Sounds	Baseball	Pacific Coast League	First Tennessee Park	1978
Nashville Venom	Indoor Football	Professional Indoor Football League	Nashville Municipal Auditorium	2013
Nashville FC	Soccer	National Premier Soccer	Vanderbilt Soccer	2013

		League	Complex	
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College

Nashville is also home to four Division I athletic programs.

Program	Division	Conference	Major venues
Vanderbilt Commodores	Division I (FBS)	Southeastern Conference	Vanderbilt Stadium (football) Memorial Gymnasium (basketball) Hawkins Field (baseball)
Tennessee State Tigers	Division I (FCS)	Ohio Valley Conference	Nissan Stadium (football) Gentry Center (basketball)
Belmont Bruins	Division I (non-football)	Ohio Valley Conference	Curb Event Center
Lipscomb Bisons	Division I (non-football)	Atlantic Sun Conference	Allen Arena



2004 Vanderbilt-Navy Game

Parks and gardens

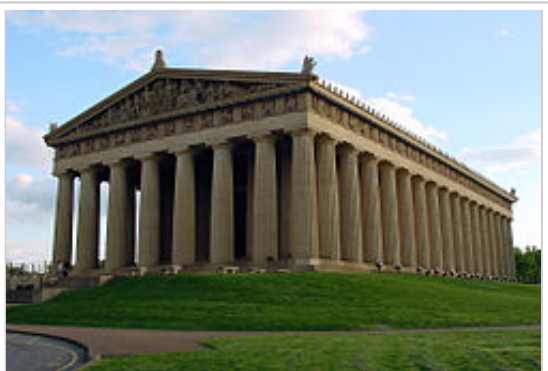
Metro Board of Parks and Recreation owns and manages 10,200 acres (4,100 ha) of land and 99 parks and greenways (comprising more than 3% of the total area of the county).

Warner Parks, situated on 2,684 acres (1,086 ha) of land, consists of a 5,000-square-foot (460 m²) learning center, 20 miles (32 km) of scenic roads, 12 miles (19 km) of hiking trails, and 10 miles (16 km) of horse trails. It is also the home of the annual Iroquois Steeplechase.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers maintains parks on Old Hickory Lake and Percy Priest Lake. These parks are used for activities such as fishing, waterskiing, sailing and boating. The Harbor Island Yacht Club makes its headquarters on Old Hickory Lake, and Percy Priest Lake is home to the Vanderbilt Sailing Club.

Other parks in Nashville include Centennial Park, Shelby Park, Cumberland Park, and Radnor Lake State Natural Area.

On August 27, 2013, Nashville mayor Karl Dean revealed plans for two new riverfront parks on the east and west banks of the Cumberland River downtown. Construction on the east bank park began in the fall of 2013, and the projected completion date for the west bank park is 2015. Among many exciting benefits of



The Parthenon in Nashville's Centennial Park is a full-scale reconstruction of the original Greek Parthenon.

this Cumberland River re-development project is the construction of a highly anticipated outdoor amphitheater. Located on the west bank, this music venue will be surrounded by a new 12-acre (4.9 ha) park and will replace the previous thermal plant site. It will include room for 6,500 spectators with 2,500 removable seats and additional seating on an overlooking grassy knoll. In addition, the 4.5-acre (1.8 ha) east bank park will include a river landing, providing people access to the river. In regard to the parks' benefits for Nashvillian civilians, Mayor Dean remarked that "if done right, the thermal site can be an iconic park that generations of Nashvillians will be proud of and which they can enjoy" (WKRN-TV Nashville).

Law and government

The city of Nashville and Davidson County merged in 1963 as a way for Nashville to combat the problems of urban sprawl. The combined entity is officially known as "the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County", and is popularly known as "Metro Nashville" or simply "Metro". It offers services such as police, fire, electricity, water and sewage treatment. When the Metro government was formed in 1963, the government was split into two service districts—the "urban services district" and the "general services district." The urban services district encompasses the 1963 boundaries of the former City of Nashville, approximately 72 square miles (190 km²),^[75] and the general services district includes the remainder of Davidson County. There are six smaller municipalities within the consolidated city-county: Belle Meade, Berry Hill, Forest Hills, Oak Hill, Goodlettsville (partially), and Ridgeway (partially). These municipalities use a two-tier system of government, with the smaller municipality typically providing police services and the Metro Nashville government providing most other services. Previously, the city of Lakewood also had a separate charter. However, Lakewood residents voted in 2010 and 2011 to dissolve its city charter and join the metropolitan government, with both votes passing.^[76]



The State Capitol in Nashville

Nashville is governed by a mayor, vice-mayor, and 40-member Metropolitan Council. It uses the strong-mayor form of the mayor–council system.^[77] The current mayor of Nashville is Karl Dean. The Metropolitan Council is the legislative body of government for Nashville and Davidson County. There are five council members who are elected at large and 35 council members that represent individual districts. The Metro Council has regular meetings that are presided over by the vice-mayor, who is currently Diane Neighbors. The Metro Council meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm, according to the Metropolitan Charter.

Nashville is home to the Tennessee Supreme Court's courthouse for Middle Tennessee.

Politics

Nashville has been a Democratic stronghold since at least the end of Reconstruction, and has remained staunchly Democratic even as the state as a whole has trended strongly Republican. Pockets of Republican influence exist in the wealthier portions of the city, but they are usually no match for the overwhelming Democratic trend in the rest of the city. While local elections are officially nonpartisan, nearly all of the

city's elected officials are known to be Democrats. The city is split between 10 state house districts, all but two of which are held by Democrats. Three state senate districts and part of a fourth are within the city; two are held by Democrats and two by Republicans.

Democrats are no less dominant at the federal level. Democratic presidential candidates have only failed to carry Davidson County three times since the end of Reconstruction. In 1968, third-party candidate George C. Wallace carried Nashville with a plurality of 35.1 percent. In 1972, Richard Nixon became the first Republican to carry Nashville since Reconstruction, winning it with 61 percent of the vote as part of his 49-state landslide that year; as part of it, Nixon carried 90 of Tennessee's 95 counties. In 1988, George H. W. Bush narrowly won Nashville with 52 percent of the vote.

In most years, Democrats have carried Nashville at the presidential level with relatively little difficulty, even in years when they lose Tennessee as a whole. This has been especially true in recent elections. In the 2000 presidential election, Al Gore carried Nashville with over 59% of the vote even as he narrowly lost his home state. In the 2004 election, John Kerry carried Nashville with 55% of the vote even as George W. Bush won the state by 14 points. In 2008, Barack Obama carried Nashville with 60% of the vote even as John McCain won Tennessee by 15 points.

Despite its large size, Nashville has been in a single congressional district for most of the time since Reconstruction; it is currently numbered as the 5th District, represented by Democrat Jim Cooper. A Republican has not represented a significant portion of Nashville since 1874. Republicans made a few spirited challenges in the mid-1960s and early 1970s. The Republicans almost won it in 1968; only a strong showing by a candidate from Wallace's American Independent Party kept the seat in Democratic hands. However, they have not made a serious bid for the district since 1972, when the Republican candidate gained only 38% of the vote even as Nixon carried the district in the presidential election by a large margin. The district's best-known congressman was probably Jo Byrns, who represented the district from 1909 to 1936 and was Speaker of the House for much of Franklin Roosevelt's first term as President. Another nationally prominent congressman from Nashville was Percy Priest, who represented the district from 1941 to 1956 and was House Majority Whip from 1949 to 1953. Former mayors Richard Fulton and Bill Boner also sat in the U.S. House before assuming the Metro mayoral office.

From 2003 to 2013, a sliver of southwestern Nashville was located in the 7th District, represented by Republican Marsha Blackburn. This area was roughly coextensive with the portion of Nashville she'd represented in the state senate from 1998 to 2002. However, the 5th regained all of Nashville after the 2010 census.

Education

Public schools

The city is served by Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

Private schools

- Abintra Montessori
- Lipscomb Academy
- Davidson Academy
- Donelson Christian Academy

- Christ Presbyterian Academy
- Harding Academy
- Ensworth School
- Ezell-Harding Christian School
- Franklin Road Academy
- Father Ryan
- Goodpasture Christian School
- Harpeth Hall School
- Linden Waldorf School
- Madison Academy
- Montgomery Bell Academy
- Nashville Christian School
- Nashville International Academy
- St. Cecilia Academy
- St. Paul Christian Academy
- University School of Nashville

Colleges and universities

Nashville is often labeled the "Athens of the South" due to the many colleges and universities in the city and the metropolitan area.^[64] The colleges and universities in Nashville include:



Freeman Hall at Belmont University

Name	Affiliation	Enrollment
American Baptist College		
Aquinas College	Roman Catholic	
Belmont University		6,647
Daymar Institute		
Fisk University	United Church of Christ (HBCU)	800
John A. Gupton College		
Lipscomb University	Churches of Christ	4,278
Meharry Medical College	United Methodist Church (HBCU)	700
Nossi College		
Nashville School of Law		
Nashville Auto Diesel College (a NAFTC Training Center)		
Nashville State Community College		9,853
Tennessee State University	HBCU	10,389
Trevecca Nazarene University	Nazarene	2,345
Vanderbilt University		12,714
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film		400
Welch College	Free Will Baptists	338

Within 30 miles (48 km) of Nashville in Murfreesboro is Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), a full-sized public university with Tennessee's largest undergraduate population. Enrollment in post-secondary education in Nashville is around 43,000. Within the Nashville Metropolitan Statistical Area—which includes MTSU, Cumberland University (Lebanon), Volunteer State Community College (Gallatin), Daymar Institute, and O'More College of Design (Franklin)—total enrollment exceeds 74,000. Within a 40 miles (64 km) radius are Austin Peay State University (Clarksville) and Columbia State Community College (Columbia), enrolling an additional 13,600.

Nashville is home to four historically black institutions of higher education: Fisk University, Tennessee State University, Meharry Medical College, and American Baptist College.^[78]

Media

The daily newspaper in Nashville is *The Tennessean*, which until 1998 competed with the *Nashville Banner*, another daily paper that was housed in the same building under a joint-operating agreement. *The Tennessean* is the city's most widely circulated newspaper, while a smaller free daily called *The City Paper* shares the Nashville market. Online news service *NashvillePost.com* competes with the printed dailies to break local and state news. Several weekly papers are also published in Nashville, including *The Nashville Pride*, *Nashville Business Journal*, *Nashville Scene* and *The Tennessee Tribune*. Historically, *The Tennessean* was associated with a broadly liberal editorial policy, while *The Banner* carried staunchly

conservative views in its editorial pages; *The Banner's* heritage is carried on these days by *The City Paper*. The *Nashville Scene* is the area's alternative weekly broadsheet. *The Nashville Pride* is aimed towards community development and serves Nashville's entrepreneurial population.

Nashville is home to eleven broadcast television stations, although most households are served by direct cable network connections. Comcast Cable has a monopoly on terrestrial cable service in Davidson County (but not throughout the entire media market). Nashville is ranked as the 29th largest television market in the United States.^[79]

Nashville is also home to cable networks Country Music Television (CMT), among others. CMT's master control facilities are located in New York City with the other Viacom properties. The Top 20 Countdown and CMT Insider are taped in their Nashville studios. Shop at Home Network was once based in Nashville, but the channel signed off in 2008.

Several dozen FM and AM radio stations broadcast in the Nashville area, including five college stations and one LPFM community radio station. Nashville is ranked as the 44th largest radio market in the United States. WSM-FM is owned by Cumulus Media and is 95.5 FM. WSM-AM, owned by Gaylord Entertainment Company, can be heard nationally on 650 AM or online at WSM Online (<http://www.wsmonline.com>) from its studios located inside the Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center. WSM is famous for carrying live broadcasts of the Grand Ole Opry, through which it helped spread the popularity of country music in America, and continues to broadcast country music throughout its broadcast day. WLAC, whose over-the-air signal is heard at 1510 AM, is a Clear Channel-owned talk station which was originally sponsored by the Life and Casualty Insurance Company of Tennessee, and its competitor WWTN is owned by Cumulus.

Several major motion pictures have been filmed in Nashville, including *The Green Mile*, *The Last Castle*, *Gummo*, *The Thing Called Love*, *Two Weeks*, *Coal Miner's Daughter*, *Nashville*,^[80] and *Country Strong*.

Transportation

Road

Nashville is centrally located at the crossroads of three Interstate Highways: I-40, I-24, and I-65. Interstate 440 is a bypass route connecting I-40, I-65, and I-24 south of downtown Nashville. Briley Parkway connects the north side of the city and its interstates. A number of arterial surface roads called "pikes" radiate from the city center; many carry the names of nearby towns to which they lead. Among these are Clarksville Pike, Gallatin Pike, Lebanon Pike, Murfreesboro Pike, Nolensville Pike, and Franklin Pike.

Bus



Offices for *The Tennessean*



A Music City Star commuter train beneath the Shelby Street Bridge

The Metropolitan Transit Authority provides bus transit within the city, out of a newly built hub station downtown. Routes utilize a hub and spoke method. Expansion plans include use of Bus rapid transit for new routes, with the possibility for local rail service at some point in the future.

Nashville is considered a gateway city for rail and air traffic for the Piedmont Atlantic Megaregion.^[81]

Air

The city is served by Nashville International Airport (BNA), which was a hub for American Airlines between 1986 and 1995 and is now a focus city for Southwest Airlines. During 2011, Nashville International was the 34th busiest passenger airport in the U.S. with a total of 4,673,047 passenger boardings.^[82] Major airlines serving Nashville include American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Frontier Airlines, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, US Airways, and AirCanada.^[83] AirTran Airways offered limited routing to the airport until it was deemed unprofitable.

Rail

Amtrak

Although a major freight hub for CSX Transportation, Nashville is not currently served by Amtrak, the second-largest metropolitan area in the U.S. to have this distinction.^[84] Amtrak's *Floridian* (Chicago-Florida via Louisville and Nashville) served Nashville until its cancellation on October 9, 1979 due to poor track conditions resulting in late trains and low ridership.

While there have been no proposals to restore Amtrak service to Nashville, there have been repeated calls from residents.^[85] However, Tennessee state officials have advised it will not be happening anytime soon due to scarce federal funding. "It would be wonderful to say I can be in Memphis and jump on a train to Nashville, but the volume of people who would do that isn't anywhere close to what the cost would be to provide the service," said Ed Cole, chief of environment and planning with the Tennessee Department of Transportation.^[85] Ross Capon, executive director of the National Association of Railroad Passengers, said rail trips would catch on if routes were expanded, but conceded that it would be nearly impossible to resume Amtrak service to Nashville without a substantial investment from the state because federal money has dried up.^[85]

Commuter

Nashville launched a passenger commuter rail system called the Music City Star on September 18, 2006. The only currently operational leg of the system connects the city of Lebanon to downtown Nashville at the Nashville Riverfront. Legs to Clarksville, Murfreesboro and Gallatin are currently in the feasibility study stage. The system plan includes seven legs connecting Nashville to surrounding suburbs.

Bridges within the city include:

Official name	Other names	Length	Date opened
Gateway Bridge	Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge	1,660 feet (510 m)	May 19, 2004
Kelly Miller Smith Bridge	Jefferson Street Bridge		March 2, 1994
Old Hickory Bridge			1929
Martin Luther King Jr. Bridge	Bordeaux Bridge		September 18, 1980
Shelby Street Bridge	Shelby Avenue Bridge	3,150 feet (960 m)	July 5, 1909
Silliman Evans Bridge		2,362 feet (720 m)	1963
Victory Memorial Bridge			July 2, 1956
William Goodwin Bridge	Hobson Pike Bridge	2,215 feet (675 m)	
Woodland Street Bridge		639 feet (195 m)	

Notable people

Sister cities

Nashville is an active participant in the Sister Cities program and has relationships with the following towns:^[86]

- Belfast, Northern Ireland (United Kingdom)
- Caen (France)^[87]
- Edmonton, Alberta (Canada)
- Kamakura (Japan)
- Magdeburg (Germany)^[88]
- Mendoza (Argentina)
- Taiyuan, Shanxi (China)
- Tamworth, New South Wales (Australia)

Candidates

- Gwangjin-gu (South Korea)

International Friendship City

- Crouy (France)

Municipality United in Friendship

- El Port de la Selva (Spain)

See also

- National Register of Historic Places listings in Davidson County, Tennessee

Notes

- Consolidated* refers to the population of Davidson County; *Balance* refers to the population of Nashville excluding other incorporated cities within the Nashville-Davidson boundary.
- Official records for Nashville were kept at downtown from May 1871 to December 1939, and at Nashville Int'l since January 1940. For more information, see Threadex (<http://threadex.rcc-acis.org>)

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External links

Government

- Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County (<http://www.nashville.gov/>)

Other

- Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau (<http://www.visitmusiccity.com/>)
- Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce (<http://www.nashvillechamber.com/>)
- Metropolitan Archives of Nashville and Davidson County (<http://freepages.history.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nashvillearchives/index.html>)
- Nashville/Davidson County timeline (http://www.library.nashville.org/research/res_nash_history_timeline.asp) from the Nashville Public Library

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