

COMMUNITY PROFILE

OVERVIEW

Clifton is a charming rural river town of 2,694 residents, as per the 2010 Census. Several thousand additional residents live in the immediate unincorporated areas around the City. Clifton is located within Wayne County, which has a population of 17,021, in the region of southern middle Tennessee. Although Clifton is a rural community, almost all of its residents use high speed internet through the local telecommunications provider, TDS Telecommunications.

The City is well-situated among other larger cities in the region; Savannah (twenty miles), Parsons (twenty-five miles), and Hohenwald (thirty-three miles), are all within a thirty minute drive of Clifton. Much larger metropolitan areas such as the Nashville MSA and Florence, Alabama MSA are 105 miles and 60 miles away, respectively. Clifton is easily accessible from Tennessee Highway 64 (5.5 miles away), and Interstate 40 (38 miles away).

Many residents of Clifton can trace their lineage family to the area. If you were to speak with them, you would hear tales of infamous deeds, Civil War heroes, and ancestors who had great ties to both the fields and the river. Through this connection, most members of the community are especially invested and engaged in future of the City.

LOCAL ECONOMY

Throughout much of fiscal year 2014, the national and state economies have begun to experience recovery from the Great Recession. While slow growth has been made over broad statistical categories, the local economy has not experienced these same puts and peaks. The City of Clifton has experienced some economic slow-down since 2008. However major rises in the local unemployment rate or a rise in business closures, or falling revenues, (sales tax, gas tax, and real estate tax) have been so far avoided. Major regional economic development projects are handled at the State level by Tennessee Economic & Community Development, and locally by the Wayne County Joint Economic and Community Development Board.

Clifton enjoys a diverse local economy with employment found primarily through blue collar positions in forestry, corrections, manufacturing, and education. Of the major private employers near Clifton, American Whirlpool Manufacturing, Brown Foreman Cooperage, and Correctional Corporations of America have all held a steady workforce for the past three years. Additionally, some employers have experienced hiring and wage increases within the past fiscal year.

Tourism is also a major economic driver in Clifton. The City enjoys a noticeable seasonal tilt as visitors to the Tennessee River often enjoy meals, overnight stays, and other recreation opportunities in town. A major tourism opportunity exists in the Ross Creek Trace golf course, which has been closed since 2011. During periods when the golf course was open, the City experienced a greater number of visitors and sales tax revenue. Additionally, Clifton also has three major assets to tourism development: the Tennessee River Resort Act, the Tennessee Downtowns' Program, and Hassell Field. Each of these assets make our community a more attractive place for tourism and potential development.

Demographics & Statistical Data

City Government

Date of Incorporation	1840
Date of City Charter	1952
Form of Government	Commission-Manager
City Employees	21
Trustee Workers	5

Physiographic

Land Area - Square Miles	6.4 Land/0.6 Water
Population Density	420.94/per sq. mile
Elevation	404 ft.
Region	11C-Nashville Basin

Utility

Cable	Charter
Electric	Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative
Gas	City of Clifton
Solid Waste	City of Clifton
Telephone	TDS Telecom, Inc.
Wastewater	City of Clifton
Water	City of Clifton

Largest Private Employers

Correctional Corporation of America
People's Bank
American Whirlpool Manufacturing, Inc.

Largest Public Employers

State of Tennessee
Wayne County Board of Education
City of Clifton

Taxes

Real Estate Tax Rate	\$0.6469
Personal Property Tax Rate	30.00%
Local Option Sales Tax	2.75%

Population

2010 U.S. Census	2694
2000 U.S. Census	3,046
1990 U.S. Census	1,917

Households

2010 U.S. Census	336
2000 U.S. Census	353
1990 U.S. Census	236

Average Household Size

2010 U.S. Census	2.37
2000 U.S. Census	2.28
1990 U.S. Census	2.18

Age (2010 U.S. Census)

(1-19)	7.9%
(20-34)	25.7%
(35-64)	60.4%
(65+)	6.0%

Race & Ethnicity (2010 U.S. Census)

Asian	0.3%
Black	33.7%
Hispanic	0.2%
Other/Mixed	1.1%
White	64.6%

Unemployment (Prelim. May 2014)

Wayne County	9.7%
Tennessee	6.4%
United States	6.3%

HISTORY

Clifton would not exist without the Tennessee River. In fact, our town is named Clifton because it sits on a "cliff" high above this great stream. There has always been a special link between the river and the town. Clifton's Main Street ends where the town began- on the riverbank. Today the end of Main Street is a very appealing site, ornamented with trees, shrubs, flowers, a rock wall and a stately iron gate. Off to one side there is a memorial to veterans killed in action, a low stone wall with the American flag towering above. This is the place you should go to understand the true importance of the river to Clifton. Walk up to the overlook and spend a few moments absorbing the spectacular scene. Below you the Tennessee River flows by, past our town and through our history. For many generations the old road stretching down the slope provided access to the historic ferry landing. Much of Clifton's history is tied to the river's bank along this area.

The ferry landing and the surrounding riverbank are usually quiet these days. The big boats once so essential to the commerce of our town quit docking there decades ago. The gunboats and transports teeming with Yankee soldiers are long gone. The old mail boat is now a fading memory. Even the ferry service that had existed in or near Clifton since 1818 came to an end in January 1998, shortly after a new bridge opened a few miles upstream. But this town is not dead, and the river is still crucial to Clifton. In recent times our riverside location has become a tremendous asset once more. People are drawn to the river. Our town lives on with a new vitality, more vibrant and alive than it has been in many years.

Settlers first came to the Clifton area in the early 1800's. Many current residents can still trace their ancestry back to King Prater, who legend says was the first non-Indian child born in Wayne County after it was organized in 1818. Clifton was called Ninevah in the early 1800's, but the name was changed in 1840 when work began on the Clifton Turnpike. Clifton wasn't really much of town before the turnpike, and Cliftonians have traditionally regarded 1840 as the date of our town's founding. The historic Clifton Turnpike provided parts of Southern Middle Tennessee with access to the river at Clifton. In the early days it was used to transport crops from the rich farms around Maury County and pig iron from the furnaces that once prospered throughout Wayne County.

The Civil War was the most traumatic event in Clifton's history. While most surrounding communities remained loyal to the Union, Cliftonians enthusiastically allied themselves with the Confederacy. This led to many unhappy consequences. In the second year of the war, the Tennessee River became a vital invasion route for Union forces. Clifton, to its great misfortune, was located in a strategic position on that river. Early in 1862 Union forces occupied Clifton, and they stayed here for most of the remainder of the war. The Union stronghold in Clifton was Stockade Hill, and the officers' headquarters were located in what is now the front yard of Frank Hughes School. Several skirmishes were fought around Clifton, and Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest conducted an important raid here in December 1862. Legend has it that only four homes in Clifton survived the Civil War. The Presbyterian Church is the only public building still standing from that unhappy era. At various times during the war it was used as a hospital and misused as a horse stable by the occupying Union forces. The front of the church still bears the scars of where Union soldiers pulled out part of the brick wall to make a wider opening.



The decades following the Civil War saw happier times. Clifton entered its first golden age in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Those were the days when the steamboat was king, and Clifton was an important river port. During that era railroads were being built all across America, and the countless crossties cut from the vast timber resources of this area were shipped from Clifton.

Money poured into Clifton as it never had before. Many of the old homes and buildings in town date from that prosperous era. During those years Clifton developed a rowdy reputation that remained with the town for decades to come. On Saturday nights Clifton was apparently a lively place. Old stories linger that Main Street once was lined with several drinking establishments. Fights were common, and murders were not uncommon. These days Cliftonians tend to be a peaceful group, and the crime rate is very low.

One of the most interesting things that happened in the early 1900's occurred in 1918. That was the year that the Tennessee River froze over solidly. It seems almost impossible to imagine now, but old photographs still exist showing Cliftonians strolling around on and playing on the wide frozen river.

The "Roaring Twenties" were not so good for Clifton. As America became more prosperous and cars and trucks became more common, the river landing at Clifton became less important to the world at large. The major roads and highways were all built elsewhere, and Clifton entered a long period of gradual decline. In the 1930's Clifton, like the rest of the world, struggled to survive the Great Depression. Yet it was during those dark years that our most celebrated resident achieved his greatest triumph. In 1933 Clifton's own T.S. Stribling won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature with *The Store*. Today Mr. Stribling's home on Water Street serves as a library and museum. It was also in the 1930's that another famous man reportedly came to Clifton. German General Erwin Rommel, Hitler's legendary "Desert Fox," supposedly spent a night in Clifton's Russ Hotel while studying the Civil War tactics of Nathan Bedford Forrest. During the 50's, 60's, and 70's the slow decline continued. Most of the businesses on Main Street eventually ceased operations and many of the old buildings remained empty for a long time. Increasing numbers of young people began leaving town for better opportunities elsewhere. It was during this sad era that too much of our heritage was lost. Several of our greatest old homes and public buildings disappeared. Almost every longtime resident of Clifton still mourns the demise of the Russ Hotel and the original Frank Hughes School building.

The 1980's saw the beginning of Clifton's rebirth. In the early 1980's the State of Tennessee built a new prison facility at the edge of town. Although some much needed jobs were provided, it took a few more years for Clifton to get back on track. The state built a second and much larger facility with more jobs in the early 1990's. In the following years the state built new highways running in several directions and a bridge crossing the river a few miles above the town. The outside world finally gained good access to Clifton!



Clifton has been transformed over the last decade. Citizens and guests alike have a new appreciation for our town. The natural beauty of our riverside location provides a powerful draw for visitors and new residents. A number of new businesses providing fresh job opportunities have moved into Clifton or to nearby areas. Commercial establishments have come back to the central part of town, moving back into the old buildings or building attractive new facilities. Most of the

historic and the new buildings along Main Street look great these days. Attractive lighting now lines the sidewalks that have been rebuilt to look better than they ever did in the past. The city streets are generally in good condition, and most of the town is attractive and well maintained. Frank Hughes School has been enlarged with new classrooms and a spacious new gym. The city has developed new ball fields for our young people. Columbia State Community College now has a nice campus in Clifton, and the widely praised new Ross Creek Landing Golf Course is located just outside of town. Plans are already in the works to improve recreational facilities along the river. With the dawn of the new millennium, Clifton has apparently entered a new "golden age."

CULTURAL & RECREATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Downtown Clifton has an incredible number of cultural and recreational amenities. Due to its location on the water, Clifton is classified by the state of Tennessee as a "Tennessee River Resort Area." The classification provides the City leverage in determining alcohol regulations and access to special state financing related to tourism. Clifton has a variety of cultural and recreational offerings both within and outside the proposed project area.

Within the Downtown Area

The project area is framed by the scenic Tennessee River, and has a public landing. If you were to sit in the park and look at the river, you would be passed by recreational boaters, fishermen, and commercial traffic alike. Riverboats have been known to stop in Clifton while on cruise (pictured above). The river is an essential part of the community, and having public infrastructure on the banks of the Tennessee is important. The riverfront area includes a rock overlook, war memorial, and large green space with two picnic tables. While the property is picturesque, it is currently under-utilized and could be redeveloped to create a usable, more community-friendly space



Historic amenities are also a big portion of the Clifton story. As you travel through downtown, sometimes walking on two hundred year old stone sidewalks, old foundry markers can be found on metal frames of buildings constructed several decades ago. Other historic accents adorn the buildings, such as cornerstones from the 1800's, or friezes depicting the names of locally significant families and businesses.

Downtown is also home to an enormous amount of Civil War history. In late 1862, Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest

chose Clifton as the location to cross the Tennessee River and begin a daring raid on West Tennessee. He crossed the river again at Clifton in an attempt to evade capture. From the end of Forrest's raid throughout the remainder of the war, Clifton was occupied by Federal forces who built a stockade on the heights immediately above Main Street. The Presbyterian Church and annex, in the 300 block of Main Street, were utilized by both sides as a hospital, stable, and officer's building. Today, if you look closely at the brick façade of the church, you can see holes in the wall where hinges were ripped off by Federal forces to use the Church as a stable. In late 1863, most of Clifton was set ablaze by the occupying Federal troops, sparing only the Presbyterian Church and annex. Today, Forrest and Stockade Streets are located just outside the project area.

Another cultural amenity is found in the many special events and festivals held in Clifton. No matter what time of year, Main Street is ground zero for special community activities. The largest of Clifton's events is the annual Horseshoe Riverbend Festival in early September. The festival, which just celebrated its 30th year, serves as the county fair, and is the largest event in Wayne County. A three day music event, the Horseshoe Riverbend Festival also features a carnival, quilting exhibitions, vendors, a tractor-pull, a fly-in at the airport, as well as fly-over demonstrations. This September's Festival featured country music headliner Sammy Kershaw, and drew a record crowd of over 10,000 festival-goers. Other events hosted on Main Street throughout the year are Fall Community Day, a 'Stroll through Christmas' in December, Spring Community Day, the 'Smoke on the River' barbeque competition in June, and the Andrew Talley Memorial Fishing Derby in August.

Near the Downtown Area

Clifton has a number of other attractions that lie just outside of the project area that enhance the Clifton experience. One such amenity is the Ross Creek Trace Golf Course; an eighteen-hole Jack Nicholas signature course that features a challenging day on the links for players, vacation villas for overnight packages, and a superior steakhouse. The golf course is located near another major asset to the area – municipal airport, Hassell Field. With a 65' x 4600' runway, Hassell

FY 2015 Adopted Budget – City of Clifton, Tennessee

Field is able to accommodate corporate and personal planes. It is heavily used in conjunction with the golf course as a recreational airport. This calendar year, the airport is slated to receive a \$1.2 million dollar runway facelift project. The runway project will be the first of several large endeavors at the field in the coming years, which include obstruction lighting for night landings, new hangers for plane storage, a terminal for pilots, and possible runway lighting and pavement extensions.

A full service Marina is located roughly three quarters of a mile away from downtown and offers everything from fuel and a boat slip, to brats and a beer. The Marina provides a home to vessels owned by residents of Clifton and visitors alike. Boats from 24 states and 14 countries float through the Marina every year. Visitors that arrive in Clifton via land are able to rent a vessel from the Marina for a day out on the water. Fifteen river-view camping sites with electric and water hook-ups are also located at the Marina.

Clifton is also the hometown of author T. S. Stribling, Tennessee's only Pulitzer Prize winning author. He married a Clifton resident and spent most of his adult life here with her. Today, the T.S. Stribling Museum and Library pays tribute to the man who wrote acclaimed works such as, '*The Store*', '*The Unfinished Cathedral*', and '*The Sound Wagon*.' Located two blocks north of Main Street, the exterior of the house has been restored to the way it appeared in the early 1900's when Stribling lived there.

In addition to the eight Ross Creek Trace villas used for corporate clients on overnight golf packages, Clifton has two hotels located immediately outside of the project area. The Bear Inn and the Clifton Inn have around sixty beds between them and offer comfortable accommodations for tourists, event competitors, and festival goers.

Budget Information Requests

Copies of the FY 2015 Adopted Budget and supporting capital documents are available as follows:

Office of the Administrative Assistant
City Hall
Post Office Box 192
142 Main Street
Clifton, Tennessee 38425
Phone: (931) 676-3370
Email: cprimm@cityofclifton.com

City Website: <http://cityofclifton.com/government/budgetaudit-info/budget-ordinances>

Elected Officials

Mayor

Robert Culp

Vice Mayor

Clyde Carroll

City Commissioners

Tommy Boyd

David Primm

Eva Ruth Warren

All City of Clifton elected officials can be reached at City Hall using the following information:

City Hall

Post Office Box 192
142 Main Street
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