

COUNTRY PANTRY

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Meeting set for West Seventh Street redevelopment

BY TONYA S. GRACE
PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

Community and Development Services is hosting a public forum to introduce residents to a proposed redevelopment plan for the West Seventh Street area.

Slated for 5 p.m. on July 30, the upcoming meeting in the Hopkinsville City Council chambers will share ideas for improving traffic flow in the area

from North Drive to Seventh and Ninth streets, for beautifying the corridor, adding landscaping and decorative lighting, and exploring a proposed roundabout at the intersection of Seventh and Ninth streets.

Those attending may ask questions and share their feedback about the project.

“So we have prepared through Bell Engineering some preliminary designs

to show what they believe would be great enhancements to that corridor,” said Holly Boggess, the assistant director of CDS.

Boggess noted that among the suggested enhancements are providing better traffic flow, enhancing aesthetics, providing additional beautification efforts, increasing the width of sidewalks, slowing down

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TONYA S. GRACE | KNE

Vehicles wait on Monday afternoon at the intersection of Seventh and Ninth streets in Hopkinsville. A proposed street enhancement project for a portion of West Seventh Street would stretch from North Drive to Seventh and Ninth streets.



SARAH LADD | KENTUCKY LANTERN

Hundreds of Kentuckians with disabilities and their loved ones and advocates came to Frankfort and pleaded with elected officials to find a way to protect the services they receive through Medicaid waivers, Friday.

Kentuckians with disabilities, advocates say looming 4% Medicaid cut is a 'threat'

BY SARAH LADD
KENTUCKY LANTERN

FRANKFORT — Kentuckians with disabilities and their loved ones and advocates came to Frankfort Friday and pleaded with elected officials to find a way to protect the services they receive through Medicaid waivers.

Several spoke during a legislative subcommittee meeting, which was formed to handle issues surrounding waiver waitlists, and many more spoke at a town hall meeting and rally on the Capitol Annex steps. Organizers estimated hundreds attended these events.

Laura Orsland, the mother of a son with disabilities who founded the HIVE in Bowling Green to support “people with developmental disabilities and those who care for them,” said the looming 4% cuts to the providers who help her family and others “is not just a number to us. It’s a threat.”

“It is a warning,” she said. “It is the sound of one more piece of stability slipping away.”

A June 8 letter from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services informed various providers they

would see a 4% reduction in Medicaid reimbursement starting Aug. 1. Reductions are set to target the following waivers, in addition to providers in other sectors:

Home and Community Based Waiver, which provides services to Kentuckians 65 and older or those who are physically disabled and need a nursing facility level of care.

Michelle P. Waiver, which provides services for Kentuckians with intellectual or developmental disabilities who need nursing facility or immediate care facility level of care.

Model II Waiver, which provides services for people needing ventilator support 12 or more hours a day, are on a physician-monitored weaning program and need a nursing facility level of care.

Supports for Community Living, which provides services for Kentuckians with intellectual or developmental disabilities who need immediate care facility level of care.

Meanwhile, families who need waiver services said it’s already difficult to find providers able to care for them and their loved ones.

Leslie Hoffmann, the deputy commissioner of the Department for Medi-

caid Services, said there were nearly 19,000 people on waitlists for Medicaid waivers as of July 13, with only around 1,000 spots available.

Year over year, the cost of waiver services and Medicaid claims have increased from around \$492,000 per person in 2020 to around \$607,166 in 2025, Hoffmann said in a presentation to members of the Waiver Waitlist Management Subcommittee on Friday morning. Total annual expenditures for these services hit nearly \$1.9 billion in 2025 even as many spend years on waitlists waiting for care.

Dr. Steven Stack, the secretary for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, said solutions to the waitlist and other issues come back to money.

“If you shed tears over the size of the Medicaid budget now, some of the ways we could make all of these problems go away would make you shed buckets of tears about how much larger the cost would be,” he said.

‘I AM A PERSON’

Grace Anna Rodgers, a singer who has Michelle P. Waiver services and uses a wheelchair, told those gathered for the

Friday afternoon town hall: “Don’t ever feel sorry for yourself, because we are still human beings.”

“A lot of people see people like me as somebody who, ‘oh she’s in a wheelchair, she can’t do anything,’ but we thrive and we love to do things,” she said. “I play piano, I sing and I love doing it. I am a person.”

Claire Myneer, who has autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), obsessive compulsive disorder and other diagnoses, said she waited 15 years to get her Michelle P. Waiver.

“I need the services to help me to be able to do the things like to be independent and see friends and do things that I like to do out in the community, and that helps me be able to go out when I have services,” said Myneer, 34. “I like doing a lot of Special Olympic sports and stuff.”

Gov. Andy Beshear has blamed the budget passed by the General Assembly this year for forcing his hand toward the cuts, while lawmakers have said he could better manage the money they provided.

Judi Gerding, the founder and CEO of The

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Arden Barnes | For the Kentucky Lantern

Rocky Adkins speaks with Kentucky Secretary of State Michael Adams before the State of the Commonwealth address at the Thomas D. Clark Center for Kentucky History in Frankfort, Kentucky, on Jan. 7.

Democrat Adkins officially enters Kentucky governor race

MCKENNA HORSLEY
KENTUCKY LANTERN

Rocky Adkins, a former Democratic leader in the Kentucky House and senior advisor to Gov. Andy Beshear from Eastern Kentucky, is officially running for governor.

His campaign issued a press release Tuesday morning and released a video on social media. It opens with boxers fighting in a ring and then moves to Adkins speaking over shots of Kentuckians waking up to go to work and take care of their families.

“We’ve always been fighters,” Adkins says in the video before vowing to be a fighter for the commonwealth.

Beshear, who was elected in 2019 and 2023, is term-limited from running for governor again. Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman, also a Democrat, announced her run for governor in April. Her campaign recently reported it raised \$303,000.

“The governor of Kentucky is the last line of defense for the people of this commonwealth,”

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Educational trailer draws attention to Hopkins club

BY CASSANDRA PROFITT
PAXTON MEDIA GROUP

The Hopkins County Sportsmen and Sports-women Club announced its new Outdoor Recreational Educational Trailer. The trailer allows the club to educate families on things like wildlife conservation, hunter education, wildlife biology, and more.

“We are receiving opportunities to set our trailer up free of charge at large events across the state of Kentucky and beyond,” explained club founder and president Loman Scarbrough.

Over the weekend, he brought the trailer to the East Kentucky Outdoor Show in Pikeville. The group got a chance to connect with locals and introduce area youth and families to the great out-

doors. “The Modern Woodman Financial organization really appreciated our organization and what we do. They will be becoming our newest sponsor,” said Scarbrough. “Yes, Hopkins County Sportsmen and Sportswomen Club now has sponsors over five hours away in Pikeville, Ky.”

As much as he appreciated connecting with communities across the state, Scarbrough is also excited for local opportunities. The trailer’s first appearance in Hopkins County will be as part of the Hopkins County Fair on Aug. 1, 7, and 8. Staying closer to home, the group will also be bringing their trailer to Owensboro for the Blueridge Squatch Fest in

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