



Communities Beyond Cleanup: Planning a Diverse Economic Future

Amy Fitzgerald | City of Oak Ridge | June 22, 2022

Topics to Cover:

- About the City of Oak Ridge
- Economic Development Challenges
- Diversification Opportunities
- Key to Success



About the City of Oak Ridge

- Population: 31,402 Size: 92 square miles
- City Manager-Council form of government
- Municipality in two counties: Anderson & Roane
- More than 170 miles of shoreline along Melton Hill Lake, Clinch River navigable by barge for 42 miles
- Home to Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Y-12 National Security Complex
- Four industrial parks, including Horizon Center and Heritage Center (former K-25 site)
- Nearly the entire 33,000 acre Oak Ridge Reservation in the City Limits
- Partnering with DOE, State of TN, Roane County, Anderson County and other economic development partners is Key





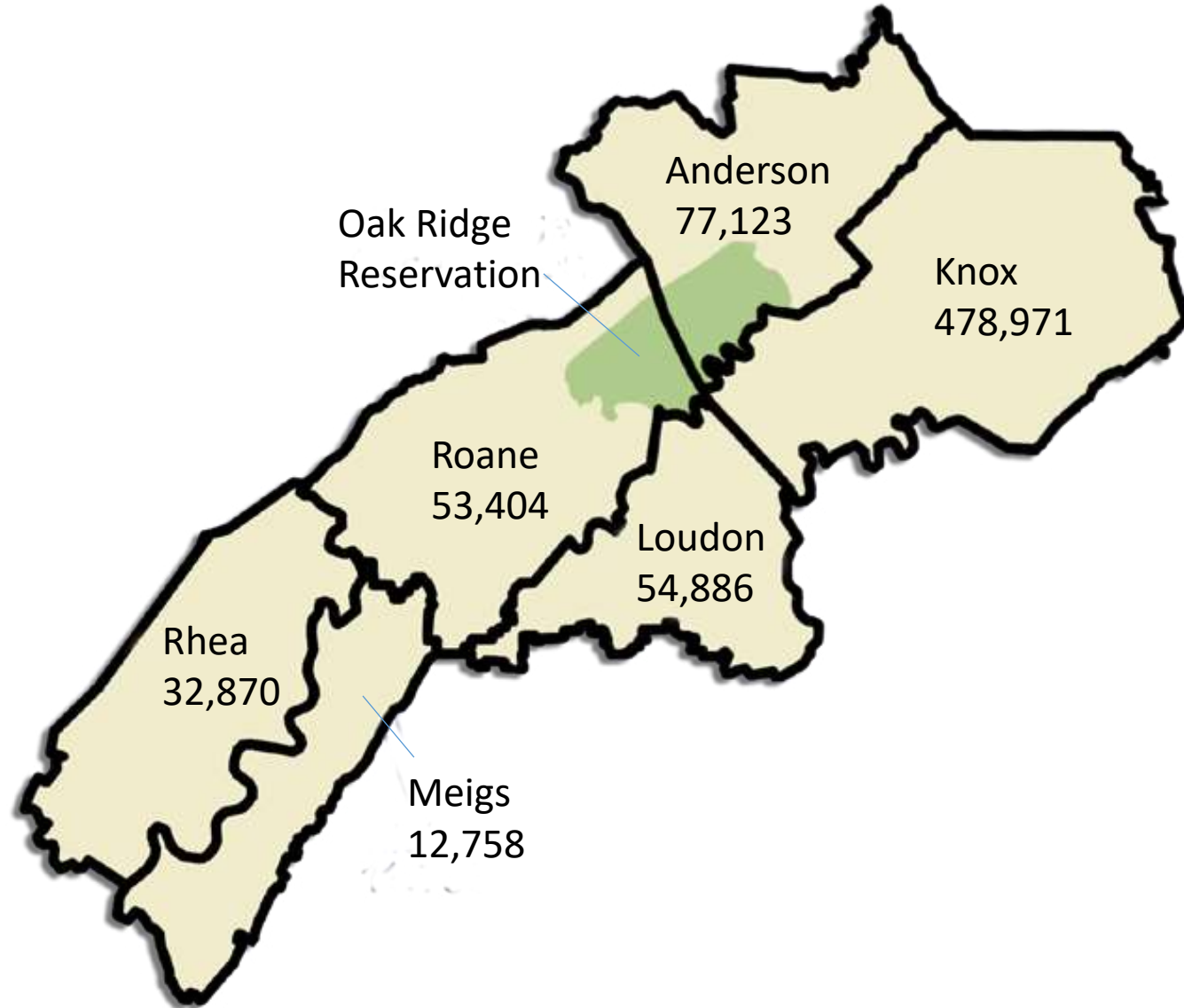
The DOE's Oak Ridge Reservation is comprised of three major sites, all of which are located inside the Oak Ridge City limits and Roane and Anderson Counties

Map source: U.S. DOE Oak Ridge Office

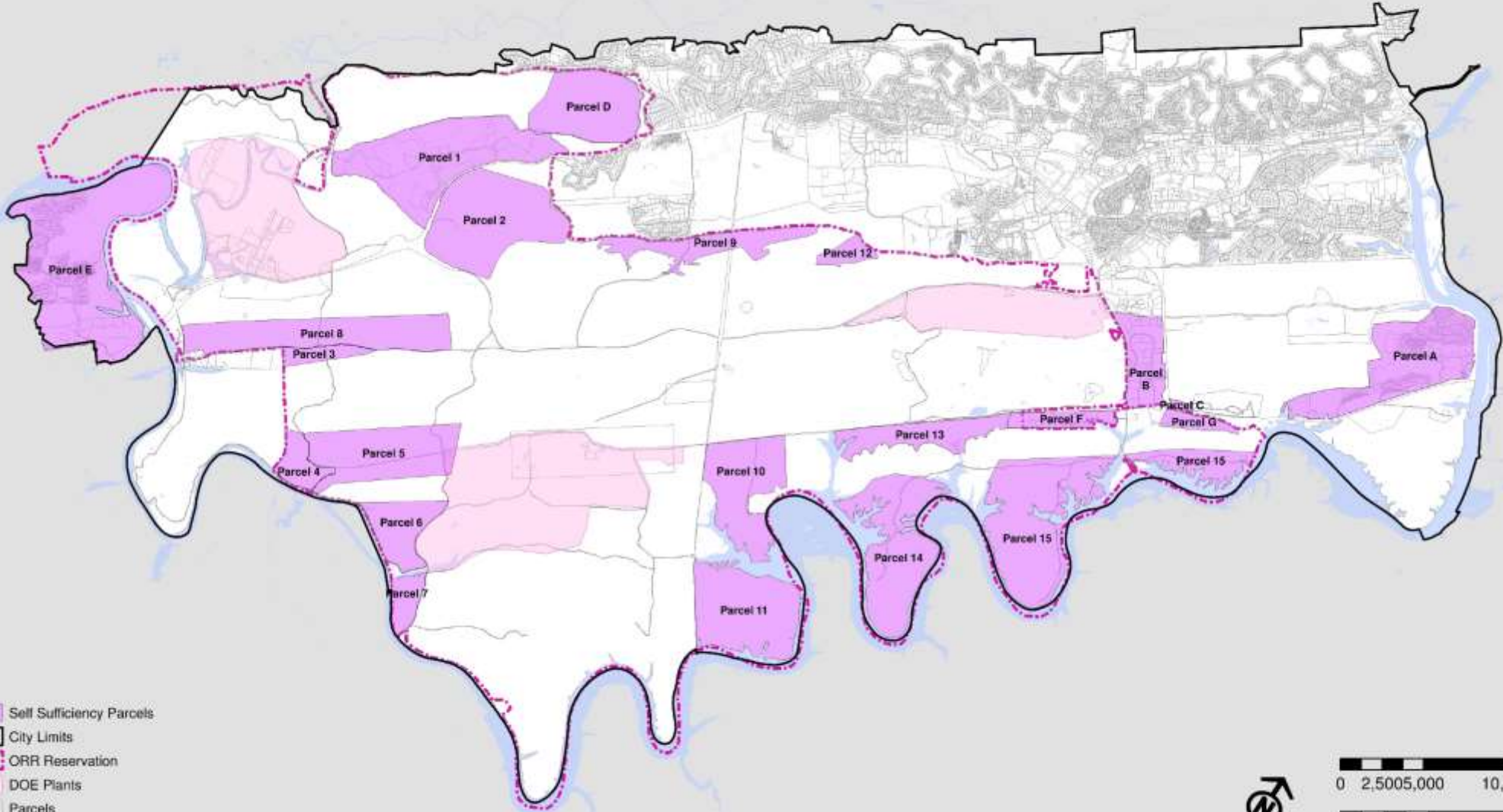
The greater metropolitan area has almost three-quarters of a million population

2020 Census = 710,012

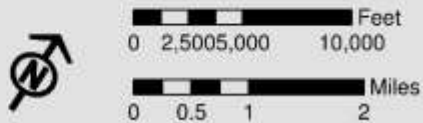
Map source: U.S. DOE Oak Ridge Office



Oak Ridge Self-Sufficiency Parcels



- Self Sufficiency Parcels
- City Limits
- ORR Reservation
- DOE Plants
- Parcels
- Water



Modernizing Infrastructure is a Key to Success

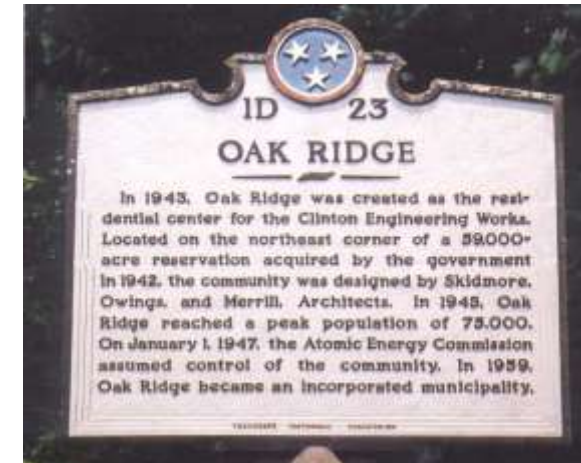
- A significant factor influencing site selection
- Supports ongoing DOE missions
- Needed for Community revitalization/diversification



Managing Aging Infrastructure – Key Challenges

Legacy Homes

- Housing and infrastructure was constructed to be temporary; Not last 70 plus years
- Legacy homes are small and can be difficult to sell
- Many are rentals with owners living remotely
- Some are considered blighted
- Blight deters families from relocating to Oak Ridge
- City's population had not grown
- Changing Demographics; Lower income population
- Limited tax base and utility fund base



Managing Aging Infrastructure – Key Challenges

Electric Service—A Key to Reindustrialization

- **1997:** Goal to transition service at Heritage Center from DOE to City
- Substation and equipment was antiquated
- DOE distribution system did not meet codes applicable to City
- Facilities frequently unidentified or misidentified
- Four Phases: (1) Use DOE systems, City meters to service customers
- (2) City constructs major substation in 2002; DOE closed theirs in 2011
- (3) DOE brings distribution lines up to code; City takes over operation
- 2017:** City takes over new lines inside the industrial park
- City does not operate in high security areas; contaminated areas;
where current codes/practices not met; where DOE rules apply

Managing Aging Infrastructure – Key Challenges

Aging Infrastructure – Water Treatment Plant, Raw Water Intake, Booster Pump Station

- City's most critical assets
- Essential to DOE's mission
- Powered by an antiquated electrical system
- Aging WTP with limited capacity
- Aging pumps and equipment
- Aging transmission mains



2400 VOLTS

Managing Aging Infrastructure

City of Oak Ridge



- **New EPA WIFIA (Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act) program**
- Oak Ridge one of 12 communities chosen to apply
- 49% of project fund by WIFIA low interest loan program
 - Amortized over at least 35 years
 - Other 51% being explored through Tennessee State Revolving Loan
- 80% Federal money limitation
 - However, needs DOE longer contractual commitments to ensure credit worthiness during evaluation
- City Council has selected to build new at \$50 million at a riverfront site

Managing Aging Infrastructure – City of Oak Ridge

Aging Infrastructure – Water Distribution

- Approximately 160 miles of water mains are 70 plus years old
- Average 113 breaks annually

Aging Infrastructure – Collection System

- Aging sanitary sewer system resulting in SSOs and I/I issues
- City recently completed a \$27M EPA Consent Order
- Has invested over \$50M since the 1990's
- Y-12 facility I/I goes into to City's system

Legacy Contaminants:- Mercury @ Y-12 site

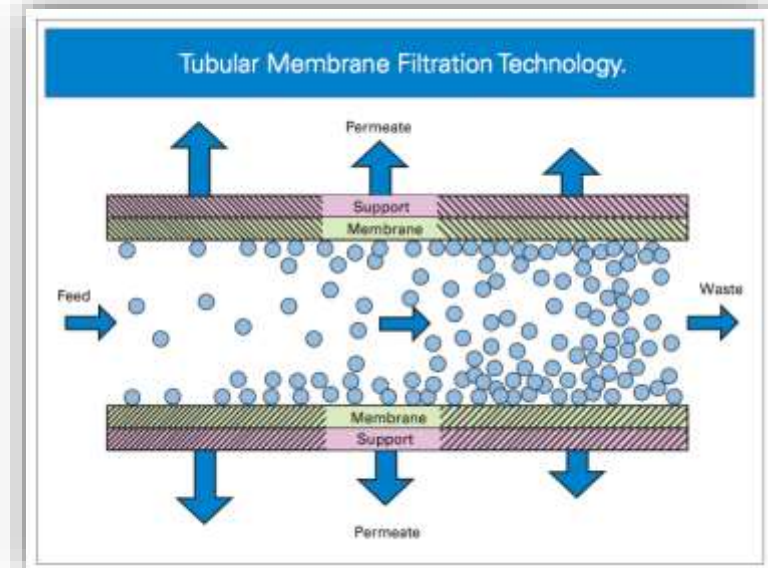
- Technetium 99 from ETTP at RRWWTP disposed off out of state by DOE



Managing Aging Infrastructure – City of Oak Ridge

What's Needed

- New Water Treatment Plant
- Annual replacement of water mains
- Continued sanitary sewer rehabilitation
- Removal of blighted housing
- New affordable homes
- New industrial business – ETTP
- New Development
- Continued Partnership with DOE & private sector



Diversification Opportunity: Heritage Tourism

- New directional signage recently installed around town to help drivers locate the Manhattan Project National Historical Park Visitor Center



Friendship Bell Peace Pavilion Dedication

- The Friendship Bell is a symbol of peace between the U.S. and Japan, created as part of the City's 50th anniversary
- After discovering the original housing had deteriorated in 2014, the City developed a new plan



Friendship Bell Peace Pavilion Dedication

- A citizen committee was formed and fundraising began
- An architect designed a modern new home for the bell, proposing to display it beneath a concrete cantilever
- Sprawling carbon fiber beams, the longest of their kind in the world, were also included in the new structure



Friendship Bell Peace Pavilion Dedication

- Thanks to crucial community partnerships and innovative fundraising, the project was completed successfully
- The new Peace Pavilion was dedicated in 2018



Center for Oak Ridge Oral History Highlights

- The Center for Oak Ridge Oral History (COROH) project began in 2009 as a systematic effort to collect the experiences of the scientific and technical communities in Oak Ridge during the Manhattan Project Era



Center for Oak Ridge Oral History Highlights

- Efforts originally centered on the Manhattan Project Era but eventually expanded to include the “Birth of the City of Oak Ridge,” cultural and other institutions, and life during the Cold War
- COROH is housed at the Oak Ridge Public Library and is managed by City Staff and guided by a volunteer steering committee of citizens, and retired city and federal employees



Center for Oak Ridge Oral History Highlights

- Over 9 years, COROH has collected an estimated **917 interviews**
- These include oral histories donated by the American Museum of Science and Energy, The Smithsonian, Methodist Medical Center, The Jewish Congregation of Oak Ridge, and the Oak Ridge Historical Preservation Association, among others
- The grant was dispersed in two separate cycles with a total amount of \$1,015,000 coming from the Department of Energy Environmental Management
- Staff is researching opportunities for sustaining the project



Scarboro Memorabilia Wall

- In 2008, a member of the community suggested a Memorabilia Wall in the Scarboro Center as a means to capture the African American involvement in the community's history
- Photos, newspaper articles and other related documents were gathered to be displayed
- Phase I was completed and dedicated in 2011



Scarboro Memorabilia Wall

- In 2018, we set out to complete Phase II by asking for donations and were able to raise enough money to complete it in April 2019
- Visitors can now learn about our past and how the community has changed while retaining its rich heritage



Public Perception



“The ORR’s former nuclear research and national security missions left a legacy of radioactive and chemical wastes that require management and/or disposal. These materials that are present in burial grounds, settlement ponds, seepage pits and trenches, inactive tanks, abandoned underground pipelines, and surplus facilities have contaminated soils, groundwater, and surface water. *Abundant rainfall (annual average of 55 inches) and high water tables (e.g., 0 to 20 feet below the surface) have the potential to accelerate leaching of contaminants, which can result in contaminated soil, surface water, sediments, and groundwater on the ORR.*”

Source: Public Involvement Plan for CERCLA Activities at the U.S. Department of Energy
Oak Ridge Site

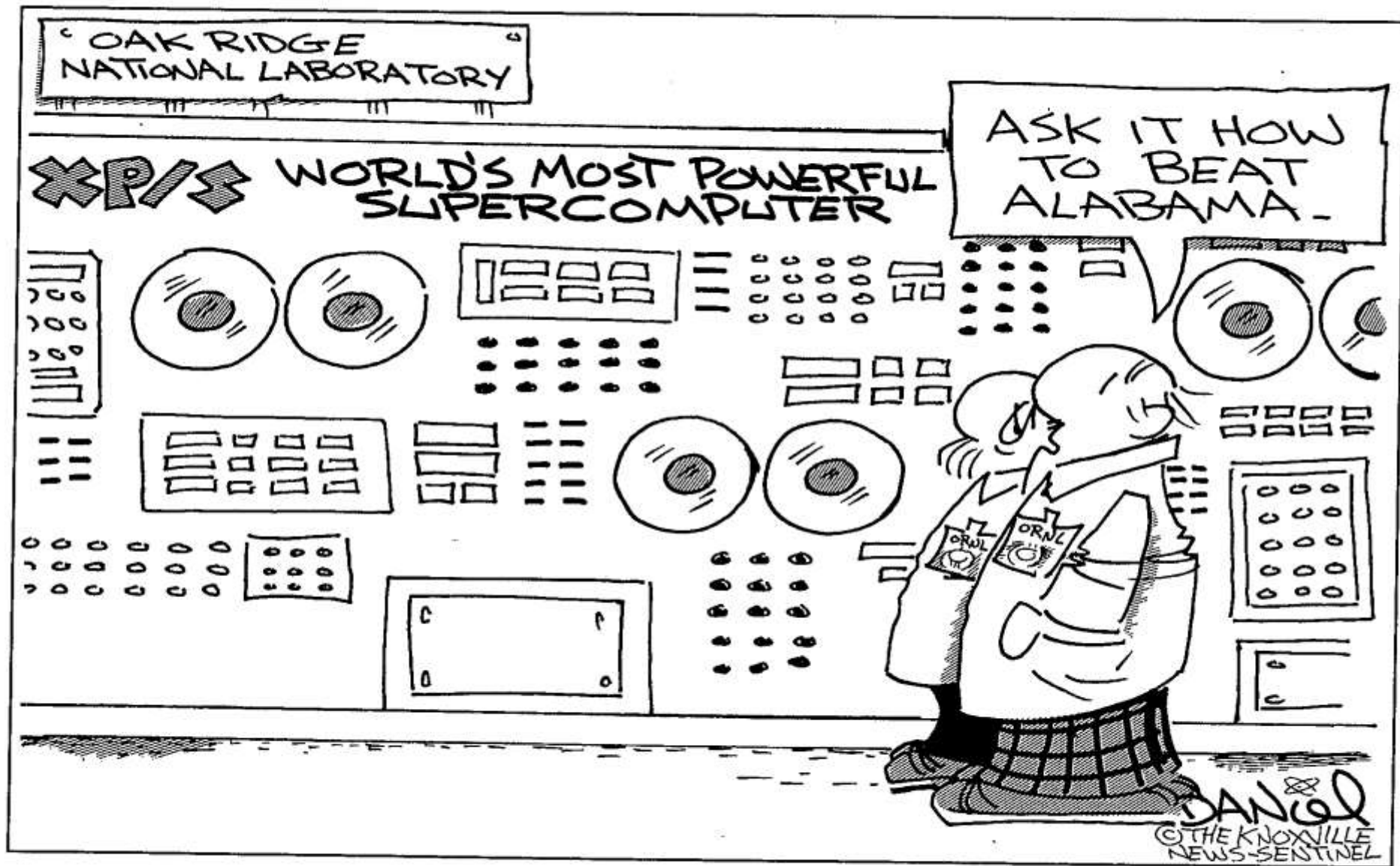


HEY_DON'T TAKE OUR
WORD FOR IT_READ THIS
GLOWING REPORT...OOPS!





November 12, 1992





MORGAN

ANDERSON

OAK RIDGE

KNOX

ROANE

THE OAK RIDGE CORRIDOR

LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

The Oak Ridge Corridor

<https://oakridgecorridortn.com>

Keys to Success:

- Cooperation among multiple economic development entities: site selection, marketing, incentives
- Navigating complex framework of DOE land use/regulations
- Modernizing aging infrastructure
- Capitalizing on Diversification Opportunities
- Ongoing Public Education and Outreach
- Strong Intergovernmental Partnerships



QUESTIONS?

