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Dear Growth Policy Plan Coordinating Committee members,

Knox County has thirteen (13) farms that have been recognized as [Tennessee Century Farms](#) by a program run by MTSU's Center for Historic Preservation. A farm is recognized as a Century Farm if it has been owned and farmed by the same family for at least 100 years. The listing of farms may be found here: <https://www.tncenturyfarms.org/knox-county/>. Each farm family has provided documentation to [MTSU CHP](#) for their certification. They may be contacted at [histpres@mtsu.edu](mailto:histpres@mtsu.edu)

These farms are historically significant at a local level. Many of these also have prime farmland soil, or locally important soils.

Agriculture is a significant contributor to the local economy. You need do nothing more than go down to the Market Square Farmers Market on a June Saturday morning to see how good, local farm products helped create an economic engine for downtown Knoxville, helping to revive the Market Square and downtown areas. There was **significant feedback** from Round 1 that many of our Treasures and Places are the old farms and agricultural, rural character ([Round 1 Summary Memo](#), [Round 2 Briefing Slides](#)). These old family farms are the quintessential examples of what is treasured in Knox County, and should be designated for maximum conservation by placing them in the Rural Area of the Growth Plan.

**But several of these farms are placed in the Planned Growth Area of the proposed Growth Policy Plan map.** I have described them below. The maps depict approximate boundaries - MTSU will have full information on the precise boundaries, or also the property owners.

The Placetypes depicted are from the March 2023 version of the Future Land Use Map, and may have changed. Unfortunately a map of the current draft Future Land Use Map is only available at a low resolution, so these images cannot be updated.

Antoinette van Zelm, Assistant Director of the Center for Historic Preservation, wrote the Advance Knox project team in April 2023 and provided additional context:

Tennessee Century Farms are shining examples of Tennessee's agricultural history. Century Farm families have played leading roles in not just the state's agricultural history but in its educational, religious, and economic history. Countless Century Farm families founded rural schools and churches across the state. These farms are jewels of historic and landscape preservation. Some of the farms even go back to 1796 or earlier—these

are the Pioneer Century Farms that represent the earliest years of European settlement across the state.




I hope the below information provides insight and prompts you to amend the proposed Growth Plan Map to place these in the Rural Area of the county.

--Kevin

**Yarnell Family Farm** at 10805 Hardin Valley Rd. The Yarnell Farm was recognized at the May 2022 Knox County Commission meeting for being designated a Tennessee Century Farm ([R-22-5-104](#))

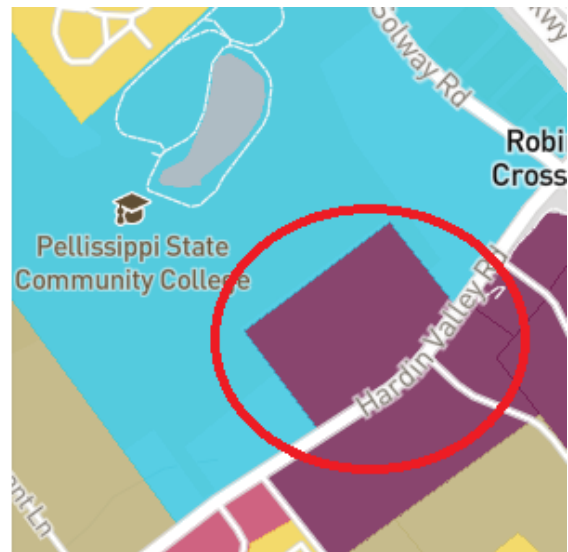
### Future Land Use (Placetype)

#### WALKABLE COMPACT GROWTH

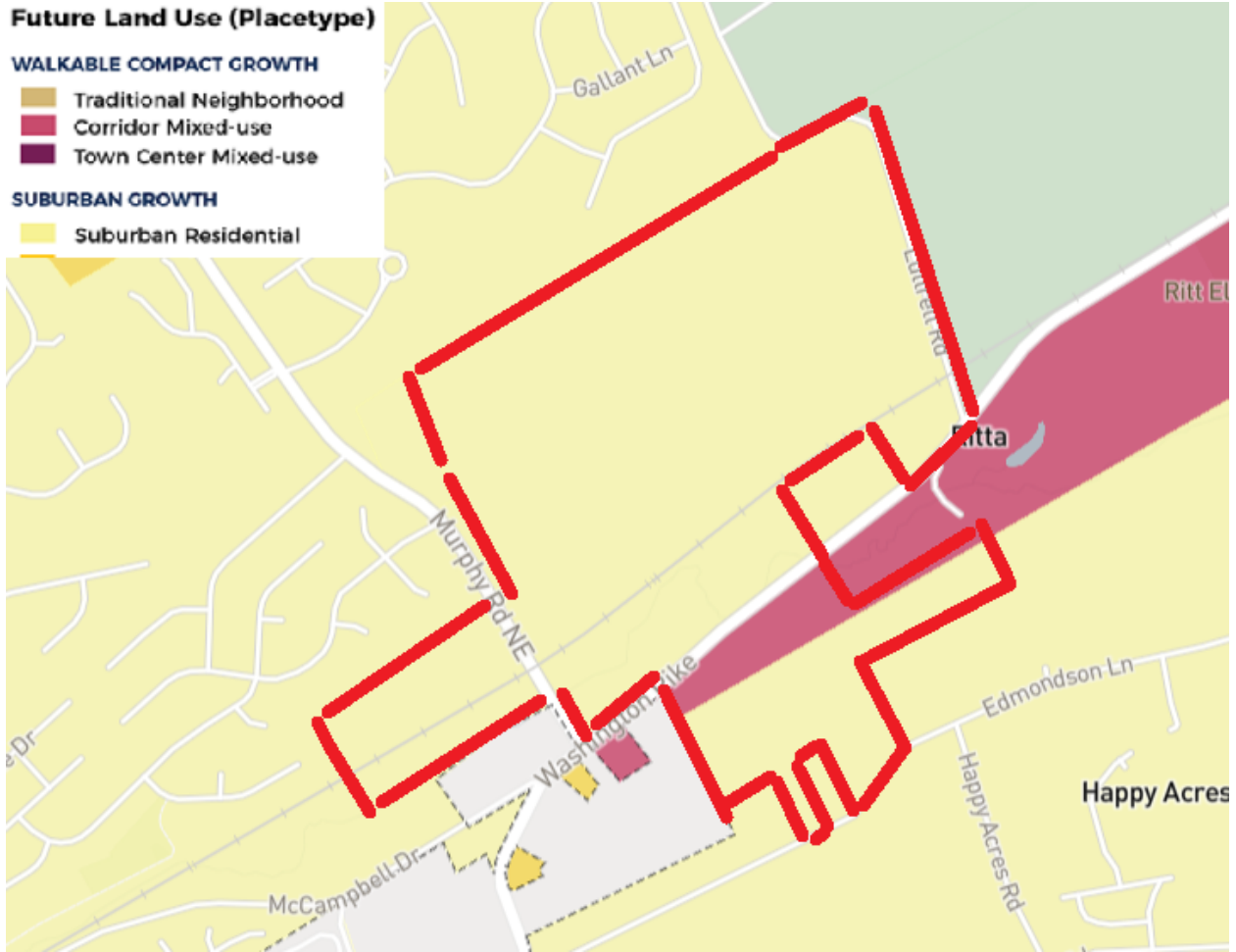
-  Traditional Neighborhood
-  Corridor Mixed-use
-  Town Center Mixed-use

#### SUBURBAN GROWTH

-  Suburban Residential
-  Suburban Mixed Residential
-  Corridor Commercial
-  Business Park



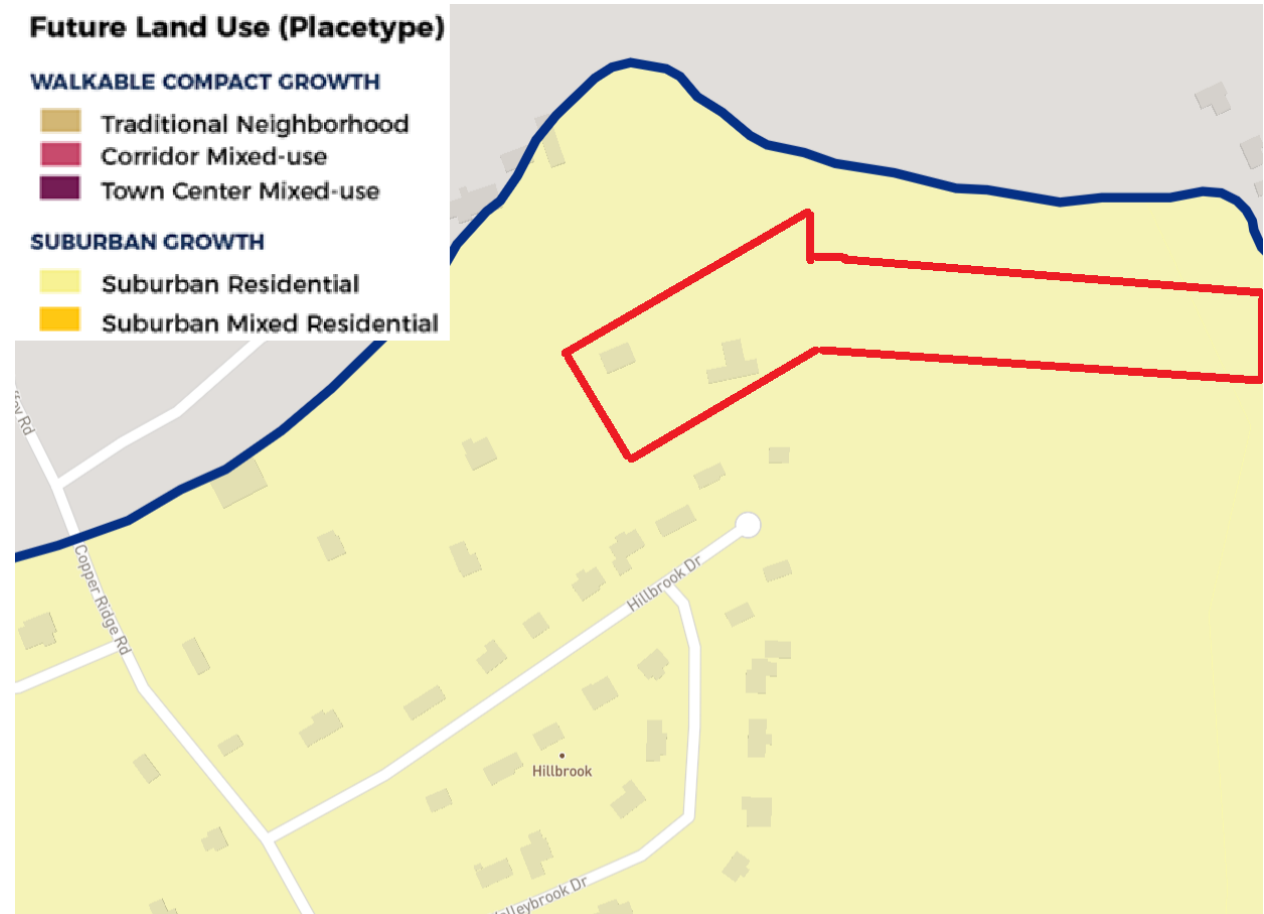
**Murphy Springs Farm**, at Murphy Rd / Washington Pike. The Murphy Farm was honored by the Knox County Commission at the May 2022 meeting for reaching 225 years as a Century farm ([R-22-5-105](#)). About 185 acres of the 205 acres is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Murphy Springs Farm Historic District ([listing 14001034](#)).



**Green Acres Farms**, at 8821 Mascot Rd and established in 1803, is owned by Mike and Susan Clark. This century farm has been operated by the same family for more than 200 years. The Clarks have spent years working on recommended grazing and soil conservation practices with the local NRCS and Soil Conservation District. You can read about their practices here: <https://www.nacdnet.org/soil-champs/southeast/mike-susan-clark/>. This 200+ year old Century Farm is identified as a Traditional Neighborhood Placetype in the Advance Knox Plan.



**Gregory Farms**, in Karns on the Knox County / Anderson County line at 4002 Copper Ridge Rd, is slated for the Suburban Residential placetype. The Gregory Century Farm was established in 1902, and maintains an active horse training and boarding operation (<https://www.gregoryfarmstn.com/>)

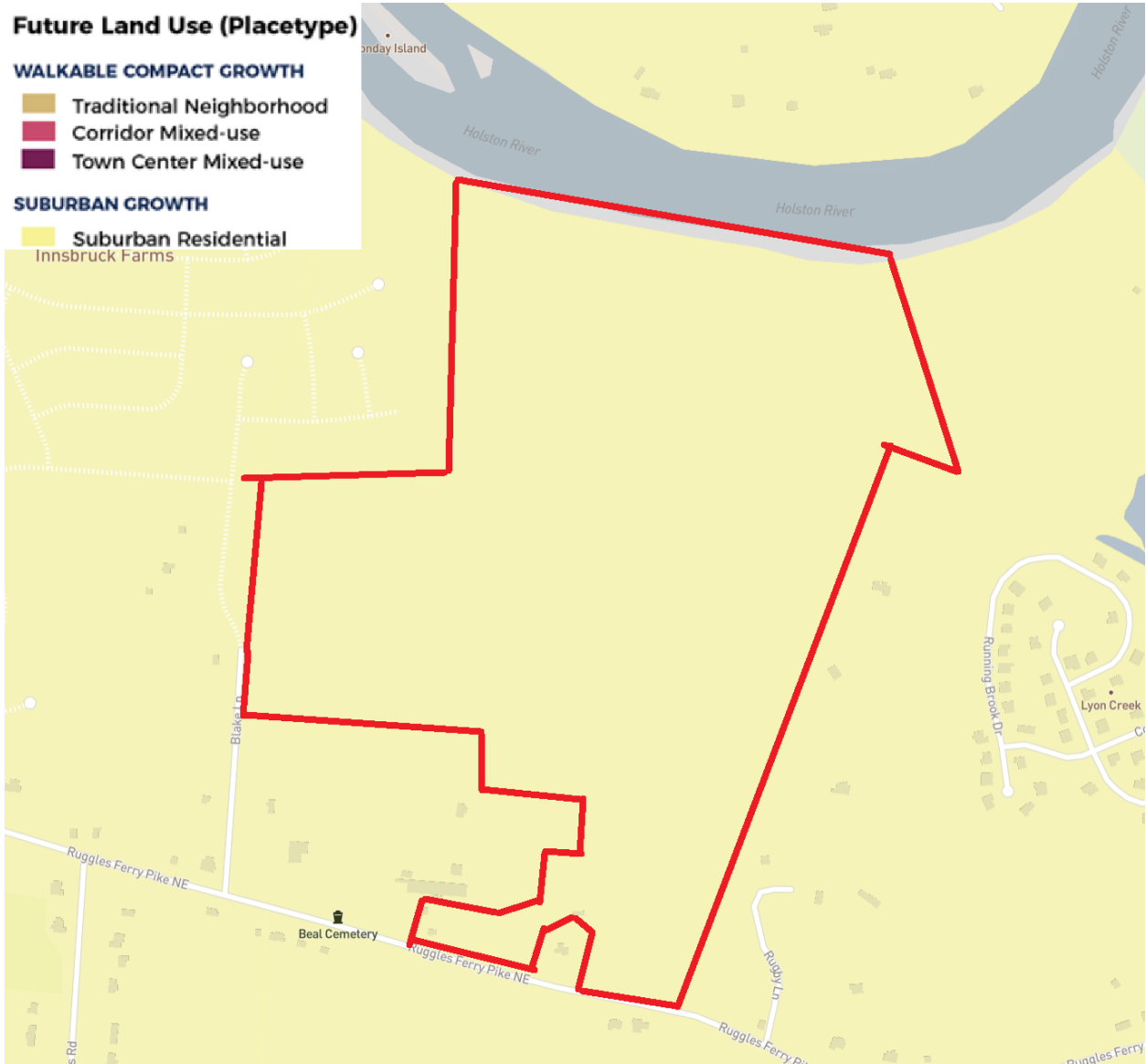


**Ragle Family Farm**, a Century Farm established in 1885, is located in the fast growing Hardin Valley area where Couch Mill and Williams Bend Road meet. A portion of the farm is slated for Rural Living, but south of Couch Mill Rd it is slated for Suburban Residential.



The following are not Century Farms, but are still long-owned family farms that are eligible for the Century Farm designation yet are located in the Planned Growth Area. This is not a comprehensive list.

The **Blake Farm** is on south side of the Holston River and north of Ruggles Ferry Pike at 8831 N Ruggles Ferry Pike. It is the eastern portion of the family's holdings that go back to at least 1906 if not much earlier. This large parcel of over 170 acres is slated to be Suburban Residential, but it has a large amount of Prime Farm Land and Locally Important Soil.



Last but certainly not least is the largest continuously owned farm in Knox County, the **Strong Stock Farm**. Established circa 1791, it is eligible to be a Pioneer Century Farm. With significant frontage on the Holston River, and a house that has been identified as eligible to be listed on the National Historic Register (the Strong-Kern House, depicted on the KGIS Historic Resources layer), this farm also contains a large amount of prime farmland soil and locally important soil. At over 900 acres, the entire farm is slated for Suburban Residential.

