

(Updated 2024-Jan-09 with additional supporters)

Dear Growth Plan Committee,

The group “Advocates for Balanced Growth” (knoxgrowth.org) has asked for Supporters and also posted a [petition](#) on our website since late November where individuals have signed supporting the positions of Advocates for Balanced Growth. Our posted position is:

We support planning that balances our growing population with the natural beauty and agrarian traditions of our county. New and infill growth should be well planned, attractive, and include developments with a variety of housing options, retail and restaurants, schools, parks, and other amenities for the growing population.

Our belief is this is best accomplished by focusing growth near existing infrastructure. If growth is needed away from existing infrastructure and services, then near-term funding must be identified for expanded infrastructure and services. We desire a combination of infill and more compact development along existing major corridors, and some modest expansion of the Planned Growth Area.

We do not support subdivisions sprawling out and onto our farmland. These cost us our rural landscape, they de-value or destroy agricultural assets and the livelihoods and traditions of farmers. Advance Knox’s [fiscal analysis](#) demonstrates that low density suburban residential is a net-loss for county taxpayers.

Farms, natural areas, and the urban proximity to these spaces are an important part of this region and why so many people have chosen to live, work, and raise our families in Knox County.

Again, we understand the need for growth, but we advocate building in ways that accommodate both the livelihoods of the farmers and communities around them (who have been here for decades and longer), AND the needs of new residents coming into our area.

We specifically ask that the Growth Plan Coordinating Committee consider and make amendments that:

1. Retract (shrink) the Planned Growth Area for areas with Prime and Locally Important Farmland Soil and Environmental Habitat. Keep these spaces in the Rural Area.
2. Place our [Century Farms](#) and large agricultural farms in the Rural Area. Century Farms have been farmed by the same family for more than 100 years.
3. Promote a compact pattern of development, which will direct new growth and redevelopment to areas with infrastructure, thus reducing the cost of providing new services to far-flung areas of the country.

The following organizations, farms, and neighborhoods are listed as “Supporters” on our website (<https://knoxgrowth.org/supporters>):

Farms and Farmers

Blake Farm, Ruggles Ferry
Bullrun Farm, Heiskell
Chandler Tree Farm, Cedar Grove
Copeland Farms, Corryton
DeBevoise Farm, Ruggles Ferry
Don Gordon, South Knox County
Green Acres Farm, Mascot
Hartsong Farm, Ritta
G T Farms, Carter
Joker Farm / Holston River Bison, Ruggles Ferry
Maple Grove Farm, Ritta
McFalls Family Farms,
Murphy Springs Farm, Ritta
Strong Stock Farm, Rutledge Pike
Stoutt Farm, Ruggles Ferry
Thompson Tender Beef, Corryton
Vannland Farm, Ruggles Ferry
Zavels Family Farms, Corryton

Other Organizations

Knox-Union Cattleman’s Association
Tennessee Foundation for Conservation and Stewardship

Neighborhoods and Community Groups

Knox County Planning Alliance (KCPA)
Gibbs Planning Advocates
Hardin Valley Planning Advocates
Northshore Corridor Association
Ritta Planning Advocates
Ruggles Ferry Community Association

The following Knox County residents have signed the petition and optionally provided the following comments about it:

Name	Comment (optional)
Charles M	I have always been a Knox county resident a strawberry plains native. I moved to Rutledge pike 11 years ago to make a home for my young family as I worked on Washington pike in 11 years the growth has brought families new opportunities but also brought a lot of danger in transportation. This area in the past year has had so many accidents on narrow road ways or un marked small roads. This is what living rural means the world tends to slow down a bit people look out for neighbors and land. These open tracts these fields that the high ups see as a cash machine are already producing steady and generational money for families with hay crops or soy bean crops, we are a very highly listed tobacco crop county these things are necessary just as housing. We all understand the need for homes we also understand that these homes are not primarily affordable for the people here in this rural area of Knoxville consider a movement that has readily accessible roads that are consumer friendly places where tractors don't still work these plots and streets. We need better solutions aside from dollars in our eyes ultimately we need more time it's neither convenient nor realistic to shove a list of homes import families and wash hands with everything surrounding that gets left. Legitimate planning and time frames honest answers and solutions and accountability tied to to answers. We are Tennesseans and we are volunteers but we also need to save our rural work force that helps stock the grocery stores and the gas station shelf. Its not much but it's a thought thank you.
Lee A	
Herbert A	
Rebekkah M	
Daniel G	
HVPA H	
Allen G	
Penny H	There is no way our schools and roads can handle thie additional numbers. With the new developments this past year, it has also increased more accidents in our area. Also once the Farmland is gone..it is gone Forever. No thought has been given about the outcome of what this will do to our future. It is going to be devastating. We chose to Live in the Country not the City...
Suzannah C	
Melissa S	I am very concerned the growth plan soes not take in consideration the vital farms, woodlands and grasslands that are being consumed by excessive sprawl. It would be better to consider revitalizing and renewing areas that have had housing which is not being utilized. Dollars and focus need to be used for current road improvements, safety, and infrastructure that is failing. I would like for our representatives to make plans on improving what is now here rather than over burdening the system and allowing sprawl onto the open lands of the county. Many are of historical significance which is being overlooked.
Ann B	
Colleen C	
James R	
Donna V	I am extremely concerned with the growth plans for the beautiful (and needed) farmland in East Knox county. Knox county seems to only be about greed not the land. Once the land is ruined it's forever ruined. Knox county is a hodgepodge of a huge mess. I pray this changes with this committee
Charles C	My land has been in the family since the early 1790's. It is a registered tree farm and in the green belt. My son and I are developing a food forest and apiary featuring AZ hives.

Name	Comment (optional)
Rhonda M	
Mandy S	
Jeremy M	
Allen G	
Sarah H	
Nadine P	
CASANDRA D	
Ivan C	
Deetra M	I currently live in an area that is being considered for "proposed" growth.
Kim W	
Elizabeth C	
June L	Stop the Urban Sprawl toward Northeast Knox County
Angie T	<p>Just because so many people want to move to Corryton, Gibbs, Ritta area does not mean provisions should be made to accommodate all of them, especially when it directly and negatively impacts the residents that have called the area home and many for generations. This is not the only area for people to move to however politicians, developers and real estate agents are only looking at the money and are trying to take much needed and desired farmland and forever do away with it. WE the residents that have chosen to live here all our lives should have the biggest voice in this, not those desiring to live here and definitely not those that stand to profit. The traffic in the last few years has already become a jammed up mess. The infrastructure is not capable of handling this kind of growth neither is the schools.</p>
Mary C	
Angi C	
Kelly K	
Grant P	
Heather C	
Terry W	
Tess M	Finish destroying Hardin Valley, but leave the north/northeast alone! We moved here for a reason and are worthy of living the life we want. Don't just hunt for more money. Keep a balanced county. We need local farmers not more traffic.
Sarah W	I live near Wise Springs on Washington Pike, and strongly agree that the area should be left alone! Traffic is already bad, and I moved to this area 10 years ago because I love the rural setting and back roads, farms, and sprawling land. KEEP GROWTH OUT. Especially subdivisions
Jay B	
Karen N	
Rheanna M	
Katrina M	
Nick W	
Michelle G	We support a plan that will protect our existing farmland and rural areas. We do not support over development, widening roads, and overstressing our infrastructure.

Name	Comment (optional)
Sarah J	
Tim C	
Dorothy H	They already have started on Brakebill road and Hammer. All the deer and turkeys have been pushed out. It's terrible they clear cut.
Rachel F	
Amber S	We are farmers. We love our rural communities and would like to keep them that way. There is no real housing shortage. We need to get democrats out of office so they will stop sending our money to help other countries when we can't even afford to help our own people, veterans, foster children etc. APR interests rates need to go down so people can afford to buy homes. Luttrell has brand new 1600sq foot homes on Main Street trying to sell them for \$300,000 that absolutely ridiculous for small home.
Eric B	Slow down on this growth plan, it needs a second look
Charles C	
Jason C	
Stephen C	
Mary G	
Jennifer D	
Janet G	
Femeika E	
Ronald S	
Wesley O	What infrastructure plans does the county propose to accommodate this growth we are already far behind the population growth in terms of our roadways
Stephen L	
Jeff D	
Danny M	
Rocky N	
Raymond M	Knox county and surrounding area are not providing the infrastructure for the growth. Developers ignore the requirements and pay a small fine and continue building in spite of the law.
Justin L	
Fran W	
Ann S	
Ann S	
Mary A	
Frank A	
Kristie L	There destroying the rural areas and we cannot even get to work the growth has been so overwhelming for this community!!
Paul L	
Melissa B	
Stephanie G	
Colleen M	
Katherine A	I requested to OPT OUT of the planned growth area that is purposed.

Name	Comment (optional)
Meg G	I live on 10 acres in East Knox County, where we have a small farm. I also work as a nurse practitioner within Knoxville city limits. I love Knox County and want to stay here BECAUSE it is rural. Please preserve our natural areas and our farm land!
George D	The economic health and certainty of a city or county ought not be limited to the outmoded notion of (plan-oriented) maps wherein the distribution of the development of new properties (residential or commercial) are presumed to spread horizontally across hundreds, if not thousands of often unspoiled open natural landscape. Forward thinking municipalities have long ago abandoned such restricted vision and "visioning". We live in a four-dimensional world (as time is a critical part of any planning process). Knox county can still claim the remains of fragments of the lyrical landscapes that drew many here generations ago, some dating back to before Tennessee was a state. The current plan will do much to eradicate much of that landscape and worse, add to already over-burdened roadways, particularly along Washington Pike. I drive in that area many times a week. It is already a dangerous place to drive with over-developed roadways lined with commercial buildings and asphalt parking lots, all degrading the natural environment with increased polluted runoff. More development will make it only make it more so. Expanding existing infrastructure will only lead to more proposals for more development and increased traffic. All research on this topic supports this endless spiral. There are ways to DIRECT development and "grow the pie" without tattooing open green fields with more suburban sprawl.
nathan h	
Paul B	
Scott s	
Corey D	
Alexandria L	
Mike P	
Prescott S	
Jeremiah w	
Traci G	
Samantha F	
Samantha F	
Andrea C	
Wendy B	
Kim F	Concerned about condition of road ways
Patricia S	There is already traffic difficulties if you live in NE Knox County. Most of the roads that run East to West (Emory Road, Washington Pike, are two lane roads that are not maintained well to begin with; add more traffic and it will get much worse. Traffic around the East Towne Mall area is already getting out of hand. We need to protect our farms and the land surrounding them for the future of our children and grand children.
Teresa B	I support the initiative to protect Knox county's agriculture and farmlands. The beauty of our natural landscape is a precious resource, once gone it's gone. We cannot regrow our land. It's the main reason I recently moved outside of city limits to the county.
Kelly L	

Name	Comment (optional)
James B	I support protecting Knox County farmlands & limiting multiple development of subdivisions.
Judith M	I've been questioning how long this growth would continue and how we could save our bush and farmlands. I will continue to say that if developers and realtors stop developing at the extent it has been going, we could slow down the overdevelopment. And it is indeed overdevelopment. I'm very concerned of a domino effect of the worse if it doesn't stop!
Melissa J	
Todd S	Growth only works if transportation and utilities are addressed prior to growth and expansion. The North/North-East Knoxville transportation arteries and utility districts are already overloaded and the utilities, water and sewer, are overpriced. Expansion will only exacerbate the issues if not addressed in advance of allowing new housing to be placed. This should NOT be a direct tax increase to the existing residents but rather a tax to the developers who are bringing additional people and congestion to the area. I am not in favor of high density development.
david k	still learning more about it. i want to see an increase in city density and not suburban sprall
Brandon C	
Glenn G	
Christine G	Please stop destroying all our farm land and forest. Most of us live here because we like the farm/forest land. If we wanted big city with house in top of house we would live in West Knoxville or other high population areas. Stop this growth, with growth comes more crime, congested roadways and unhappy people. Also, the wildlife that people associate with the mountains of TN have no place to go. You are forcing them into neighborhoods which causes a whole new issue!! Stop the American greed.
Ethan A	Hello, my name is Ethan. I live on Washington pike, Corryton Tennessee. My family has lived here in the Corryton and Knoxville for over 200 years. I love this area but my heart hurts when I see a new subdivision take over a once beautiful farm. Now with this growth plan it seems to be the nail in the coffin for the rural aspect of Knox county in East Knox. I hope that we can fight and get this changed. I am not opposed to growth but like y'all's page says we need to protect are farms and rural nature of our county.
Jason S	Our roads cannot handle the growth, stop letting contractors build cheap neighborhoods in rural areas! I moved to a rural area to get way from this!
Jill E	
Bekkah M	
Andrea R	
Maja R	
Gretchen K	
Marty S	
Maggie L	Best ways to oppose expansion and a more thoughtful development plan.
Steven L	
Meghann H	
Queena J	I am gravely concerned about the loss of farmland to housing, multi-family housing, and infrastructure overload. Overpopulation of rural areas is not the answer, and Knox County natives should not bear the burden of burgeoning growth plans that will deplete natural resources, strain our school systems, increase traffic, pollution and litter, and eradicate farmland and soil. Instead of taking more farmland, hold

Name	Comment (optional)
	developers accountable for long-term use of older buildings, shopping centers, and rundown subdivisions. We don't need "more," we need to clean up what we have.
Eric J	Preserve our farmland and protect our natural resources.
Joyce F	
David P	Please help preserve what makes our City ' County what they are and limit development of farms and open spaces- once they are gone Knoxville will be like any other over crowded urban sprawl called a "city"
Guy B	My wife and I moved away from an area because of rapid growth, an area we raised our family in, the schools and the community! A place we loved, but the growth was so rapid, this area seem to change overnight, the Powell community! We moved into the Corryton/Gibbs community hoping for that quiet, rural living. And after a year of living here, they have already started a new subdivision that does NOT fit, or looks like it belongs in this community! My hope for this beautiful community and land area is that it stays that way!
Kevin K	No growth please
Lisa S	The plan needs some adjustments because we don't need such a large Planned Growth area, especially with mostly suburban development planned for that area, which will encourage sprawl.
Janice T	
Jim H	The solution to the projected housing shortage is density in areas where infrastructure can support density, not by placing two homes per acre on farms and open spaces.
Anna K	Knoxville is a special city because of these open spaces and beautiful rural farmlands. The anticipated growth is in large part because of how Knoxville has maintained conservation and local agriculture. People are moving here to avoid sprawl, not contribute to it. This proposed growth map goes against the heart beat of what makes Knoxville unique and will inevitably also impact tourist dollars, farmers markets, and food systems. We need to protect these spaces, not build subdivisions.
David W	The roads can't handle the traffic now
Drew W	There has to be some sort of preservation of the rural history of NE Knox county (Gibbs, Corryton, Ridgeview Heights, etc.). The developments that have been created in the past 10 years alone have contributed to the growing traffic problem our infrastructure is not capable of handling, and there has been an incredible loss of the green space that not only contributes to the signature look of the area but also acts as a home for the variety of wildlife that is unique to our area. The plan that is being proposed only solves the issue of housing without providing any satisfactory answer to how our infrastructure will be able to handle the resulting growth in population. The destruction of what was previously large swaths of farmland to build new housing will ultimately result in an incredible loss of character and heritage for these areas around Knoxville. There must be a balance of development and conservation, and recent trends have unfortunately leaned towards unchecked development. The gentrification of the area is pushing those who have lived here for generations out as they can no longer afford to keep the land they have lived on. The current plans of growth in Knox county cannot go into effect without serious revision.
Mary L	I oppose the current growth plan.
Eric J	We, Vestal Community, residents are seeking to transition our community away from heavy polluting, and dangerous heavy industrial along Maryville Pike to more a peaceful residential neighborhood by adopting solar energy through KUB at the heavily polluted sites along Maryville Pike and increased residential in keeping with the preferences and needs of our community. We are an active and involved Vestal Community Organization ready to advocate for the protection and enhancement of our Vestal Community. Eric Johnson, President, Vestal Community Organization 865-771-6223
Kent M	

Name	Comment (optional)
Chloe C	
Jessica R	
Jill K	Input from the people who live in communities where development is proposed needs to be considered.
Todd R	Do not impede on our rural areas.
ALEX E	
Jennette H	
Albert L	
Carrie J	
Pam T	
Donna R	
Ann M	
Coy C	
Savannah P	How are they going to accommodate for the growth at the local schools? Ritta and Corryton Elementary are already at very large class sizes.
James C	
David P	i'm in favor of farms, conservation of resources, and wilderness preservation. i'm in favor of low taxes for actual farming families from Tennessee and high taxes for Amazon, Walmart, and immigrants, especially industries and developers from other counties, states, and countries. Dollar General is killing East Tennessee: let's kick them out!
Brenda H	Our roads in the Washington Pike and Gibbs area will not support any further growth!
Carol P	I live on Burkhart Road on a 14 acre farm. I would like to know if there are any upcoming meetings. I was there at the December meeting downtown and plan to attend on January 10.
Dale M	I'm an artist and creative director and I use the farms and natural areas (with permission) as subjects and inspiration for my work. I moved to the county, off Washington Pike for the forest, fields and streams not spoiled by intense development but they are already beginning to scraped off large sections at an alarming rate. I know Washington Pike is a very old and historic road which I hope deserves some protection of it's scenic farms and natural beauty.
Bryan B	The disregard for the importance of rural and undeveloped lands is short sighted and disturbing. Unchecked sprawl must stop.
Axel R	
Suzanne M	I would like a sign for our yard. Where/how can I order one?
Ann R	How do we verify our land has been opted out?
Dana C	
Chris J	
George B	70,000 news residents over 20 years is ludicrous.Do the math it works out to 10 per day.
Regina D	
Timothy D	
Gwen B	
Kate H	Keep North Knoxville (Gibbs/Ritta) rural!
Angela S	
Dean S	
Peggy S	
Judy H	
Mikayla B	STOP BUILDING OUT HERE!!!!!!
Lauren S	
David S	Slow down

Name	Comment (optional)
Shawntal A	
Joseph A	
Sierra A	
Brandy W	We love country living! We don't want the city creeping its way out here. That's why we live where we do, to enjoy the rural life.
Kat J	
Brook A	
Robbin K	Please leave the farm land alone
Blake R	Why do you continue to want to destroy the land just to build apartments low income at that an bring trash into the area of farmers an hunters we have enough problems with crowded an over populated areas we do not need to help that problem inside why don't you put the money into land conservation an actually grow into making more wooded areas an place why children can learn about life
Taylor P	
Lance S	
Jeff H	What safeguards are planned for existing core community members? Do we have any options for decreasing light pollution, or evaporation from over paving? How will fight smithbuilt and the county when they demand a large portion of front yard for their "new town"? I'm paying for it, whats in it for me?
Robin M	
Whitney V	
Jeff H	
christi s	
Elizabeth T	Keep Knox County beautiful and rural!!
Glenda C	
Elizabeth C	
Faith B	
Sara K	
Illabelle L	
Allen M	
Kathy B	
Joey G	I plan on speaking at the forum. I'm both a farm owner of 70 acres on the Washington pike area (the old Ted Lay farm) as well as a business owner with offices in market square. As I plan my talk, how long do they give you the floor to speak so I can plan?
Dan B	Current Growth Plan does not promote re-development of vacated properties within City limits. There are several such parcels (empty car dealer and closed commercial properties) that appear appropriate for re-development as apartments, condos, etc. which would be within walking distance of Public Transportation (KAT) which couldd "dovetail" into the proposed Traffic Plan without disturbing every patch of rural land available. In short, the County residents seem to bear the burden of growth more than City entities.
Dawn H	I moved out of the city for a reason. Do not want it coming to me.
Heather B	
Thomas H	
Lori B	Glen Jacob's leave knox county the way it is, rural. We appreciate our agricultural land and our lower taxes.
Shirley H	I don't want to live in the city, and I certainly don't want it to come to me. The land in the country would be farmed if the government ever supported the farmers that have fed us for generations, but they would rather give it to subsidize people that haven't earned it. Put them to work instead of teaching them to sitick their hands out. Build high rise government apartment housing and patrol it.

Name	Comment (optional)
Kelly L	

These are sincere comments submitted about this issue, and we hope that you will take the time to read them and consider them.

Sincerely,

--Kevin

Kevin Murphy, on behalf of Advocates for Balanced Growth