



SUBDIVISION REPORT - CONCEPT/DEVELOPMENT PLAN

▶ **FILE #:** 2-SD-26-C
2-E-26-DP

AGENDA ITEM #: 33
AGENDA DATE: 2/12/2026

▶ **SUBDIVISION:** SIMMONS' FARM ON ROBERTS ROAD

▶ **APPLICANT/DEVELOPER:** JOSH SANDERSON

OWNER(S): Josh Sanderson Smithbilt Homes

TAX IDENTIFICATION: 22 00514

[View map on KGIS](#)

JURISDICTION: County Commission District 8

STREET ADDRESS: 6701 ROBERTS RD

▶ **LOCATION:** West side of Roberts Rd, north of Washington Pk

GROWTH POLICY PLAN: Rural Area

FIRE DISTRICT: Rural Metro Fire

WATERSHED: Flat Creek

▶ **APPROXIMATE ACREAGE:** 74.73 acres

▶ **ZONING:** PR (Planned Residential) up to 2 DU/AC

PLACE TYPE: RL (Rural Living)

▶ **EXISTING LAND USE:** Agriculture/Forestry/Vacant Land

▶ **PROPOSED USE:** Detached residential subdivision

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING:
North: Agricultural/forestry/vacant land - A (Agricultural)
South: Single family residential, agricultural/forestry/vacant land - A (Agricultural), PR (Planned Residential) up to 3 du/ac
East: Agricultural/forestry/vacant land - A (Agricultural)
West: Public-quasi public land (TVA substation), transportation/communications/utilities (KUB substation) - A (Agricultural)

▶ **NUMBER OF LOTS:** 149

SURVEYOR/ENGINEER: Wanis A. Rghebi, PE Southland Engineering Consultants, LLC

ACCESSIBILITY: Access is via Roberts Road, a major collector with a pavement width of 20 ft within a 50-ft right-of-way.

▶ **SUBDIVISION VARIANCES REQUIRED:** VARIANCES
None

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARDS REQUIRING KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL
None

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARDS REQUIRING KNOX COUNTY ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS APPROVAL (PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED)

1. Increase the maximum intersection grade from 1% to 1.02% on Road 'B' at Road 'A'.

2. Increase the maximum intersection grade from 1% to 1.5% on Road 'D' at Roberts Road.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

► **Approve the Concept Plan subject to 14 conditions.**

- 1) Connection to sanitary sewer and meeting other relevant utility provider requirements.
- 2) Provision of street names consistent with the Uniform Street Naming and Addressing System within Knox County (County Ord. 91-1-102).
- 3) REVISED (2/10/2026)- Implementing the recommendations of the Simmons' Farm Traffic Impact Study (Cannon & Cannon, 10/28/2024) as required by Knox County Engineering and Public Works and the Tennessee Department of Transportation during the design plan phase (see Exhibit B), excluding the recommendation of a westbound left turn lane on Emory Road at the Roberts Road intersection, and partnering with Knox County to install an advanced warning flasher with radar detection on both Emory Road and Roberts Road (see Exhibit C).
- 4) REVISED (2/10/2026)- Entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with Knox County Engineering and Public Works for completing off-site improvements per Chapter 54, Article V of the Knox County Code (Ord. O-23-4-102). The County will engage the developer's TIA preparer to create an estimate to complete the left turn lane required at Roberts Roads and Washington Pike, and once the developer has submitted the corresponding funds equal to the estimate, the County will design and implement a larger project to align the northern and southern Roberts Road intersections. The cost sharing agreement for the advanced warning flashers on E. Emory Road and Roberts Road, as outlined in condition #3, will be determined during the design plan phase.
- 5) If during design plan approval or construction of the development, it is discovered that unforeseen off-site improvements within the right-of-way are necessary, the developer will either enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the County for these improvements or reimburse the County for their direct expenses (if completed by County crews) to make corrections deemed necessary.
- 6) Labeling Lot 17 as a Common Area lot on the final plat, such as CA1, to indicate it is not a house lot.
- 7) Submitting a geotechnical report for review and approval by Knox County Engineering and Public Works during the design plan phase to determine if any areas shown as closed contour sinkholes on the concept plan are required to be shown on the final plat as a closed contour sinkhole with a 50 ft building setback (buffer) as required by Section 3.06.B of the Subdivision Regulations. If it is determined by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) that the feature is not a sinkhole, or Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works staff determines that the closed contour designation on KGIS is the result of a manmade feature, the feature will not have to be designated on the plat. If the approved geotechnical report determines that a closed contour identified by Knox County Engineering and Public Works is not a sinkhole, the certification to be provided by Knox County Engineering and Public Works must be placed on the final plat and sealed by the applicant's engineer.
- 8) Adding a note on the final plat that all structures will have to be located outside of the 50-foot setback area unless a geotechnical study prepared by a registered engineer states that building within the 50' sinkhole/closed contour area setback is acceptable and the study is approved by the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works. The geotechnical study must be reviewed and approved prior to approval of a plat for any proposed lots that do not have an adequate building area outside of the 50-foot setback area. Building construction is not permitted within the sinkhole/closed contour area or within any required drainage easement for the sinkhole/closed contour area.
- 9) Certifying that the required sight distance is available along Roberts Road in both directions at the Road 'D' intersection, with documentation provided to the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works for review and approval during the design plan phase.
- 10) All double frontage lots must meet the requirements of Section 3.02.A.4. of the Subdivision Regulations.
- 11) Providing the total acreage of the property (parcel 022-00514) on the subdivision's final plats per condition #2 of the Development Plan (2-E-26-DP) to confirm the proposed 149 lots (dwellings) does not exceed 2 du/ac.
- 12) Meet all applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Ordinance.
- 13) Meet all applicable requirements of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works.
- 14) Before certification of the final plat for the subdivision, establish a property owners association or other legal entity responsible for maintaining common facilities, such as common areas, amenities, private roads, and/or stormwater drainage systems.

► **Approve the development plan for up to 149 detached residential lots, subject to 2 conditions.**

- 1) Meeting all other applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Ordinance.
- 2) The subdivision shall not exceed 149 residential lots (dwellings) based on plan note #5 on the concept plan, which states the property is approximately 74.73 acres. If the total area of the property is less than 74.5 acres,

the maximum number of residential lots (dwellings) must be reduced to conform with the maximum density of 2 du/ac.

With the conditions noted, this plan meets the requirements for approval in the PR zone and the criteria for approval of a development plan.

COMMENTS:

REVISION (2/10/2026) -- Conditions #3 and #4 were modified per the recommendation of TDOT and Knox County Engineering and Public Works to install advanced warning flashers with radar along these roadways in lieu of a westbound left turn lane on E. Emory Road at the Roberts Road intersection. The turn lane is currently warranted without the development. However, sight distance does not meet the minimum standard looking east along E. Emory Road, and the left-turn movements from Roberts Road onto E. Emory Road would be impacted by the development. Therefore, the advanced warning signs will be installed as a partnership between Knox County and the developer.

This proposal is for a 149-lot detached residential subdivision on the 74.73-acre property at a density of 1.99 du/ac. The majority of the lots are clustered on 28.5 acres on the eastern portion of the property, closer to Roberts Road. The remainder of the property is split into several lots larger than 1-acre, a 17-acre lot, and a 5-acre common area. The southwestern portion of the site is identified as a wetland, with a 50-ft buffer. The property was rezoned from A (Agricultural) to PR (Planned Residential) up to 2 du/ac in March 2024 (2-J-24-RZ).

BACKGROUND

In November 2024, the Planning Commission approved a 141-lot concept plan and development plan for this property (11-SA-24-C / 11-A-24-DP), with a lot and road layout similar to the current proposal. The main difference between the previous (2024) and current (2026) subdivision plan is that the 2024 plan labeled the western portion of the property as "future development". The Planning Commission's approval of the development plan (11-A-24-DP) was appealed and heard by the Knox County Board of Zoning Appeals in January 2025 (BZA file # 24-Z0069). The motion to uphold the Planning Commission's approval failed 2-7, rendering the appeal approved and denying the development plan. In addition, this rendered the concept plan approval null and void. The rationale for denying the development plan was not provided in a motion, but a primary concern expressed by the board members was that the rear (western) 48-acre portion of the property lacked a proposed use and was labeled "future development". This has been addressed by proposing 7 large house lots and 1 common area.

TRANSPORTATION IMPACT STUDY (TIS)

The TIS studied the impact of the additional traffic at the proposed Roberts Road access points and the intersections of Washington Pike to the south and E. Emory Road to the north. The conclusions of the study are:

1. Install a left turn lane (50 feet storage) on E. Emory Road (SR 331) at Roberts Road intersection.
 UPDATE (2/10/2026)- TDOT and Knox County Engineering and Public Works recommend installing advanced warning signs with radar on E. Emory Road and Roberts Road in lieu of the turn lane. The TIS preparers recommendation regarding the advanced warning flashers is provided in Exhibit C.
2. At the intersections of Roberts Road at Washington Pike, a left turn lane is warranted during the PM peak hour at the eastern intersection and during the AM peak hour at the western intersection. Due to the proximity of the eastern and western intersections of Roberts Road at Washington Pike (around 200 feet), installing left turn lanes for opposing movements would not be easily accommodated. It is recommended to realign Roberts Road to create a more traditional four-way intersection to accommodate the additional traffic associated with this development.
3. Maintain intersection corner sight distances on the site driveways by ensuring that new site signage and landscaping is appropriately located.

The County will engage the developer's TIS preparer to create an estimate to complete the left turn lane required at Roberts Roads and Washington Pike, and once the developer has submitted the corresponding funds equal to the estimate, the County will design and implement a larger project to align the northern and southern Roberts Road intersections.

ALTERNATIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

The applicant requests to increase the maximum intersection grade from 1% to 1.02% on Road 'B' at Road 'A',

and to 1.5% on Road 'B' at Road 'D'. Knox County Engineering and Public Works can approve an intersection grade of up to 2% when there is a crosswalk and 3% when there is no crosswalk.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN ANALYSIS PER ARTICLE 6, SECTION 6.50.06 (APPROVAL OR DENIAL)

In the exercise of its administrative judgment, the Planning Commission shall determine if the proposed plan is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance and adopted plans.

1) ZONING ORDINANCE

PR (Planned Residential) up to 2 du/ac:

A. The PR zone allows detached houses as a permitted use. The administrative procedures for the PR zone require the Planning Commission to approve the development plan before permits can be issued (Article 5, Section 5.13.15).

B. The proposed density is 1.99 du/ac. Because the concept plan states the total acreage is approximately 74.73 acres and the proposed density is so close to exceeding the maximum allowed, development plan condition #2 states that the number of lots must be reduced to conform with the maximum density of 2 du/ac if the total area of the property is less than 74.5 acres.

C. The property has two closed contours that must be studied during the design plan phase to determine if they are sinkholes. If they are determined to be sinkholes, the proposed lots that do not have buildable areas outside of the top of the sinkhole must be eliminated or combined with adjacent lots.

2) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES

A. The subdivision has 5 acres (lot 17) identified as common area, approximately 3 acres of which is identified as wetland or wetland buffer. This is consistent with Policy 7, to encourage development practices that conserve and connect natural features and habitat. The remainder of the 8-acre wetland is primarily on the adjacent 17-acre lot (lot 40), with small areas on lots 20 and 21.

B. The County will leverage the funds provided by the developer for improvements at the Washington Pike intersection and implement a larger project to align the northern and southern Roberts Road intersections. This is consistent with Policy 9, to coordinate infrastructure improvements with development.

3) FUTURE LAND USE MAP

A. The property is classified as the RL (Rural Living) place type on the Future Land Use Map. Rural Living areas are primarily made up of single family residential within a rural setting. These areas may include agriculture, open space, and some limited commercial that supports agriculture and civic uses.

B. Single family residential on a wide range of lot sizes is a primary use in the RL place type. Primary uses are intended to be the predominant focus. – The proposed single family development with varying lot sizes is consistent with the RL place type.

C. The proposal conforms to the form attributes of the RL place type, which recommends building heights of 1-2 stories. – The maximum height is 35 ft for houses in the PR zone.

D. The RL place type allows consideration of PR (Planned Residential) up to 2 du/ac as a partially related zone per the Place Type and Zoning Correspondence Matrix (Appendix H of the Comprehensive Plan). The proposed development has a density of 1.99 du/ac.

4) KNOXVILLE – FARRAGUT – KNOX COUNTY GROWTH POLICY PLAN

A. The property is located within the Rural Area on the Growth Plan Map. The Knox County Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map shall determine land uses permitted in the Rural Area. The rural designation shall not impede the right of a property owner to use or develop the property for a purpose permitted by that property's zoning. – The proposed development is consistent with the PR zoning district.

B. Residential development in the Rural Area shall be limited to all of the following conditions: (a) no more than 2 dwelling units per acre; and (b) sanitary sewer, or a sewage system approved and maintained by a public utility company and public water must be available; and (c) must be on a collector road with a minimum width of 18ft pavement.—This proposal is consistent with the growth policy plan.

ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT: A traffic impact study was prepared by the applicant. The findings of that study were used in formulating the recommendations of this staff report.

ESTIMATED STUDENT YIELD: 63 (public school children, grades K-12)

Schools affected by this proposal: Corryton Elementary, Gibbs Middle, and Gibbs High.

- Potential new school population is estimated using locally-derived data on public school student yield generated by new housing.
- Students are assigned to schools based on current attendance zones as determined by Knox County Schools. Students may request transfers to different zones, and zone boundaries are subject to change.
- Estimates presume full build-out of the proposed development. Build-out is subject to market forces, and timing varies widely from proposal to proposal.
- Student yields from new development do not reflect a net addition of children in schools. Additions occur incrementally over the build-out period. New students may replace current population that ages through the system or moves from the attendance zone.

The Planning Commission's approval or denial of this request is final, unless the action is appealed. For more information on the appeal process, contact Knoxville-Knox County Planning.