



A Joint Statement from HVPA and KCPA on Growth in Hardin Valley to the  
Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission and  
Knox County Commission  
December 6, 2021

There is a lot of Hardin Valley development activity on the December 2021 Planning Commission agenda. In front of Planning Commission this week are 3 rezonings and 3 residential development plans that have significant impact. These, plus the cumulative rezonings over the past several years, have residents looking at the cumulative impact. Below is our attempt to give you that picture for Hardin Valley, today.

This month we are focused on:

Item	File	What / Where	Acres	Requested Density	Requested Dwelling Units / Lots	Estimated Trips (from Request)	Estimated Students (from Request)
7	<a href="#">11-E-21-RZ</a>	Vinit Sharma, 2106 Schaeffer Rd	4	4	16	170	6
16	<a href="#">12-I-21-RZ</a>	Safe Harbor Residential, Couch Mill Rd	131.7	3	395.1	3746	163
18	<a href="#">12-K-21-RZ</a>	Ball Homes, 2205 West Gallaher Ferry Rd	23.8	4	95.2	992	39
		Total - Rezonings			506.3	4908	208
20	<a href="#">12-SA-21-C/</a> <a href="#">12-A-21-UR</a>	Amber Meadows Ridge, Buttermilk Rd			61	660	25
21	<a href="#">12-SB-21-C/</a> <a href="#">12-E-21-UR</a>	Long / Donahue Subdivision, 12000 Hardin Valley Rd	20		46	509	19
23	<a href="#">12-SD-21-C</a>	Briggs Station, 1928 Marietta Church	94		188	1804	78
		Total - Concept Plans			295	2973	122
		<b>TOTAL REZONING AND CONCEPT PLANS</b>			801.3	7881	330

Some background for Hardin Valley

**Schools:** The three Hardin Valley Schools are over or very close to capacity:

School	Capacity	Enrollment	Notes
HV Elementary	900	1304 (+504 over)	5 portables onsite with 2 more ordered.
HV Middle	1,200	1,081 (-119 under)	Will be over in 2 years when the largest 4th and 5th grade classes in history move up
HV Academy	1,800	2,125 (+325 over)	Designed to accommodate addition of 1 more wing, but would need to be funded
Totals	3,900	4,510 (+610 over)	Just the Dec 2021 requests estimate growth of additional 330 students in next 1-8 years

Knox County is building a Northwest Elementary School and will build a new elementary school in Farragut. Those still will just barely bring HV Elementary to capacity levels, but there is no relief or plan in sight for the middle and high school.

**Roads:** Looking at the 5/15 year improvement plan from the NW sector plan: The Karns Connector and interchange improvements at Hardin Valley / Pellissippi Parkway are completed. The Hardin Valley Mobility Plan was completed in 2019 after the Sector Plan, and it identified and prioritized 34 projects for the next 10 years. The total cost estimates ranged from \$141 million to \$151 million to complete all these projects. Knox County has a yearly capital budget of about \$15 million a year for mobility/transportation projects across the entire county.

**Utilities:** There is an improved sewage treatment plant and TVA is bringing in a new high voltage transmission line to feed LCUB. But that means an unsightly transmission line crossing people's properties and dominating their view. And while West Knox Utility District has submitted comments that they can provide new services for the development on Couch Mill Rd, we also understand they are asking Knox County Finance about available assistance with their utility projects that support growth in the northwest sector. Some examples of what West Knox Utility District cited as capital needs directly related to growth:

WKUD Project Type	Unfunded Needs	Examples and Notes
Utility Relocation	\$1.3 million	Areas such as the Hardin Valley Rd and Hickory Creek Rd roundabout. That's in addition to the \$6.3 million they have to spend for relocating utilities for the Schaad Road project.
Growth-related Capital Projects	\$5.2 million	\$800,000 for a Watt Rd wastewater pump station, \$1 million for a Solway Rd pump station, \$1.2 million for improvements to a pump station serving Steele Rd and existing schools and would serve the proposed Couch Mill subdivision.
Fire hydrants	\$21 million	address 15 existing neighborhoods that were built without fire

		hydrants before codes required them, so the water lines are too small to support them.
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Using the Northwest Sector Plan's 5/15 year improvement plan, we should look at how we are doing in the bigger picture regarding:

**Parks and Community Facilities:** The 5/15 year plan identified 7 projects in Hardin Valley. The Middle School and Plumb Creek Park were completed. But none of the others have been started. Unfortunately the Hardin Valley Community Center on Hickory Creek was condemned and demolished due to unsafe conditions, and also stopped use of that land for athletic practices. We have no community gathering location. Athletic fields on school grounds are in high demand and many teams are paying for off site practice areas. That's why we keep asking for you to require new neighborhoods to put in pocket parks and recreational offerings. Many of you were at the Legacy Parks luncheon where you heard the statistic that a child who grows up within ½ mile of a playground is 5x more likely to be a healthy weight.

**Land Use:** The 5 year plan calls out 6 initiatives related to Land Use. One of them, creating a Rural Preservation zone, is complete on paper, but there's no property in the county with that zoning applied, and no incentives for landowners or planners to use it. The other 5 land use initiatives haven't started. We feel the sidewalk initiative took a step backwards, and we have less sidewalks being built. Codifying conservation subdivisions is something we desperately want in the Valley. It's been called for in every county Sector Plan for the last 20 years.

That's the facts related to current situations and plans. Here are some facts related to growth:

- In the Northwest Sector (which is a superset of Hardin Valley), there were 1,161 building permits in 2020, 832 in 2019, 891 in 2018, 1153 in 2017, 872 in 2016. Over 6,000 permits since 2010.
- In Hardin Valley, we are building 1 house every 32 hours.
- We have asked staff for information about residential building permits approved in the Hardin Valley area for 2021; that's basically the number of units that have come online in the last few months and will be in the next 6-9 months.
- We have also asked staff for information: since 2016 how many lots were created through subdivisions (or PR rezonings without a concept plan) where building permits haven't yet been pulled. That will represent the potential units that have been authorized and haven't started the building.

The December 2021 agenda has requests from applicants that, if approved as applied for, could create up to 801 lots, add another 7,881 trips to the area's roads, and another 330 students to the Hardin Valley schools.

It is clear that investment in infrastructure, schools and public services in Hardin Valley is behind the plan and in further need of investment. At the same time, growth pressures are maintaining or increasing.

### **Call to Action**

HVPA and KCPA are *very* excited about the Comprehensive Land Use, Transportation, and Park Plans initiative that is just starting. We believe that this update will positively position Knox County, and Hardin Valley, for future residential and economic growth. It will also help preserve our sense of place that makes our community so desirable.

It will take 18-24 months to update the General Plan and Growth Plan, and then we need to enact the plans through updates to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

During the intervening time, with all the growth pressures and infrastructure investment needed, KCPA and HVPA asks that Knoxville-Knox Planning Commission and Knox County Commission:

- Uphold the existing Sector Plans by applying the plans and guidelines to land use decisions, without assuming that what the updated General Plan will have until it is agreed to and adopted.
- Deliberate about if a request should be approved based on the big picture of the area - what is the availability of public services and utilities in the area, and how the land use decision will impact the characteristics identified as important in the Sector Plan
- Apply the requirements of the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations to rezonings and Use on Reviews. With Use on Review applications, carefully consider character and adverse impact to neighbors, as impacts are more acutely felt in a more densely populated county.
- Look for opportunities where land use decisions can further projects already identified in sector plans, such as parks, greenways, new schools, or transportation projects

# 2016 Northwest County Sector Plan 5 and 15 Year Improvement Plan (Hardin Valley Area Projects) - HVPA Tracker

<i>Project or Program</i>	<i>5-Year</i>	<i>15-Year</i>	<i>Responsible Agency</i>	<i>Community Comments</i>
<b>LAND USE</b>				
Develop a scenic corridor overlay district for commercial and rural corridors - Oak Ridge Highway, Hardin Valley Road, W. Emory Road, Schaad Road Extension	X		County/MPC	Not initiated
Create a new Agricultural zone in the county to protect farmland and rural landscapes	X		City/County/MPC	Rural Preservation Zone codified, but no incentives to use this zone or protection from adjacent land uses
Update the subdivision ordinance to include conservation subdivisions as a development alternative	X		City/County/MPC	Not initiated. This is a key tool that Hardin Valley and all communities in Knox County desire
Update the Growth Policy Plan – Will be after General Plan Update	X		City/County/MPC	General Plan won't come for 18-24 months
Update the subdivision ordinance to include sidewalk and connectivity standards	X		MPC	Feeling is that updated sidewalk ordinance is resulting in fewer sidewalks being built within subdivisions
Draft Small Scale Innovation District Zone	X		City/County/MPC	Not initiated
<b>GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE</b>				
Adopt conservation subdivision development ordinance for the preservation of farmland and/or open space	X		City/County	Not initiated, and something HV and other areas strongly desire
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b>				
Work with Knox County Schools on site planning for the proposed Hardin Valley Middle School	X		County/Knox County Schools/MPC	Completed
Complete Plumb Creek Park	X		County	Completed
Build the West Knox to Oak Ridge Greenway (along the Pellissippi Parkway Technology Corridor)	X	X	TDOT/City/County	Not initiated
Acquire land in Hardin Valley area for Hardin Valley Community Park	X		County	Not initiated. Also Hardin Valley Community Center on Hickory Creek was demolished and athletic fields closed
Acquire easements and build Conner Creek Greenway (Hardin Valley Area)	X	X	County	Opportunistic easements are being acquired during Subdivision process, but no other progress to acquiring or building greenway
Build Northwest District Recreation Center	X	X	County	Not Initiated
Build Hardin Valley Community Park		X	County	Not initiated. 15 year horizon
<b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION</b>				
Update the inventory of historic resources in the Northwest County Sector	X		County/MPC	The Coward Mill Bridge is National Register Eligible and Knox County has a road project that may impact it

TRANSPORTATION				
Construct new road, Karns Connector, between Westcott Boulevard and Oak Ridge Highway	X		County	Completed
Pellissippi Parkway and Hardin Valley Road Interchange Improvements	X		TDOT/County	In Progress
Widen Lovell Road from 2 lanes to 4 lanes between Cedardale Lane and Middlebrook Pike with median, bike lanes and sidewalk	X		County/TPO	In design and ROW
Improve Pellissippi Parkway interchanges at Lovell Road and Oak Ridge Highway		X	TDOT/County	Not initiated. 15 year horizon
Widen Campbell Station Road to add center turn lane and bike and pedestrian facilities		X	County	Not initiated. 15 year horizon