

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY IN KNOX COUNTY:  
LISTINGS OF FASTEST GROWING SCHOOL ZONES**

**A REPORT TO KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS**



Prepared by the Knoxville/Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission

August 4, 2004

**RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY IN KNOX COUNTY:  
LISTINGS OF FASTEST GROWING SCHOOL ZONES**

**A Report to Knox County Schools by the Knoxville/Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission**

August 4, 2004

**Introduction**

Residential subdivision lots and construction permits comprise tangible measures of growth in an area, and in turn, offer a barometer by which recent and future demand for education services can be measured.

In this brief overview, school zones are ranked by subdivision lot approvals, by building permit growth, and by estimated impacts on school enrollment. Summary findings are reported here, and accompanying this review are several tables, graphs, and maps that provide greater detail on the area's fastest growing school zones.

**Subdivision Lots**

As a measure of development activity, subdivision lots include a time-lag factor, as the period from subdivision approval to actual home construction can extend over a few years. By examining the most recent approvals, a glimpse of where growth will occur over the next couple of years can be seen.

First, five-year totals of Knox County's subdivision lot approvals were summarized by school zone, and schools were ranked to show areas of highest growth. The top-five zones among elementary, middle, and high school levels are summarized below. (Complete listings in attached table, *Residential Subdivision Lots by School Zone*.)

**Table 1:  
Subdivision Lot Approvals, 1999-2003: Highest Ranked School Zones**

<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS</b>	<b>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</b>	<b>HIGH SCHOOLS</b>
Farragut Primary and Intermediate	Farragut	Farragut
Gibbs	Holston	Gibbs
A L Lotts	West Valley	Karns
Brickey McCloud	Halls	Bearden
Karns Primary and Intermediate	Powell	Halls

The most recent subdivision approvals, those recorded in 2002 and 2003, were tabulated to show which school zones are likely to be among area leaders in residential development activity over the next couple of years as lots build-out. (Complete listings in attached table, *Residential Subdivision Lots by School Zone*.)

**Table 2:  
Subdivision Lot Approvals, 2002-2003: Highest Ranked School Zones**

<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS</b>	<b>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</b>	<b>HIGH SCHOOLS</b>
Farragut Primary and Intermediate	West Valley	Farragut
A L Lotts	Farragut	Bearden
Brickey McCloud	Holston	Powell
Ritta	Powell	Gibbs
Blue Grass/Gibbs (tied)	Halls	Halls

The southwest, northwest, and north portions of Knox County have been growing fastest, according to the subdivision data, a continuation of development trends of the past 15 years or so. As a result, schools in communities such as Farragut, Karns, and Powell have witnessed the highest rates of enrollment increase countywide. Also, the pace of investment has picked up in northeast Knox County, reflected in the high rankings of growth in the Gibbs and Ritta Elementary zones, Holston Middle zone, and Gibbs High zone.

**Building Permit Activity**

Residential building permit data were assembled for the past five years, covering approvals from 1999 through 2003, and summarized for Knox County's elementary, middle, and high school zones. Based on the recorded permit activity, the following zones led all others in residential construction. (Complete listings in attached table, *Potential Enrollment Additions Based on Recent Building Permit Trends*. See accompanying graphs also.)

**Table 3:  
Building Permit Approvals, 1999-2003: Highest Ranked School Zones**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	MIDDLE SCHOOLS	HIGH SCHOOLS
Farragut Primary and Intermediate	Bearden	Farragut
Karns Primary and Intermediate	Karns	Karns
A L Lotts	West Valley	Bearden
Gibbs	Farragut	Gibbs
Brickey McCloud	Holston	Central

Because of the ties between building permits and subdivision lots as development indicators, it is no surprise that the same schools that led in approved subdivisions are those that recorded the highest numbers of new building permits, namely those schools in the west, north, and northeast areas of Knox County.

**Estimated Building Permit Activity and Enrollment Growth, 2004-2008**

Based on the past trends in development activity, simple short-term enrollment growth scenarios were generated, covering one-, two-, and five-year horizons. To build the scenarios, the average number of building permits issued annually over the past five years was tabulated. Second, population in households was measured. Across the many communities comprising Knox County, there are differences in average household sizes, and, in particular, the number of school-age children per household. To accommodate the differences, average household enrollment figures were calculated for each local school zone, using Fall 2003 enrollment counts and an inventory of households (from 2000 Census Bureau counts and additions of building permits through December 2003). By dividing school enrollment by number of households, the average number of school-age children per household was calculated for each school zone.

Finally, projections of enrollment increases in each school zone were estimated by multiplying the figures for average number of school children per household and the average number of building permits approved annually, for one, two, and five years. The estimates were generated under the assumption that the same rate of growth will occur for the next five years as occurred in the previous five years. (This is a coarse estimate of future enrollment growth. MPC and Knox County Schools are working together on a more sophisticated system to analyze local development activity and impacts on school enrollments. The system will be developed over the next 10 months.)

School zones of fastest projected growth over the next five years are listed below. (Complete listings in attached table, *Potential Enrollment Additions Based on Recent Building Permit Trends*. See accompanying graphs and maps also.)

**Table 4:**  
**Projected Fast Growth School Zones**

<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS</b>	<b>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</b>	<b>HIGH SCHOOLS</b>
Farragut Primary and Intermediate	Farragut	Farragut
A L Lotts	West Valley	Karns
Karns Primary and Intermediate	Karns	Bearden
Gibbs	Halls	Powell
Brickey McCloud	Powell	Gibbs

Consistent with the trends identified by the past five-year building permit and subdivision lot counts, and from the last two years of subdivision lot growth, look for development to continue in the west, north, and northeast portions of Knox County over the next few years.