



# USE ON REVIEW REPORT

► **FILE #:** 8-A-26-UR

**AGENDA ITEM #:** 32

**AGENDA DATE:** 8/13/2026

► **APPLICANT:** UNION BAPTIST CHURCH

OWNER(S): Union Baptist Church

TAX ID NUMBER: 40 10901

[View map on KGIS](#)

JURISDICTION: County Commission District 8

STREET ADDRESS: 6701 WASHINGTON PIKE

► **LOCATION:** North side of Washington Pike, west of Maloneyville Rd

► **APPX. SIZE OF TRACT:** 26.17 acres

GROWTH POLICY PLAN: Planned Growth Area

ACCESSIBILITY: Access is via Washington Pike, a minor arterial with a 22-ft pavement width within a right-of-way which varies between 40 ft and 68 ft.

UTILITIES: Water Source: Northeast Knox Utility District

Sewer Source: Knoxville Utilities Board

FIRE DISTRICT: Rural Metro Fire

WATERSHED: Whites Creek

► **ZONING:** A (Agricultural)

PLACE TYPE: SR (Suburban Residential)

► **EXISTING LAND USE:** Public/Quasi Public Land (church)

► **PROPOSED USE:** Sports playing fields

HISTORY OF ZONING: None noted.

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING: North: Single family residential - PR (Planned Residential) up to 4 du/ac

South: Single family residential, rural residential - A (Agricultural)

East: Rural residential, single family residential - PR (Planned Residential) up to 2 du/ac, A (Agricultural)

West: Rural residential, single family residential - (A (Agricultural)

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT: This area is comprised of single family dwellings on a mix of large and small lots and agricultural uses. Ritta Elementary is approximately one mile west of the subject site.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

► **Approve the request for sports playing fields, with a maximum number of fields and parking spaces as shown on the plan, subject to 9 conditions.**

1. Meeting all applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Ordinance.
2. Meeting all applicable requirements of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works.
3. The hours of operation of the playing fields shall be limited to daylight only.

4. Providing 100-ft and 75-ft peripheral boundaries along the northern and eastern lot lines as shown in Exhibit B to buffer adjacent residential dwellings.
5. Providing 35-ft and 50-ft boundaries along the eastern and southern lot lines as shown in Exhibit B, or obtaining a BZA variance to reduce these minimums. No sports playing fields, dog park area, accessory structures, or off-street parking spaces shall be located within the peripheral setbacks in conditions 4 or 5.
6. Retaining all existing healthy, mature, non-invasive trees within the peripheral boundaries and installing supplemental, continuous Type A Landscape Screening (Exhibit B) within all peripheral setback boundaries where insufficient existing trees exist. Undergrowth in the existing vegetation areas may be cleared for walking trails.
7. All site lighting fixtures, pole-mounted and attached to the building, shall be full cut-off fixtures or have housing shields to direct the light toward the ground and to restrict the light source from being visible from the adjacent residential properties.
8. The maximum height of the proposed structures shall be one story.
9. If, during plat approval or construction of the development, it is discovered that unforeseen off-site improvements within the right-of-way are necessary as caused by this development, the developer will either enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the County for these improvements or reimburse the County for their direct expenses (if completed by County crews) to make corrections deemed necessary.

#### **COMMENTS:**

This request is for a sports complex along Washington Pike next to an active rail line. The proposal includes two baseball/softball fields, one T-ball field, one soccer field, four pickleball courts, a dog park, walking trails, and accessory structures. The property is owned by a church, and the existing church structures, including a day care center, will remain on this 26.4-acre parcel. The applicant is proposing new, dedicated access off Washington Pike for the sports playing fields.

#### **DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR USES PERMITTED ON REVIEW (ARTICLE 4.10, SECTION 2)**

The planning commission, in the exercise of its administrative judgment, shall be guided by adopted plans and policies, including the general plan and the following general standards:

##### **1) THE USE IS CONSISTENT WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES, INCLUDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF KNOX COUNTY.**

A. The SR (Suburban Residential) place type of the property, as defined in the Knox County Comprehensive Plan, recommends detached residential as a "primary use" and attached residential and civic uses as a "secondary use." A church is compatible with the uses specified in the SR place type, and the proposed sports playing fields will be a secondary use for the church.

B. The recommended landscaping next to surrounding residential properties is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Policy 2 to ensure that development is sensitive to existing community character.

C. The proposed development is also compatible with the subject property's location in the Planned Growth Area of the Growth Policy Plan.

##### **2) THE USE IS IN HARMONY WITH THE GENERAL PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE.**

A. The A zone is intended to provide for a wide range of agricultural and related uses as well as residential uses with low population densities and other compatible uses which generally require large areas or open spaces. The proposed sports playing fields are permitted via the use on review process.

B. Article 4.94 (Requirements for sports playing fields) requires a minimum peripheral setback of 50 ft when the site abuts a residential zone or a zone permitting residential uses. The periphery is to be left as a natural buffer, or landscaping may be required to provide a buffer. The planning commission may reduce this setback, but not to less than that required of the zoning district (i.e., 50-ft front setback, 35-ft side setback, and 35-ft rear setback for churches and other nonresidential uses). Staff recommends the minimum allowed 35 ft - 50 ft peripheral setback along residential properties near the proposed entrance, and 75 ft -100 ft setbacks abutting Planned Residential zones on the north and east sides (Exhibit B).

C. The proposal does not meet the 50-ft peripheral setback requirement along the south edge of the proposed Girls' Softball Field and does not meet the 35-ft peripheral setback along the west edge of the proposed dog park. The applicant is seeking BZA variances to reduce the peripheral setbacks in these areas. The site plan will require revisions if variances are not obtained.

D. The zoning ordinance stipulates that off-street parking requirements shall be determined by the planning commission during the use-on-review process. The applicant is proposing 188 new parking spaces, and the existing parking spaces of the church could be used if needed.

3) THE USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE IT IS PROPOSED, AND WITH THE SIZE AND LOCATIONS OF BUILDINGS IN THE VICINITY.

A. The area is characterized by low density residential developments and large agricultural lands. The proposed use is intended to serve nearby neighborhoods and the broader community, but it is more intense than the surrounding area. In its deliberations, the Planning Commission must determine whether the development is compatible with the surrounding developments.

B. The proposed structures shall be one story, which is consistent with nearby residential structures.

4) THE USE WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY INJURE THE VALUE OF ADJACENT PROPERTY BY NOISE, LIGHTS, FUMES, ODORS, VIBRATION, TRAFFIC CONGESTION OR OTHER IMPACTS WHICH MAY DETRACT FROM THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT.

A. The applicant has stated that multiple playing fields are planned to be used simultaneously, so the development could generate significant noise and vehicular traffic during game times. The applicant has stated that the hours of operation would be limited to daylight hours only. Planning staff's recommendation for landscaped peripheral boundaries is intended to provide a visual screen for the abutting residential properties.

B. The applicant has stated that no exterior lights will be installed along the playing fields and walking trails, and the proposed accessory structures will have wall-mounted lights. Staff recommends using full cut-off fixtures or housing shields to ensure abutting residential properties are not adversely affected by light.

5) THE USE IS NOT OF A NATURE OR SO LOCATED AS TO DRAW SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC THROUGH RESIDENTIAL STREETS.

A. Washington Pike is a minor arterial street, so the proposed use would not significantly impact traffic on local residential streets.

6) THE NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IS NOT SUCH AS TO POSE A POTENTIAL HAZARD TO THE PROPOSED USE OR TO CREATE AN UNDESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PROPOSED USE.

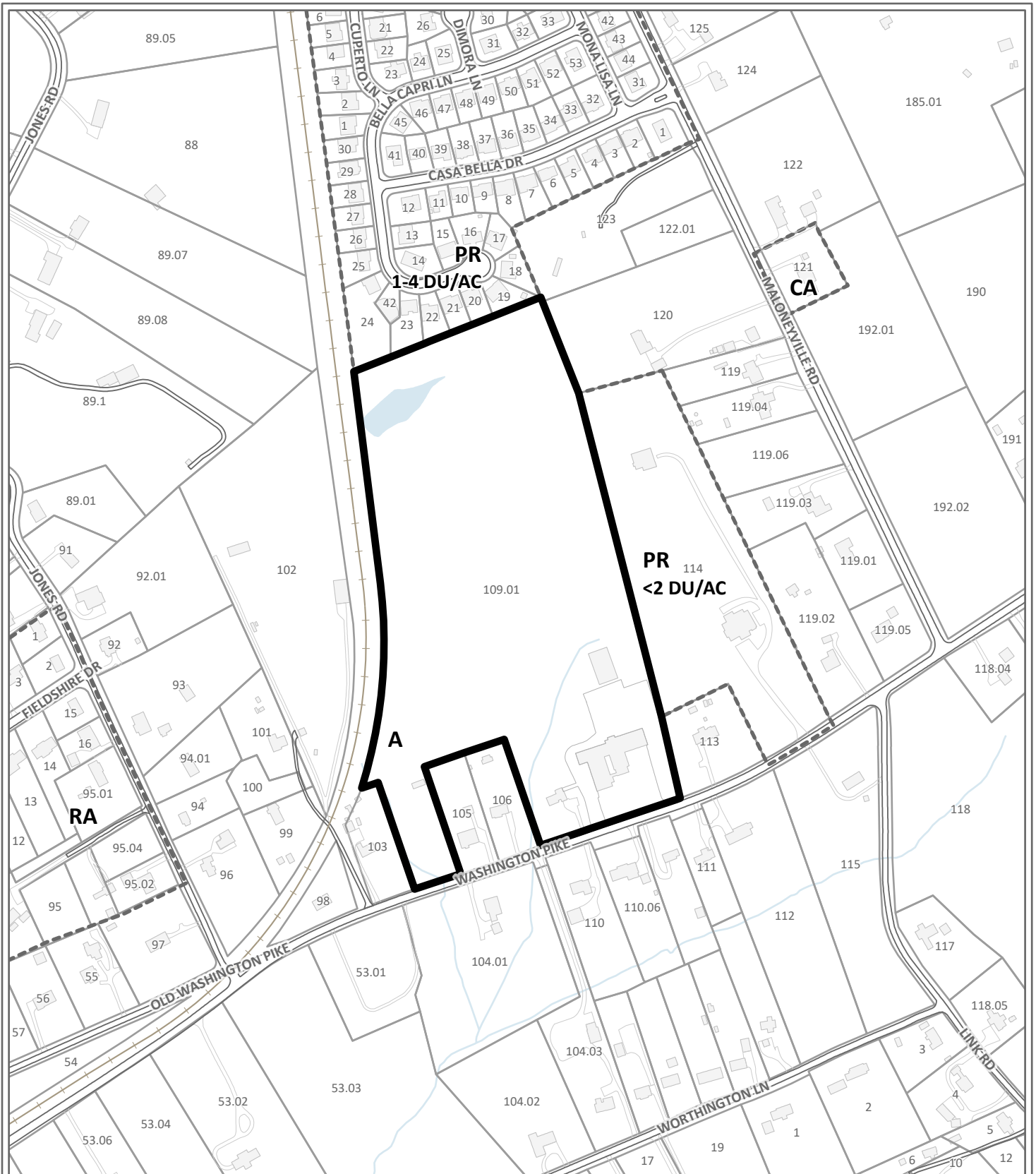
A. There is a rail line running along the western boundary of the property, but it is not expected to create any significant nuisance or hazardous conditions for the nature of the proposed use.

ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT: 448 (average daily vehicle trips)

Average Daily Vehicle Trips are computed using national average trip rates reported in the latest edition of "Trip Generation," published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers. Average Daily Vehicle Trips represent the total number of trips that a particular land use can be expected to generate during a 24-hour day (Monday through Friday), with a "trip" counted each time a vehicle enters or exits a proposed development.

ESTIMATED STUDENT YIELD: Not applicable.

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.



**USE ON REVIEW**

**8-A-26-UR**

**Petitioner:** Union Baptist Church



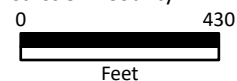
Commercial sports playing fields in A (Agricultural)

**Original Print Date:** 7/1/2026

Knoxville - Knox County Planning Commission \* City / County Building \* Knoxville, TN 37902

**Map No:** 40

**Jurisdiction:** County



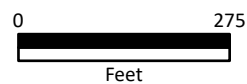
## Exhibit A. Contextual Images



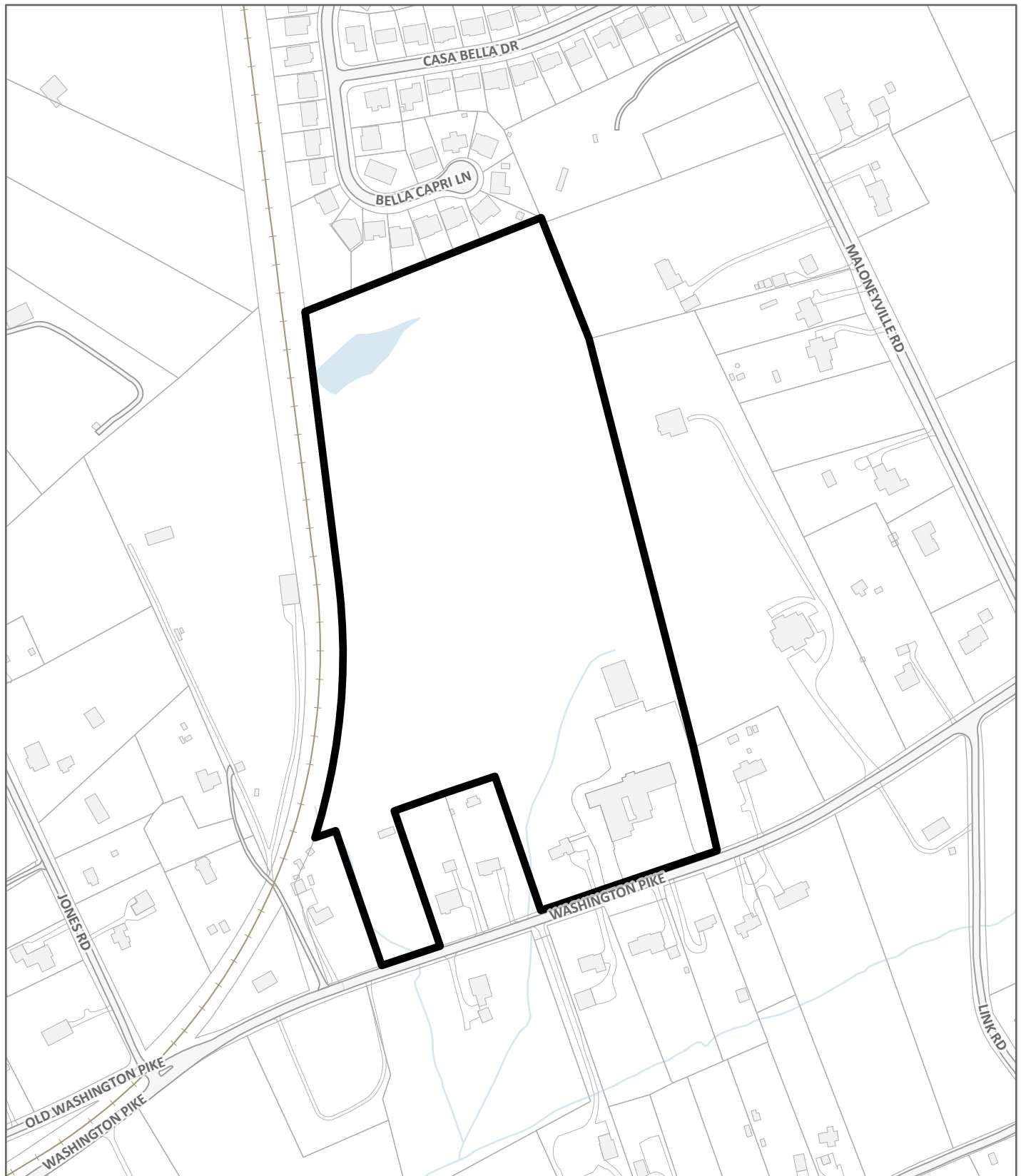
### AERIAL MAP



Case boundary



## Exhibit A. Contextual Images

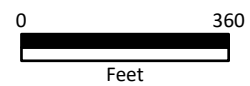


**LOCATION MAP**

**8-A-26-UR**



Case boundary



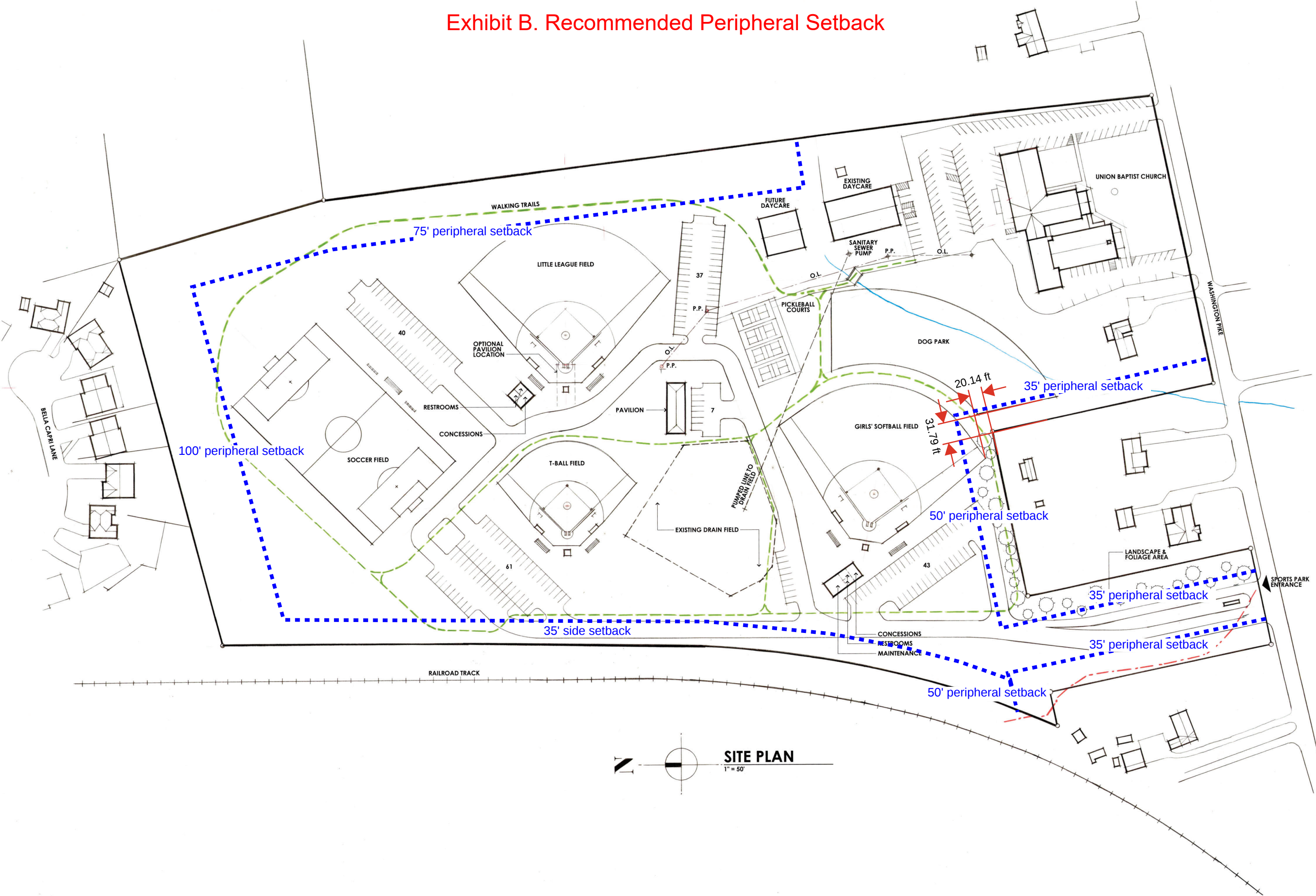


UNION BAPTIST CHURCH SPORTS PARK



Blankenship & Partners, LLC  
Architects & Planners  
1112 E. Weisgarber Road, 2nd Floor, Knoxville, TN 37909  
PHONE: 865-251-2585 WWW.BPDESIGNERS.COM

Exhibit B. Recommended Peripheral Setback



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### Type “A” Screen: Dense

**APPROPRIATE LOCATION:** Boundaries of commercial and industrial developments adjoining residential areas

**NOTE:** Landscape buffer strips should be a minimum of 15 feet in width, and sown with grass or ground cover for their full width, allowing for mulch at the base of plantings.

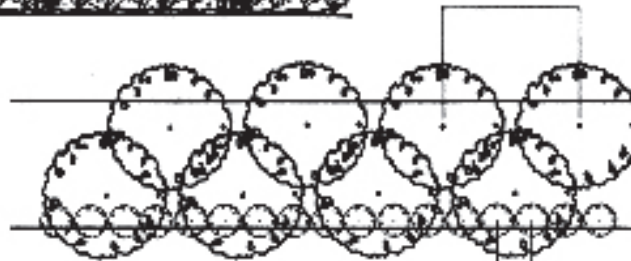
- Two offset rows of deciduous or evergreen canopy trees with a 6 ft. high continuous dense evergreen hedge, fence, wall or earth berm

**TREE HEIGHT**  
 Installed: 8 ft.  
 Mature: 40 ft.

**SHRUB HEIGHT**  
 Installed: 4 ft.  
 Mature: 6 ft.



Maximum 16' Centers



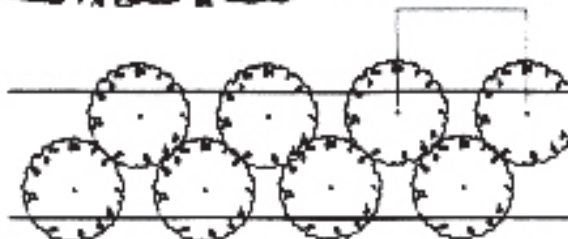
Maximum 4' Centers

- Two offset rows of evergreen trees with branches touching the ground

**TREE HEIGHT**  
 Installed: 8 ft.  
 Mature: 30 ft.



Maximum 12' Centers



#### INTRODUCTION

Landscape screening reduces the impact of intense development upon adjacent land uses by providing visual separation, reducing the transmission of glare and air pollution, and limiting access. Screening also promotes the aesthetic appeal of a neighborhood and promotes higher property values.

This series of design guidelines defines several types of landscape screen. Each type is applicable to a certain intensity of conflict between adjacent land uses. Each screen type is illustrated by several planting schemes with an equivalent height, density and opacity of landscaping.

Planning uses these guidelines to illustrate desirable levels of screening appropriate to various site planning situations. Creative alternatives which achieve a comparable effect are encouraged.

The contents of these guidelines are advisory and are intended to supplement, but not replace, the requirements of the Knoxville Zoning Ordinance and the Knox County Zoning Ordinance.



Outlook

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## Union Baptist Church Review

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**From** Craig Cummings [REDACTED]  
**Date** Mon 8/3/2026 3:15 PM  
**To** Samiul Haque <samiul.haque@knoxplanning.org>

You don't often get email from craig@discoverunion.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mr. Haque,

In reference to our property zoning, please find the requested details regarding the proposed playing fields, walking track, and hours of operation:

There will be no lighting installed on the playing fields or walking track.  
The playing fields may be used simultaneously.  
The hours of operation for the playing fields and walking track will be from daylight until dusk.

Please note that these are not commercial athletic fields. They are intended to serve as a ministry resource for our church and the surrounding community.

If you need any additional information or have further questions, please feel free to contact Harry Brooks at (865) 604-0164.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Craig Cummings, Pastor**  
Union Baptist Church DiscoverUnion.org

# Public Notice and Community Engagement

Planning strives to provide community members with information about upcoming cases in a variety of ways. In addition to posting public notice signs, our agency encourages applicants to provide information and offer opportunities for dialogue related to their upcoming case(s). The contact information you provide in your application may be used for that purpose. We require applicants to acknowledge their role in this process.

## Sign Posting and Removal

The Administrative Rules and Procedures of the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission require a sign to be posted on the property for each application subject to consideration by the Planning Commission.

**Planning staff will post the required sign.** If a replacement sign(s) is needed, the applicant is responsible for picking up the new sign(s) from Planning and will be charged \$10 for each replacement.

### Location and Visibility

The sign must be posted on the nearest adjacent/frontage street and in a location clearly visible to vehicles traveling in either direction. If the property has more than one street frontage, the sign should be placed along the street that carries more traffic. Planning staff may recommend a preferred location for the sign to be posted at the time of application.

### Timing

The sign(s) must be posted not less than 12 days prior to the scheduled Planning Commission public hearing and must remain in place until the day after the meeting. In the case of a postponement, the sign can either remain in place or be removed and reposted not less than 12 days prior to the next Planning Commission meeting. The applicant is responsible for removing the sign after the application has been acted upon by the Planning Commission.

### Acknowledgement

*By signing below, you acknowledge that public notice signs must be posted and visible on the property consistent with the guidelines above and between the dates listed below.*

8/1/26

Date to be Posted

8/14/26

Date to be Removed

Have you engaged the surrounding property owners to discuss your request?

☐ Yes ☐ No

☒ No, but I plan to prior to the Planning Commission meeting

*Way R. Brooks*  
Applicant Signature

*Way R. Brooks*  
Applicant Name

*6/23/2026*  
Date