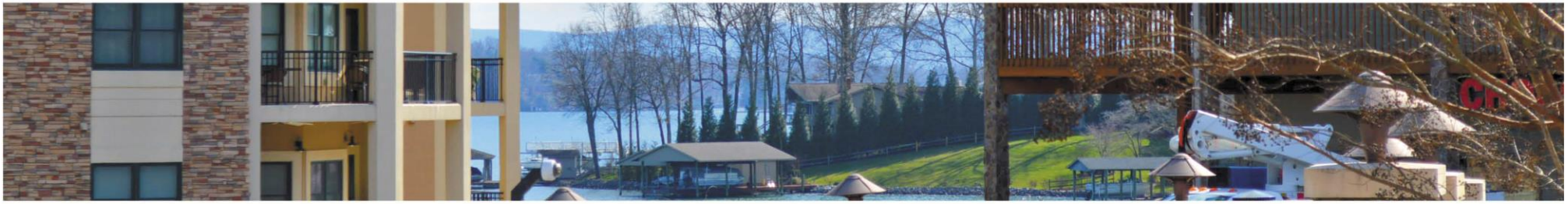
WESTLAKE HALES FORD AREA PLAN



DRAFT

OCTOBER 18, 2016

Franklin County, VA

A Natural Setting for Opportunity

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BACKGROUND

History of Westlake and Hales Ford

The Westlake - Hales Ford Planning Area was very rural in character for a long time. Both areas had farms (tobacco) and mills along the Staunton River before becoming part of Smith Mountain Lake. The Burroughs Plantation, 207 acre tobacco farm, was the birth place of Booker T. Washington. The Booker T. Washington National Monument was created by Congress in 1956. Another landmark is the Hook-Powell-Moorman property, which consist of numerous buildings and sites; such as the main farmhouse, store/slave quarters, and doctor's office. The Holland-Duncan House is another historic place in the area. The two-story house was built in the 1830s and a one-story frame post office and a v-notched log meat house that is used as a guest cabin still stand on the property. All three (3) properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

However, the Westlake – Hales Ford area in terms of development is a youthful area. In May of 1988 the Board of Supervisors adopted zoning for the Westlake and Hales Ford area and most of the existing developments were built over the last twenty-five (25) years. Developments like Bridgewater and Westlake Towne Center were developed less than twenty years ago. The surrounding residential growth has seen more commercial businesses develop to support the residences with goods and services to create a sense of community for the Gills Creek District. In fact, the Westlake – Hales Ford area has undergone a transformation from a predominant agricultural area to an area resembling more suburban type.

In 1960, Appalachian Power (American Electric Power) began to dam the Roanoke River and the Blackwater River at the Smith Mountain gorge to generate electricity. In March of 1966, Smith Mountain Lake reached full pond level, 795 feet above sea level, for the first time. The lake covers 20,600 acres and has over 500 miles of shoreline and the majority of the south shore of the lake lies in Franklin County. In 2016, Smith Mountain Lake is celebrating its 50th anniversary with numerous events to promote the yearlong celebration. The lake is one of the most popular residential, recreational, and commercial destinations in all of Franklin County and beyond the County's borders.

Booker T. Washington National Monument

The Monument contains a visitor center, administrative offices, and maintenance support and storage headquartered with the former Booker T. Washington Elementary School building, (a segregated school for African American children from 1954-1966). Cultural Resources include a 1890s tobacco barn, marked archeological sites and historic features, cemeteries, the Plantation Trail which allows visitor access to the park's Historic Area, and the Jack-O-Lantern Branch Trail which loops through old field meadows and forest and introduces visitors to the rich diversity of natural resources located within the park. The plantation house, known as the "big house" during Washington's tenure on the farm, burned in 1950. Its location is currently identified by an outline of stones that illustrate the dimension and size of the house. A second slave cabin structure believed to be the location of Washington's birth, once existed to the east and behind the plantation house and is marked with a similar outline of stones. The veracity of site improvements and features was documented in archeological studies conducted in 1959 and 1999. Twentieth-century replicas include the kitchen cabin, smokehouse, horse

barn, corn crib, blacksmith shop, hog pen, split rail fences, ducks, and chicken house. Heritage breed farm animals are kept at the park. Heirloom vegetables, dark-fired tobacco, corn, flax, and other 19th century era demonstrations crops are cultivated and harvested for interpretive setting and visitor education.

The mission of Booker T. Washington National Monument preserves and protects the birth, childhood home, and emancipation site of Booker T. Washington while interpreting his life experiences and significance in American history as the most influential African American between 1895 and 1915. The park provides a resource for public education and a focal point for continuing discussions about the legacy of Booker T. Washington, slavery, and the evolving context of race in American Society.

Booker T. Washington National Monument is managed as an educational center where Washington's life and work and the complexity of American civil rights and race relations from the antebellum period to the present can be examined. This concept expands the mission of the site beyond its original legislative purpose as a memorial to Mr. Washington, noted "educator and apostle of good will." The goal is to create a dynamic, challenging environment in which visitors contribute their views on the issues presented through on-site interpretation of life on a small, slave-holding Virginia tobacco plantation. Living history presentations of the life during Washington's developmental years as an enslaved child, supplemented by ranger programs, special events, an orientation film, and interactive exhibits, and provided visitors with a sensory immersion experience that lends understanding of the meaning and significance of Washington's life and the Monument. Resources are managed in a way to visually tell a compelling story. Existing historic and reconstructed structures, including buildings and fences, remain in situ to be preserved through regular maintenance. Some reconstruction of cultural landscape features may be undertaken from time to time if sufficient documentations are found. Natural resources have been baseline inventoried and are continuously monitored by park staff with assistance from the NPS Mid-Atlantic Inventory and Monitoring Program. The park is supported by large and enthusiastic volunteers in parks program and advocated for by the Friends of Booker T. Washington National Monument. Source: General Management Plan for the Booker T. Washington National Monument.

Benefits of National Monument Designation

- A source of pride and identity and a benefit to the Franklin County community. The uniqueness of having a site that has been designated as being significant by the people of the United States of American, to be preserved and protected because of its importance and relevance to the American Experience.
- Raises profile of the site and brings new visitors. Hotels, restaurants, tour guide agencies, and local businesses all reap the economic advantages of national monument designation.
- Provides a unique opportunity to stimulate rural economies. According to the NPS, every dollar invested in nationals parks generates $10 in return to local communities.
- National monuments protect America's most treasured lands, helping to guarantee they remain intact and unadulterated, while ensuring a lasting legacy for future generations.

Planning Concerns

- In order to achieve its missions, the BTWNM must ensure that stream flows, both quantity and quality, are sustained in healthy conditions. Therefore, the success of the Monument is dependent on all actions within the watershed that affect flows in Gills Creek and Jack-O-Lantern Branch Streams.
- Visitors to BTWNM bring with them the expectation of an experience that portrays the mid-nineteenth century environment into with Mr. Washington was born and spent his early childhood years in slavery. An integral component of that experience is the visual experience. In order to deliver the opportunity for such visitor experience, it is important that uses outside the Monument but visible from within the historical core be designed with sensitivity to the Monument mission. The viewshed from within the park must be considered to protect the historical integrity of the site and quality of the visitor experience.

Prior Planning Context

The Westlake – Hales Ford planning area has been studied and planned on numerous occasions. Citizens, business owners, agents, developers, and government officials have been planning anticipated growth in this area for over thirty (30) years. The following are documents used for planning purposes throughout the years.

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors adopted their first comprehensive land use (plan) on April 19, 1976. This newly adopted plan anticipated growth it what is known as Westlake and Hales Ford today. The Future Land Use Map shows commercial nodes in these two areas. The plan further discusses what type of growth to serve the residents of the district.

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors adopted their second comprehensive plan on December 16, 1985. The plan envisioned for this area would undergo intensive development over the next 15 years and built upon the first comprehensive plan showing small commercial nodes to support future residential development happening due to Smith Mountain Lake being a recreational area and the Roanoke urban area growth introducing individuals to this northern/northeastern part of the County. However, the area was beginning to undergo a transformation with single-family dwellings, mobile homes, multi-family dwellings, and campgrounds.

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors adopted the third comprehensive plan entitled: Inventing Franklin County's Future – 1995 Comprehensive Plan on April 4, 1995. The plan's future land use map envisioned what is known as Westlake and Hales Ford as a town, community center, or rural village area and growth area boundaries. The plan, like previous plans, saw the growth happening and envisioned the area needing support of retail, business, and service uses to support the different types of residential growth in the lake community.

A planning document entitled "Charting A Course For Smith Mountain Lake": The Vision. May, 1998" describes a vision for the future of Smith Mountain Lake. In 1995, a strategic planning effort for the Smith Mountain Lake Policy Advisory Board grew to include three jurisdictions, two planning district commissions, American Electric Power, and numerous citizens. The Vision document had specific policies for land areas such as, the lake waters, village centers, shorelines of the lake, gateways and highway corridors, rural, agricultural, forest

lands and regional watershed. Furthermore, the Vision document had policies for infrastructure, cultural and social activities and how to finance these policies.

The draft Westlake Corner Community Plan "An element of the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan" dated July 18, 2000 was prepared by staff with information from a survey and results from a community visioning workshop. This draft plan had elements of the 1995 Comprehensive Plan with background studies and goals and objectives. This Plan had implementation strategies for future road network for short-term and long-term, future land use pattern for short-term and long-term and community design. This Plan was not officially adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

In June of 2001, Frazier Associates with the help of key stakeholders, planning commission, and staff built upon the Westlake Corner Community Plan and developed the Westlake Design Guidelines. The draft had design goals for the Westlake area with specific guidelines for streetscapes, private site development, and buildings. The Westlake Design Guidelines help in establishing the Westlake Village Center Overlay District located in the Franklin County Zoning Ordinance.

In November of 2001, a draft report entitled "Route 122 Corridor Study" from Burnt Chimney to Hales Ford Bridge analyzed the corridor for transportation needs. The corridor study prepared for West Piedmont Planning District Commission by URS Corporation (formerly United Research Services) dealt with corridor issues along Route 122. The study analyzed existing corridor conditions, forecasted corridor conditions, and suggested improvement alternatives along the corridor, and established conclusions and recommendations for the corridor.

The Franklin County Board of Supervisors adopted the County's fourth comprehensive plan in May of 2007. The Future Land Use Map designated Westlake as an unincorporated town and Hales Ford designation was a mixed use village due to the growth and potential growth of both areas. The Plan discusses the potential of both areas to have mixed use development and serve the surrounding areas.

In March of 2010, the Smith Mountain Lake Corridor Study was prepared by Michael Baker, Jr., Inc. with assistance from VDOT, HSMM/AECOM, Renaissance Planning Group, and Peggy Malone & Associates, Inc. This corridor study provided a comprehensive analysis focusing on the primary and secondary public roadways that provide access to and circulation around Smith Mountain Lake. The key roadways were the primary routes of 122, 24, 116, 40, and secondary routes of 634, 626, 834, 608, and 616. The study included community profile, existing conditions, public and stakeholder input, projected future conditions, recommendations, and context sensitive design solutions and guidelines.

Relationship to Countywide Comprehensive Plan update

The most recent update of the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in May of 2007. The Plan identified two (2) unincorporated towns and seven (7) villages in the County. The Plan identified Westlake as an unincorporated town and Hales Ford as a village. The Plan stated that each of the two (2) unincorporated towns and seven (7) villages should adopt detailed community plans to help guide growth and development for these important commercial/residential areas throughout the County. It was the recommendation of the advisory committee that Westlake and Hales Ford areas be combined into a single plan. The Plan established policies for each of the towns and villages specifically to establish, identify, and plan the enhancement of key gateways and entry points to the towns and villages and to establish guidelines for landscaping, setback, and coordination of access to enhance the quality of these points. To date, the County has adopted one (1) village plan in Union Hall.

Demographics

The 2010 census total population of Franklin County was 56,159 an increase of 18.8 percent. The Gills Creek District was made up of the following census tracts 201.01 and 203 and one Census Designated Place (CDP) – Westlake Corner. Census tracts are subdivisions of counties and equivalent areas that average around 4,000 or more and have boundaries that follow permanent, easily identifiable features. CDPs are closely settled, unincorporated communities that are locally recognized and identified by name. The census supplies demographics are total population, age, race, and housing types for each area. Another source for demographics by the Census Bureau is the American Community Survey (ACS) which is an ongoing statistical survey. The data is collected and estimated for five (5), three (3), or one (1) year estimates. The ACS regularly gathers information previously contained only in the long from of the decennial census, such as educational attainment, income, disability, employment and housing characteristics to name a few. The ACS is estimated data unlike the decennial census which is an actual count every ten (10) years.

According to the 2010 census approximately 11,321 individuals lived in the Gills Creek District. There were 5,194 individuals residing in tract 201.01 and 6,127 in tract 203. There were 5,799 individuals over the age of 50 combined in the two districts, which makes up 51 percent of the population in Gills Creek. The age group 18 and under in the Gills Creek District was 1,915, which made up only 17 percent of the population. The two census tracts breaks down race as the following: 10,843 Whites, 265 African Americans, 46 Asians, 27 AIAN (American Indian/Alaska Native), 5 NHPI (Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander), 36 classified as some other race, and 99 identified as two or more races.

The 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year estimates 8,081 individuals living in the Gills Creek District. This number is lower than the 2010 census due to redistricting of the election district in 2011. There is an estimate of 4,615 individuals over the age of 50, which makes up 57 percent of the population in the Gills Creek District. The Gills Creek District estimated break down of race as followings: 7457 Whites, 286 African Americans, 12 Asians, 86 classified as some other race, and 240 identified as two or more races.

According to the 2010 census the Westlake Corner CDP had a total population of 976 individuals with 946 White, 10 African American, 7 Asian, 3 American Indian and Alaska Native, 2 as other race, and 8 identified by two or more races. There were 553 over the age of 50, which made up 57 percent of the CDP population. The ACS has an estimate of 940 individuals living in the Westlake Corner CDP with 906 White and 34 identified as two or more races. The CDP has and estimated 583 over the age of 50, which is 62 percent of the population of the CDP.

In 2010, the total housing units for the two tracts were 7,354 with 4,181 being owner-occupied and 650 housing units were renter-occupied. Vacant housing in the two tracts was 2,523. The census bureau defines vacant housing as housing for rent, rented, not occupied, for sale only, sold, not occupied, for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, for migrant workers, and other vacant.

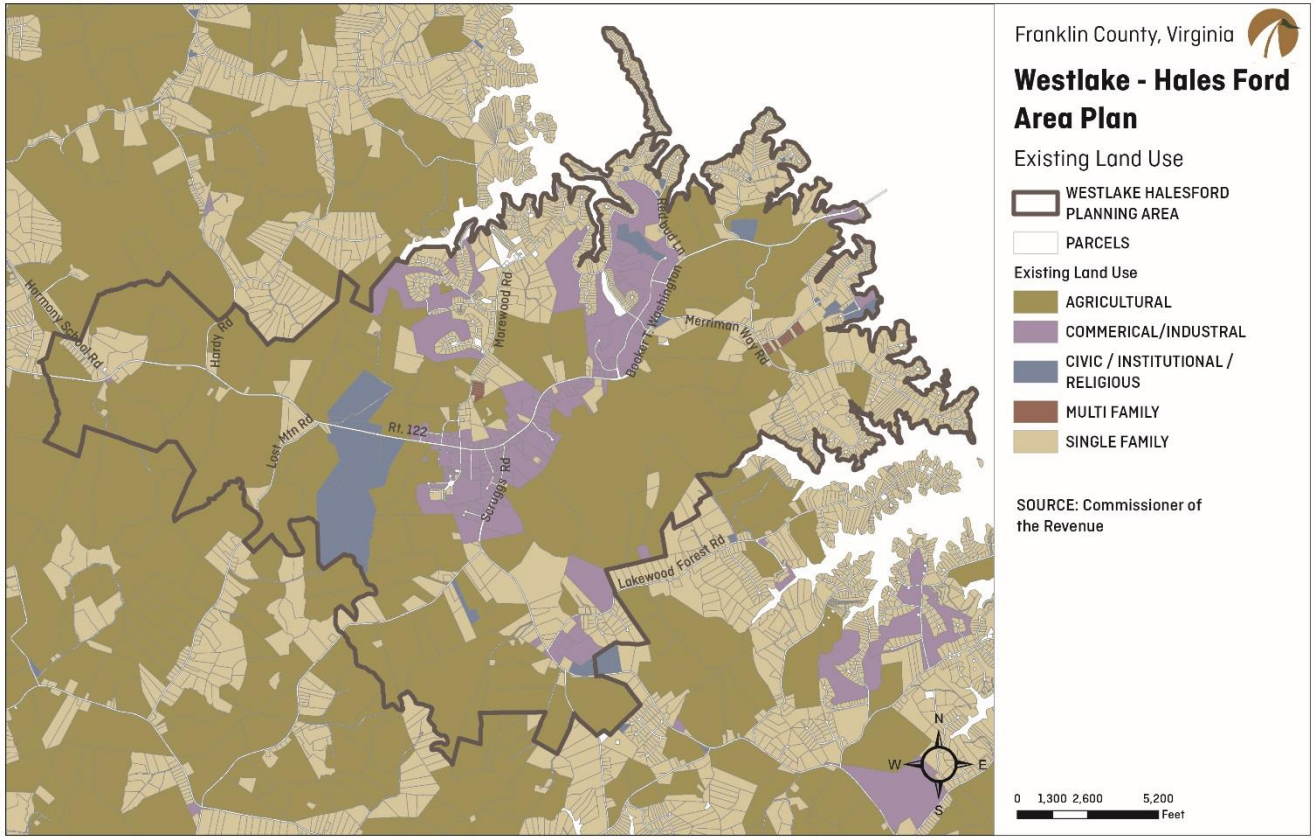
In 2010, the total housing units for the CDP was 663 with 361 being owner-occupied and 78 being renter-occupied. Vacant housing is 224.

It is intended that the Westlake Corner Census Designated Place (CDP) will be modified as a result of the adoption of this plan to allow the County to more accurately collect demographic data within the Westlake – Hales Ford Planning Area and Designated Growth Area (DGA).

AREA CONTEXT AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section provides context for the planning area's future vision by outlining a series of current conditions, including information on land use, transportation, and environment. This information can guide the area vision and implementation strategy by identifying existing trends, issues, and opportunities.

Existing Land Use/Figure 1

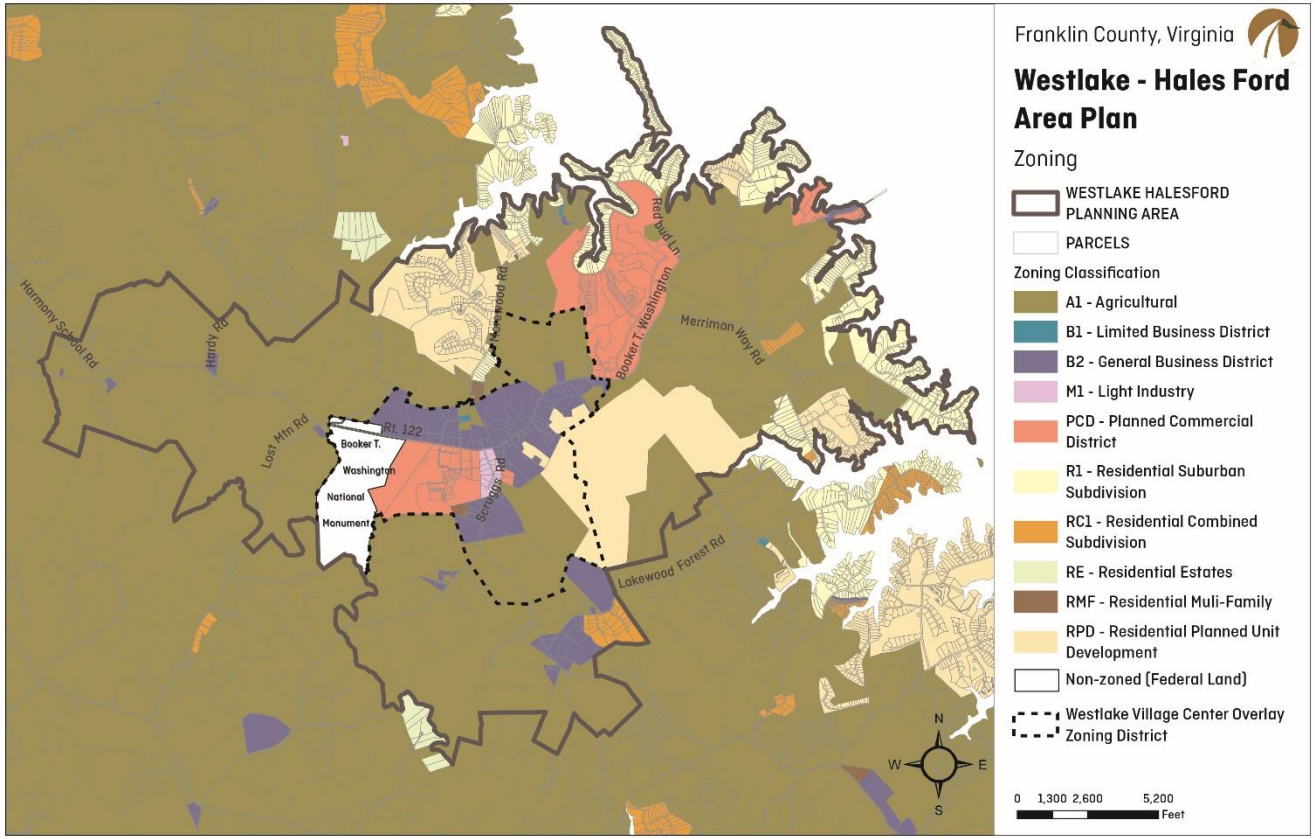


The mix of land uses in the Westlake Hales Ford Planning Area is as diverse as any unincorporated part of Franklin County, with agricultural, single family, and commercial/industrial parcels found in roughly equal measure. In general, single family and agricultural uses form an outer ring in the planning area, with single family uses along the lake shore and agricultural uses inland. There are a few commercial uses in this outer ring, most notably at Hales Ford, as well as

at crossroads or other high visibility locations. The planning area's inner core is heavily commercial, though interspersed with single-family, multi-family, and civic uses.

The mix and location of land uses is evidence of a high-functioning community that is a regional draw for commercial and civic activities. However, the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, and multi-family housing along Route 122 all reflect and reinforce the auto-oriented nature of the area. Overall, a future development pattern that focuses on a mix of uses that could be accessed by a range of transportation modes would support the existing land use, though some changes would be needed to encourage alternative transportation modes.

Existing Zoning/Figure 2



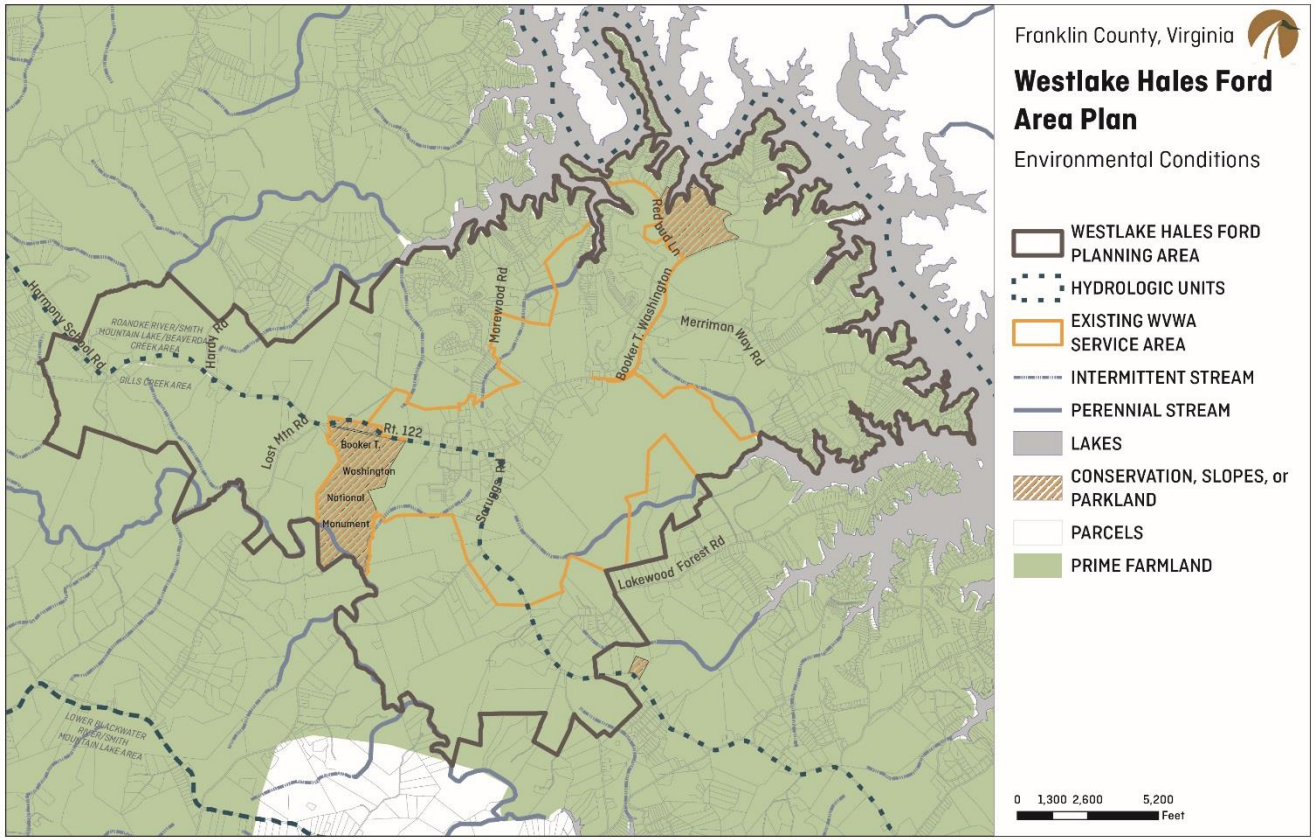
The pattern of zoning designation within the planning area resembles the existing land use pattern. A-1 Agricultural is the predominant zoning classification in the planning area, and is even more prevalent outside of it. R-1, RC-1, RPD and RMF residential districts are all found in the planning area, as well as within the Westlake Village Center Overlay District. B-1 and B-2 Business Districts, M-1 Light Manufacturing District, and PCD Planned Commercial Districts comprise the remaining zoning districts in the planning area. The commercial zoning districts are mostly concentrated in the center of the planning area, though there are non-residential districts at major crossroads and other high visibility areas. A large portion of these zoned area have been approved with conditional zoning, but have not yet been developed.

The existing zoning pattern – a commercially-focused core immediately surrounded by higher density planned development, ringed by traditional rural and suburban development – reflects an intentional effort to create a cohesive

town. However, existing zoning requirements limit the potential for a nuanced transition from town center to low-density suburban or rural uses, as there is little opportunity for mixes of uses within the various zoning classifications.

Accommodating a compact, mixed use development pattern in the planning area would be fairly consistent with existing zoning patterns, but there is a need to insert additional development flexibility into the prominent zoning districts of which the Westlake – Hales Ford area is comprised.

Environmental Conditions/Figure 3

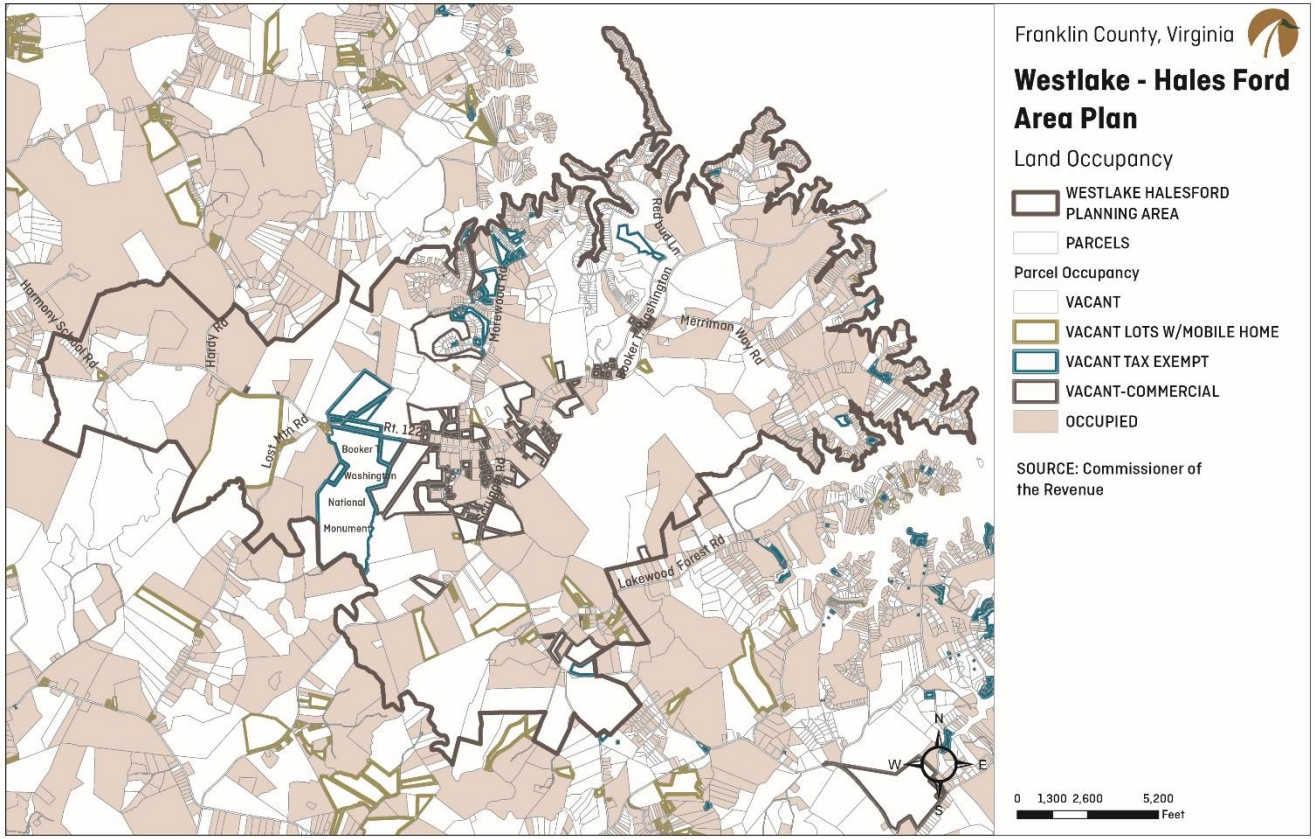


Environmental conditions in the planning area were evaluated to determine the extent to which there are environmental constraints that would impact future development, either by prohibiting or limiting development, or otherwise through the need for mitigation in the event of future development. The entire Westlake Hales Ford

Planning Area is identified as prime farmland, as is most of the land in the vicinity of the planning area. The central third of the planning area is within the existing Western Virginia Water Authority service area, which means that new development outside this area would be need on-site water and wastewater service.

Additionally, there are a limited number of perennial and intermittent streams in the planning area, some of which serve as natural parcel boundaries. All told, the environmental conditions in the planning area do not look to impact future development potential.

Land Occupancy/Figure 4



Land occupancy data can be helpful in showing the extent to which land is available for new development, and the amount of untouched land as opposed to previously developed and occupied land that have become vacant over time.

County GIS data provides information on the occupancy status of all parcels in the county. Parcels are generally listed as occupied or vacant, but some vacant parcels are listed with additional information about the nature of their previous use. As a result, parcels can be listed as the following:

- Occupied
- Vacant

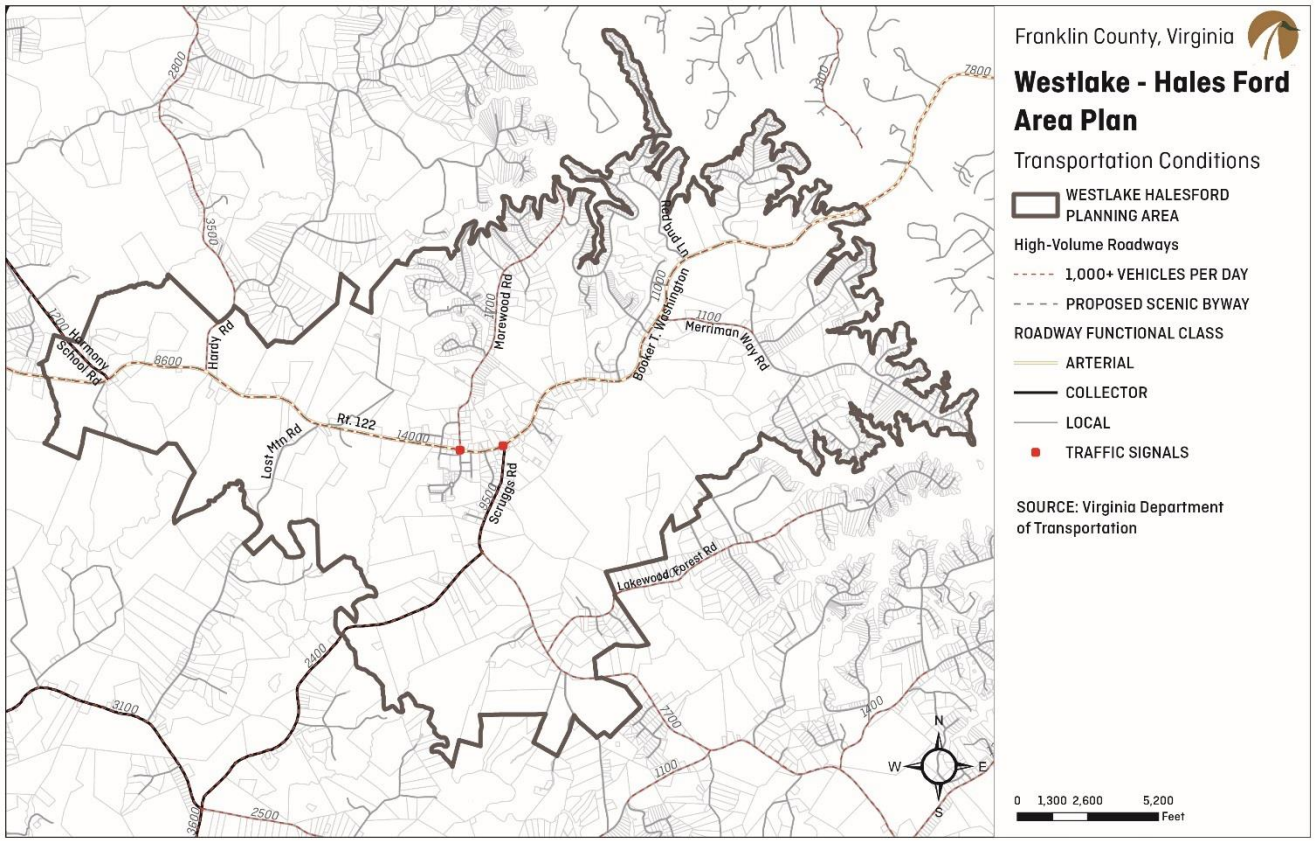
- Vacant – Commercial parcel
- Vacant – Tax Exempt parcel (such as publicly owned land that has not been built upon)
- Vacant – Mobile Home lot/parcel

There is an even mix of occupied and vacant land in the planning area, with higher occupancy along the lakeshore and in the Westlake core, as well as a long much of Route 122 and Scruggs Road. However, no areas except perhaps the lakeshore are fully occupied. There are a large number of vacant commercial sites along Route 122, especially in and around the town's core. There are also several large undeveloped parcels throughout the planning area, with many smaller commercial sites. Note that the parcels listed as vacant tax exempt include the Booker T. Washington National Monument, which is not subject to this area plan. Other tax exempt parcels are common open space and permanent conservation easements.

The only undevelopable land is the Booker T. Washington National Monument. It should be noted that two places are listed on the National Historic Registry as Historic Places being Booker T. Washington National Monument and the Hook-Powell-Moorman Farm. Furthermore, the Dinwiddie Farms Limited Company and Virginia Outdoors Foundation own a conservation easement containing over 127 acres of land along Route 122 between Redbud Lane (LakeWatch Plantation) and Lakemount Drive.

Overall, there appears to be ample room for accommodating a wide range of residential and non-residential growth in the Westlake – Hales Ford area.

Transportation Conditions/Figure 5



Transportation infrastructure and the current use of that infrastructure support the existing development in the area, and also point to potential transportation needs for accommodating future growth.

The planning area's transportation network is dominated by Route 122 and Scruggs Road, both of which carry much higher volumes of traffic than the remaining network. This is reflected in the location of traffic signals at the intersections of Route 122 and Scruggs Road and Route 122 and Morewood Road.

High volume through traffic is not, however, the only purpose of Route 122. It is also a regional connector, the main connection to Smith Mountain Lake, and is part of a larger proposed scenic byway. As such, there are seemingly conflicting priorities for this roadway, which can only be accommodated through thoughtful, coordinated land use

and transportation planning decisions. It is possible that satisfying all priorities cannot be accomplished without additional infrastructure investments. Future growth management must be careful to consider and appropriately weigh through traffic and community needs.

VTrans2040 is the Commonwealth of Virginia's long-range multimodal transportation plan. Only projects that help address needs identified in the VTrans2040 will be considered for funding under SMART Scale. Urban Development Area (UDAs)/ Designated Growth Areas (DGAs) and Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS), are eligible for SMART Scale funding along with regional networks. The County and the Chamber of Commerce is requesting an update to VTrans to include Route 122 from Hales Ford Bridge to the town of Rocky Mount as a regional collector to help with funding. The safety needs assessment for VTrans had two (2) intersections listed in the top 100 safety needs in the Salem District. The intersections of Route 122 and Hardy Road and Route 122 and Lost Mountain Road were ranked in the top 100 fatal and serious injury.

Two (2) VDOT projects have been approved for the Westlake - Hales Ford area to improve safety and traffic flow. The first project is the construction of a new right turn lane on Scruggs Road at the intersection of Route 122 and Scruggs Road at the existing traffic signal. The second project was approved June 2016 by the Commonwealth Transportation Board under the new funding source called Smart Scale (formerly HB2) for the County's Six Year Improvement Program for primary roads; this project is located at the intersection of Route 122 and Hardy Road. The improvements include a new north bound left turn lane on Route 122, the improvement of an existing right turn lane on Route 122, access management to the existing commercial business on the northeast corner of Route 122, and shoulder improvements.

Summary of Key Issues

The main issues identified in the context and existing conditions analysis are as follows:

- Existing zoning districts do not permit a mix of uses consistent with a town concept
- Existing wastewater and water service is available to many – but not all – areas of potential higher intensity development
- Route 122 is a heavily used roadway that serves multiple and often conflicting uses
- Travel in the area is almost exclusively by automobile, and there is little in the way of infrastructure or policy to facilitate a more multi-modal travel environment

The goal of this area plan is to find ways to address these issues while remaining true to the Comprehensive Plan and the evolving vision for Westlake – Hales Ford. In addition, an updated Route 122 corridor study should be conducted within the planning area to build on previously written plans for the corridor. Also, the West Piedmont Planning District Commission 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan will be updated to guide transportation projects along Route 122 and throughout the planning area.

Planning Process

Advisory Committee Report

In January 2014, the Gills Creek Supervisor, Bob Camicia established a Westlake – Hales Ford Planning Advisory Committee to review the Westlake Hales Ford Area (WHFA) and to make recommendations for the future of this area. The advisory committee was comprised of real estate agents, chamber of commerce members, land owners, citizens, contractors, and developers.

The advisory report is the culmination of two years of monthly meeting and discussions with subject-matter professionals, close dialogue with the business community, numerous discussions with individuals and small group. Three public community meetings were held on February 24, 2014, March 23, 2015 and January 27, 2016, for public input on the process and direction of the advisory committee report. The Advisory Report is attached to the plan as an addendum.

The advisory report identifies planning concerns and challenges such as, but not limited to; maintaining and improving property values, promote the area's competiveness for business and employment, land use threats, need for safe movement for pedestrians and bicyclist, infrastructure improvements, to protect and preserve heritage resources, and foster diversity of housing types. Recommended strategies were developed by the advisory committee to guide future of WHFA such as, but not limited to, changing the future land use map to be suburban like, (see map attached), finalize proposed zoning categories, expand recreational opportunities, develop and support a vibrant business and residential community.

The advisory report was presented to the Planning Commission on March 8, 2016, and to the Board of Supervisors on March 15, 2016. On March 15, 2016, the Board of Supervisors directed the Planning Commission and staff to write a community plan for the Westlake – Hales Ford Area.

Public Involvement

The Planning Commission held work sessions on March 24th, April 28th, May 10th, May 24th, June 23rd, and July 23rd to develop the Westlake – Hales Ford Community Plan. The work sessions were facilitated by county planning staff and a consultant team that was provided by a technical assistance grant from the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) under the Urban Development Area Grant Program. In addition, an Open House was held at the Westlake Library on September 1st from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for public comment prior to the Planning Commission public hearing.

The planning commission held a public hearing at Trinity Ecumenical Parish on September 13, 2016 for the Westlake – Hales Ford Community Plan. At the public hearing the Planning Commission decided to delay the recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to allow staff to make changes gathered at the public hearing. The

Planning Commission recommended approval by a vote of 6-0 on October 11, 2016 and to forward the recommendation of approval to the Board of Supervisors for a public hearing.

The Board of Supervisor held a public hearing on _____ 2016 for the adoption of the Westlake – Hales Ford Community Plan. The plan was adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan on _____.

UDA Technical Assistance Grant

As enabled by Virginia Code § 2.2-229, the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) of the Secretary of Transportation is offering grants for professional planning consultant assistance to local governments and regional entities to establish and support Urban Development Areas. Urban Development Areas (UDAs) can cover a wide variety of community types, ranging from small town or village centers to suburban activity areas to urban downtowns. UDAs can help local governments and regional entities to focus investments and create great places that attract businesses and workers alike.

The Franklin County Planning Department applied for a technical assistance grant on December 18, 2015, and was awarded on January 7, 2016.
The technical assistance, in the form of direct on-call consultant support, assisted the County in the following:

- plan for and designate at least one urban/village development area in their comprehensive plan,
- revise as appropriate applicable land use ordinances (including appropriate zoning classifications and subdivision ordinances) to incorporate the principles of traditional neighborhood design (see §15.2-2223.1 of the Code of Virginia),
- assist with public participation processes, and other related tasks.

In response to emerging regional, state, and national demographic and real estate trends, the County has incorporated Designated Growth Areas (DGA) as the mechanism for future development that is consistent with traditional neighborhood design principles. Market pressure for new residential and non-residential development, along with preferences among existing residents and businesses for opportunities to age in place is expected to increase demand for different types of development than traditional single-family detached homes and highway-oriented commercial development. In many counties across Virginia, these trends are leading to the development of walkable neighborhoods with a variety of housing types that have easy access to shops, jobs, and entertainment. Moreover, enabling this type of development in Franklin County supports the housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental goals and objectives of the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan.

The County's DGA designation is consistent with Section 15.2–2223.1 of the Virginia State Code for urban development areas. This designation does not restrict development outside of the DGA, it merely provides clarity of purpose in future development patterns within the DGA.

Policies for Designated Growth Areas

Designated Growth Areas are intended to encourage development that makes use of traditional neighborhood design principles. Encouraging these principles in new development within the DGAs will help position Franklin County for growth and economic development, while maintaining its rural look and feel. It is the County's policy to encourage within the DGAs the following traditional town design principles:

- Pedestrian-friendly road design
- Interconnection of new local streets with existing local streets and roads
- Connectivity of road and pedestrian networks
- Preservation of natural areas
- Mixed-use neighborhoods and a mixture of housing types
- Reduction of front and side yard building setbacks
- Reduction of subdivision street widths and turning radii at subdivision street intersections to calm traffic on local streets, as permissible by VDOT standards.

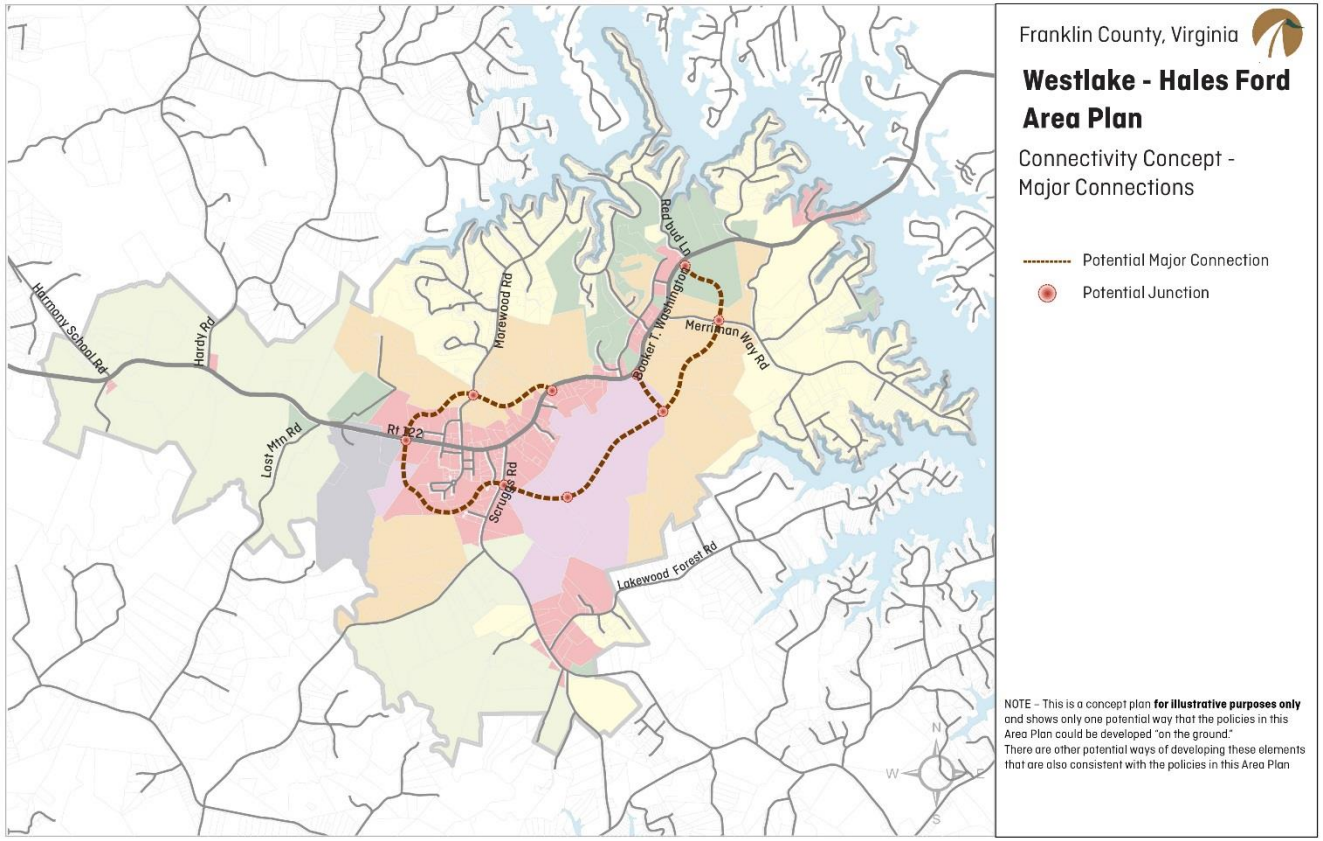
The County intends to review its zoning and subdivision ordinance to remove obstacles to development that embodies these traditional neighborhood design principles within the DGAs.

See the 'Designated Growth Area Boundary' section at the end of this plan for the determination of a DGA for the Westlake – Hales Ford area.

VISION PLAN

This area plan was undertaken as an independent project from the Citizens' Advisory Report, but did incorporate and build upon that work wherever possible. To that end, the vision plan was based in large part on the Report's Future Land Use Concept. Many of the other items and recommendations found in the Citizen's Advisory Report can be used to assist the County in recreation planning, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) development, and overall strategic planning.

Major Circulation Concept/Figure 6

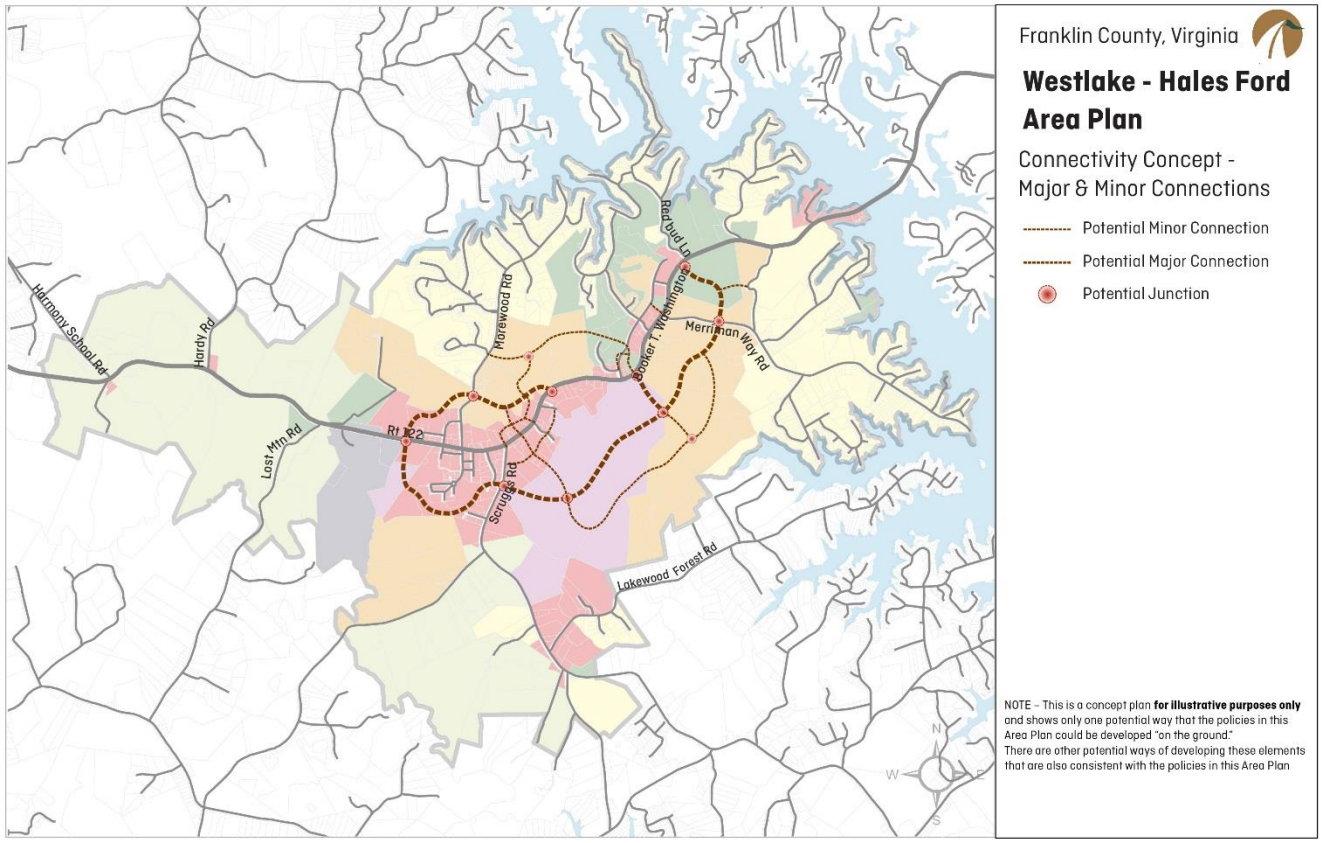


Circulation constraints were identified previously as a potential issue in the Westlake-Hales Ford planning area, especially as new development is attracted to the area. Route 122 is already the only east-west roadway in the planning area, and any new development would likely add increased traffic volumes of local residents, shoppers, visitors, and intercountry travelers. With this growth in destinations (both residential and non-residential) and traffic, increasing conflicts between local and through traffic are expected. With some travelers looking for a slower, scenic drive, and other travelers expecting a faster through trip, safety issues become a primary concern.

This concept attempts to address these issues by creating a series of parallel east-west connections both north and south of Route 122. These major connections would be of moderate speed (such as 35 or 45 MPH), and would be designed to accommodate bicycle users and small-scale transit services throughout. Pedestrian infrastructure – either sidewalks or multi-use paths – are also recommended, but there may be instances where there would be limited or no development along stretches of these major connectors, thus limiting pedestrian use.

Overall, the creation of a new set of east-west connections that intersect Route 122 in a few places allows for an internal connectivity network between the higher intensity future land uses that fosters effective travel for local residents, while also easing some of the congestion on Route 122 related to new growth in the planning area.

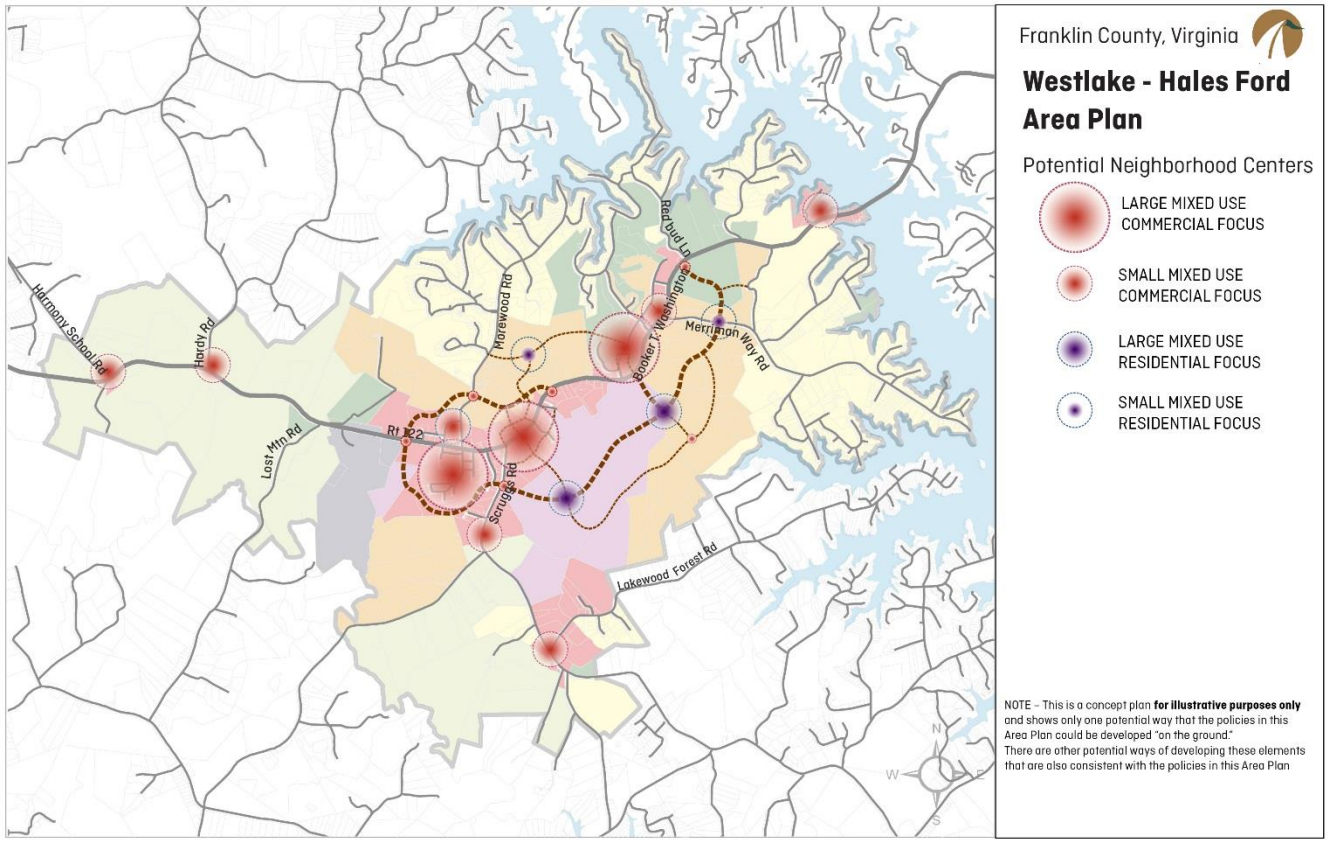
Minor Circulation Concept/Figure 7



As areas build out over time, secondary connections are needed to enhance local circulation patterns, such as those taken within or between adjacent neighborhoods. Areas like Westlake Towne Center have a good network of interconnected local roads that distribute local traffic, and this type of pattern should be generally continued for all new developments.

These minor connections should be designed for lower to moderate speeds (such as 25 to 35 MPH), and would accommodate bicycle and pedestrian use throughout. Unlike major connections, all minor connections would emphasize walking through the use of sidewalks on all streets and crosswalks at key junctions.

Neighborhood Center Concept/Figure 8

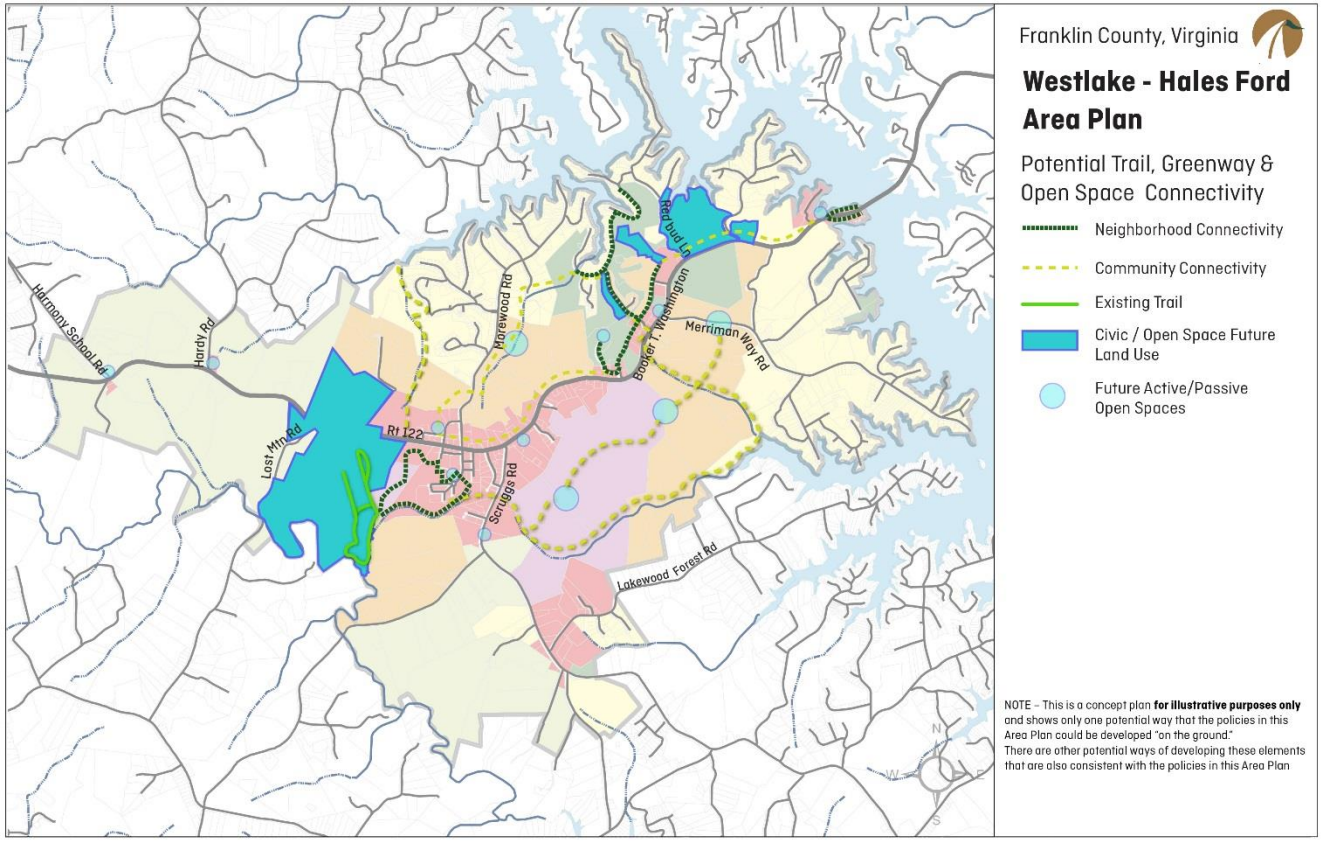


Neighborhood Centers develop most naturally at the crossroads of connectivity, and thus are influenced by any major and minor connections developed in the future. In general, larger neighborhood centers would be located at major crossroads, while smaller centers would be more likely located as minor crossroads. Neighborhood Centers should be mixed use, but each center should have a commercial or residential "focus" based on future land use policies. This means that within each center there would exist both residential and commercial uses, but one or the other would be the predominant use. In the conceptual plan above, a mix of commercially-focused and residentially-focused centers are envisioned for the Westlake – Hales Ford area. Centers on or adjacent to existing major roads (Route 122 and

Scruggs Road) are generally best suited to be commercially focused. Centers on new major connectors or at otherwise more minor junctions are generally best suited to be residentially focused.

For each neighborhood center, regardless of type, a system of internal circulation would provide auto and non-auto connections within its borders. These secondary internal connections should be designed to provide low speed local traffic so as to enhance safety along with connectivity. Centers would also have multiple points of entry, with those entry points thoughtfully located so as to make for easy connections from one center to another.

Open Space and Trails/Greenways Concept/Figure 9



Three hallmarks of successful towns is that they have a focal point, such as a multi-purpose center, and provide a range of open spaces and trails/greenways that residents, workers, or visitors can access using multiple modes of travel, not just automobiles. One way to provide benefits to both open space and multi-modal access is through an interconnected open space and trails/greenways system.

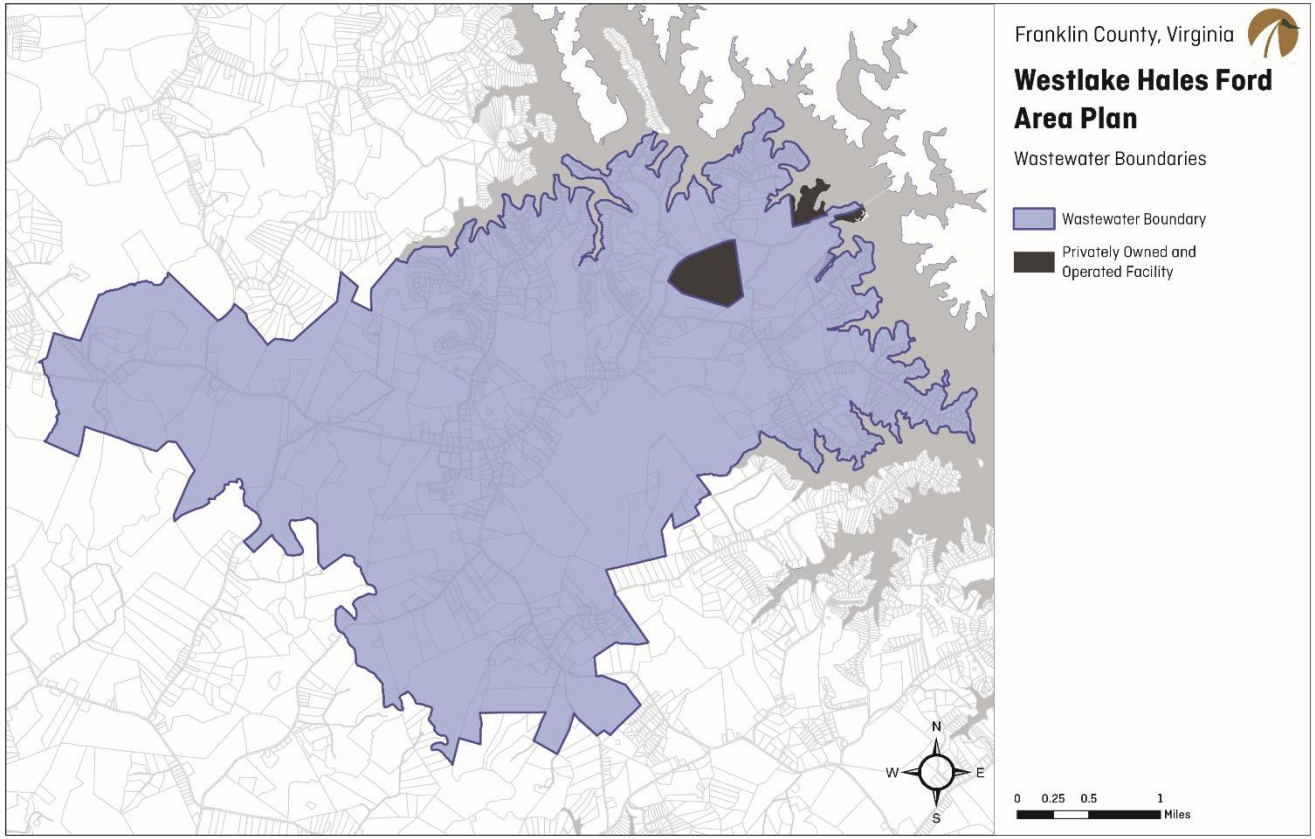
The concept plan above envisions a set of new open spaces and trails/greenways that connect to one another and provide access to active recreation, scenic vistas, and other outdoor amenities. Each neighborhood center would have its own open space: residentially focused centers would have larger spaces focused on active recreation (trails/greenways, playgrounds, ballfields, etc.) and land conservation; commercially focused centers would have

smaller open spaces focused on passive recreation (plazas, public gardens, etc.). In general, open spaces would have a connection to an area wide trail/greenway system. Larger residentially focused centers would include extensive neighborhood trails/greenways like the ones envisioned for Westlake and reproduced in the map above.

A group of citizens and business owners are working together to obtain a recreational needs assessment for the Gills Creek District. This group has been meeting to discuss recreational needs for the citizens, businesses, and tourist for this area to promote the area as a place to work, play, and live.

The establishment of a multi-purpose center, to be located in the Westlake area, will support the "urban like" identification of this designated growth area. The center will support and grow a vibrant retirement sector, as well as, a business and tourism community that will serve as an economic engine therein preserving and sustaining a strong tax base for Franklin County.

Water and Wastewater/Figure 10



Franklin County joined the Western Virginia Water Authority (WVWA) in November of 2009. The boundary of the Westlake Village Center Overlay District was the first service boundary for wastewater in the Westlake area. In July 2014, the Board of Supervisors adopted a new wastewater service area for the WVWA to encompass all areas in the Westlake – Hales Ford Planning area boundary not already under control by another entity. The map above shows the wastewater service for WVWA. Water service is available for almost the entire Westlake – Hales Ford Planning Area. The Plan envisions the entire area of Westlake – Hales Ford to be served by public water. The expansion of a larger service area will be approved by the Board of Supervisors at a later date.

Community Facilities

Community facilities are an important part of the Westlake – Hales Ford Planning area. Sheriff's Department in 2005 opened a substation in the Westlake area due to the population growth of the County. In 2008 Franklin County Public Safety opened Westlake Station behind Velocity Care on Route 122. This station is opened 24/7 and is the second busiest district for the entire day. There are six paramedic firefighters working out of the Westlake Station. Franklin County library opened the Westlake Branch Library at Westlake Towne Center; which offers a wide variety of services and events for the Westlake – Hales Ford area.

The County's public works department is working on a new collection site at the LakeWatch Plantation for citizens of the area to have another option for trash collection.

One of the key components of the Citizen Advisory Report was the establishment of a multi-purpose center, to be located in the Westlake area. The multi-purpose center is proposed to provide space for the Westlake Library, Visitors' Center, Regional Chamber of Commerce, educational programming through partnerships with regional colleges, a multi-functional area for events, conventions, etc., and meeting rooms. The Center will support the "urban-like" identification of this targeted growth area. It will also serve as an economic driver to attract retirees and those employed at the new business park, both necessary to protect and sustain the Franklin County tax base.

Future Land Use Concept

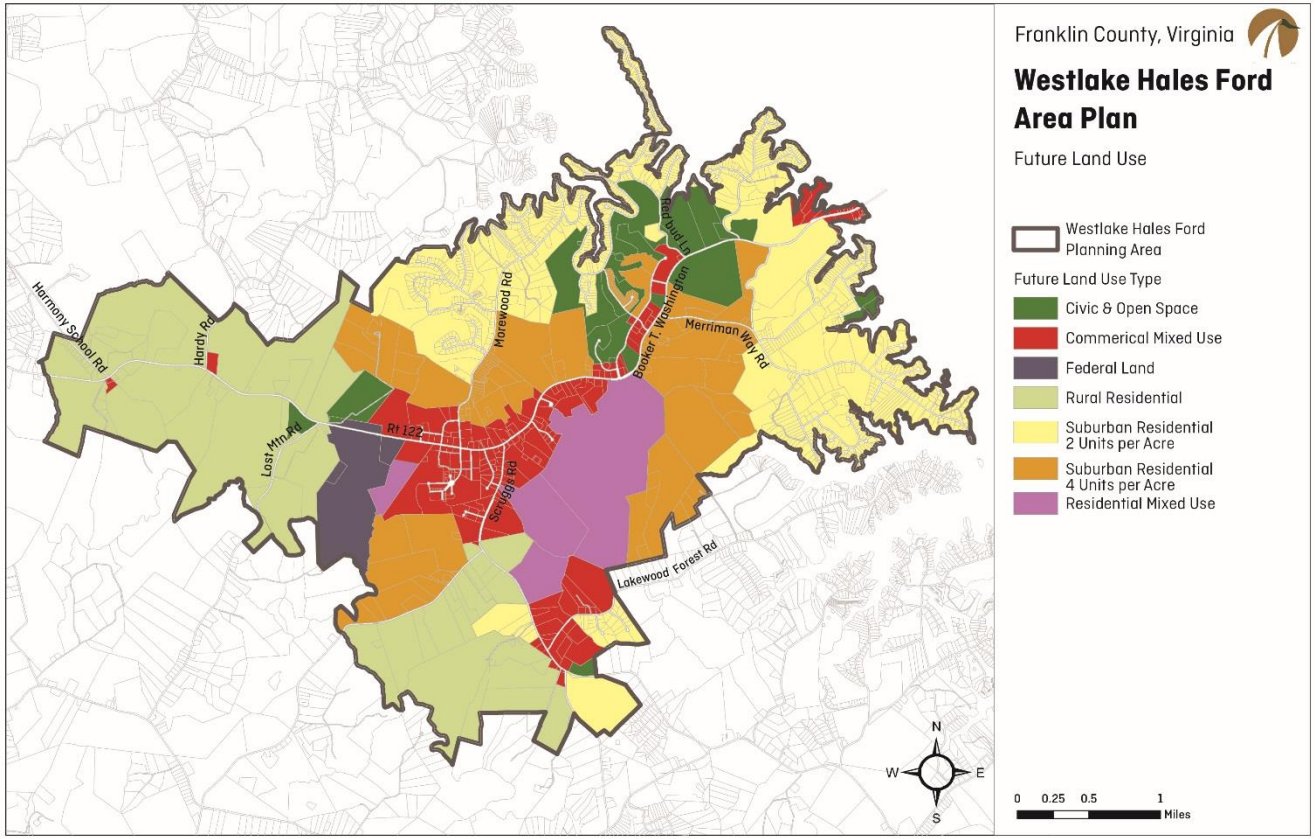
The Future Land Use Concept envisions a more intense, diverse set of land uses than are currently in place. The heart of the area would be commercial mixed use, within which a predominantly commercial area would also include residential and other non-commercial uses. Smaller pockets of this commercial mixed use are also envisioned at a few crossroads along Route 122, including Hales Ford.

Surrounding these central commercial mixed use areas are suburban and rural residential areas of varying density, ranging up to as high as eight dwelling units per acre. In general, residential densities are highest in the immediate vicinity of the core commercial mixed use area, and gradually diminish farther away from the core.

The Future Land Use map also retains federal lands, specifically the Booker T. Washington Monument, along with civic and open space uses.

Planning staff, Planning Commission Members, and Planning Advisory Committee Members built upon the Future Land Use Map reference in "Charting a Path to 2030 and Beyond" a report of the Westlake – Hales Ford Planning Advisory Committee to refine the Future Land Use Map in the Plan. It is envisioned to have commercial mixed use core that provided better multi-modal connections and a greater diversity of uses, while higher density suburban residential uses surrounded it. The areas along the lakefront are envisioned to remain single family residential, while the western and inland portions of the planning area were to remain rural residential. Small pockets of commercial mixed use were envisioned at a few crossroads, as well as at Hales Ford.

Future Land Use Map/Figure 11



DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

Policies by Land Use Category

Commercial Mixed Use

Commercial mixed use areas center around a neighborhood main street that should operate at lower speeds and offer accommodations for pedestrian movement. Storefronts line the main street, in buildings that range from one to four stories. Typically, buildings taller than one story have office and residential uses above.

The mix of uses are envisioned as predominantly commercial, but also include residential and planned open space. These non-commercial uses intended to comprise around 10-20% of total development, though the exact amount is

less critical than the regulatory allowance of a diversity of uses. This diversity of uses should extend to housing, where single-family and multi-family housing should both be offered, ideally with a range of housing stock that includes apartments, townhomes, and detached units.

Streetscapes along the commercial mixed use main street should be walkable, with wide sidewalks (8 feet minimum), landscaping, and internal plazas designed for easy public congregation. Land conservation is best reserved for areas on the periphery of the area.

Streets in commercial mixed use centers should be low speed, with on-street parking on the main street and off-street parking pushed behind buildings.

As commercial mixed use centers develop; the centers need to consider impact of the developments located close to historic places like Booker T. Washington National Monument. Booker T. Washington National Monument conducted a viewshed study in 1998 to help focus on issues of the park like viewsheds, transportation, and environmental impacts on the monument. An adequate boundary is important to protecting the park and maintaining the quiet setting and rural character. In addition, the widening or additional lanes to Route 122 in the parks vicinity would increase traffic which would affect the park in a negative way by causing increased traffic noise, impact the visual character, and increase emission. Water quality of Jack-O-Lantern Branch is important to the park and official would not want chemical leaks from vehicles parking at a new development to ruin off into the creek. Commercial mixed use centers design buildings with heights no more than three (3) stories, additional setbacks with landscaping and natural buffering to protect viewshed and the historic setting of the park. Slowing traffic down and having safeguards improves the noise level to maintain the character of the park for visitor to have the entire experience of the time.

Residential Mixed Use

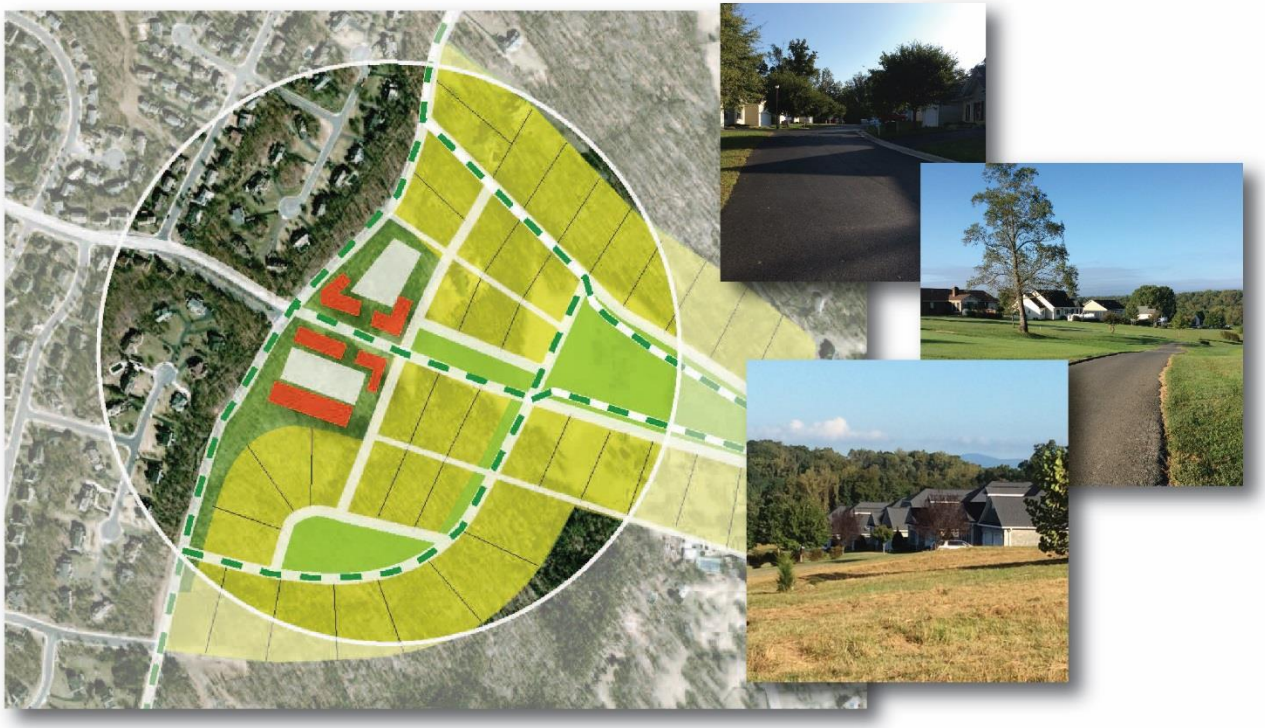
Residential mixed use areas are generally smaller centers that feature compact residentially focused living. These areas are predominantly residential, and feature a mix of housing types from apartments, townhomes, and attached and detached homes. Housing density is highest in the center of the neighborhood, and get less dense further out.

These areas offer a limited set of neighborhood retail that mostly consists of small scale ground floor retail and service uses in the core area. Home office or in-home commercial services can also be found here. Retail parking needs are small, and can be accommodated either on street or by small on-site lots.

Non-residential uses intended to comprise around 5-10% of total development, though the exact amount is less critical than the regulatory allowance of a diversity of uses. Of import, this percentage breakdown includes active recreational spaces, such as playgrounds, ballfields, courts, or similar uses. More passive recreation should also be included on the periphery, and can be as much as half of the total land area, but these spaces should be used less intensively than active recreation spaces and should primarily provide conservation and environmental quality benefits.

All streets in residential mixed use areas should be walkable, with narrow sidewalks (5 feet minimum) sufficing. There should be enough sidewalk coverage to connect all residential lots to all non-residential lots. Additionally, streets in residential mixed use centers should be low speed, with an emphasis on safety, while also providing efficient internal circulation.

Suburban Residential



Suburban Residential areas are consistent with traditional suburban development. They are predominantly if not exclusively residential areas that typically contain single-family detached homes, though townhomes and attached single-family homes would be allowed. This land use pattern is best applied at fairly low densities of two to four units per acre.

Commercial uses are expected to be very limited, and serve local retail needs at major neighborhood crossroads. Suburban residential areas can be good areas for in-home offices, though regulations in these areas should ensure that traffic and parking are mitigated without affecting neighboring residents. Other non-residential uses would include active and passive open space, including playgrounds, ballfields, courts, or similar uses, potentially as part of a neighborhood club or recreation center.

Streets in Suburban Residential areas are generally of two types: local streets and collector streets. Local streets would serve slow-moving, low-volume local traffic, sometimes within a contained subdivision. Sidewalks are beneficial on these streets, but can be absent without discouraging walking due to the low volume and slow travel speeds. While local streets in Suburban Residential areas are not intended for longer trips, attempts to improve connectivity within and between adjacent neighborhoods should be encouraged. Collector streets are higher-volume, higher-speed roads that are used by multiple neighborhoods to access the larger community. Collector roads should have sidewalks on at least one side, providing walking access to essential goods and services in the immediate vicinity of the area.

Rural Residential

Rural Residential areas consist of agricultural, forestry and residential communities. Homes should be on large lots or clustered with extensive communal preserved open space. Utility extensions should be limited. These areas should preserve very low density rural landscape characteristics with preserved natural features, scenic viewsheds and homes that are visually separated and buffered from the roadways.

In general, development in rural residential areas is 90%-95% very low density, with residential generally developed at 1 unit per 5 acres on average. Sporadic rural service, rural industry, such as wineries, or institutional uses are mixed in to this low density residential development. Residential development intended to occur as large lots or conservation

cluster subdivisions that maximize open space protection. Remaining lands should be permanently protected through conservation easements.

Rural residential areas are served by existing rural roadways. Connectivity is limited to locations within conservation subdivisions and new homes should generally not have driveways entering onto existing rural highways but onto new local roads in conservation subdivisions. The homes themselves can be visually separated from existing collector roadways through screening or large setbacks.

Conservation subdivisions are envisioned to utilized as much as possible here, and be designed to fit in with natural features to reduce land disturbance, preserve vegetation, maximize protection of environmentally sensitive features and minimize impervious surface and utility extensions. Preserved open space should include natural areas and common areas for passive recreation. Trails/greenways should connect development to the larger greenway network. Limited public facility provision is expected, and would mostly involve parks and the types of recreation facilities that do not attract significant auto traffic, such as trails/greenways and bikeways.

Civic & Open Space

Civic & Open Space areas are spaces that provide a range of amenities and services available to the general public. This includes recreation, police, fire, and government services, but can include other similar uses not listed here, as

long as they serve some civic purpose. In general, there are two types of open space: active and passive. Active open spaces allowed for formal or programmed activity, such as playgrounds and ballfields. Passive open space is designed more for more informal use, focused on preservation of the natural environment. The best open space areas provide some combination of these two open space types, allowing for the widest range of benefits to the general public and environment.

Gateways

The planning and development of the Westlake – Hales Ford area needs to place an emphasis on good design. This need stems from the area's multifaceted role in the county. In order to serve simultaneously as a scenic corridor, a growth center, a residential community, and a commercial hub, thoughtful design must be a part of all public and private development activities. One highly visible way to establish the importance of Westlake – Hales Ford as a multifaceted place is through the use of gateway design. Gateways can take many forms, but all of them serve to define the boundaries of a place and mark that place as worth noticing. Often, these places also have physically distinct characteristics that visitors need to be informed about, such as lower speeds or different intensity of activities.

With these ideas in mind, gateway concepts have been created for Westlake – Hales Ford planning area. The following gateway concepts are conceptual in nature and further analysis, study and discussions with different agencies would need to be accomplished before a final decision on any gateway concepts is accepted. Described below are four (4) conceptual options for gateways at the eastern and western entrances of the planning area.

Eastern Gateway Concept

Hales Ford is an obvious gateway into and out of Franklin County, and has a more intensive development character than a mile or more in either direction along Route 122. It also has the potential for providing pedestrian connectivity for recreational and retail purposes. Despite these characteristics, there is nothing to help visually signify the area as a gateway or a unique place. The gateway concept presented here provides the following elements:

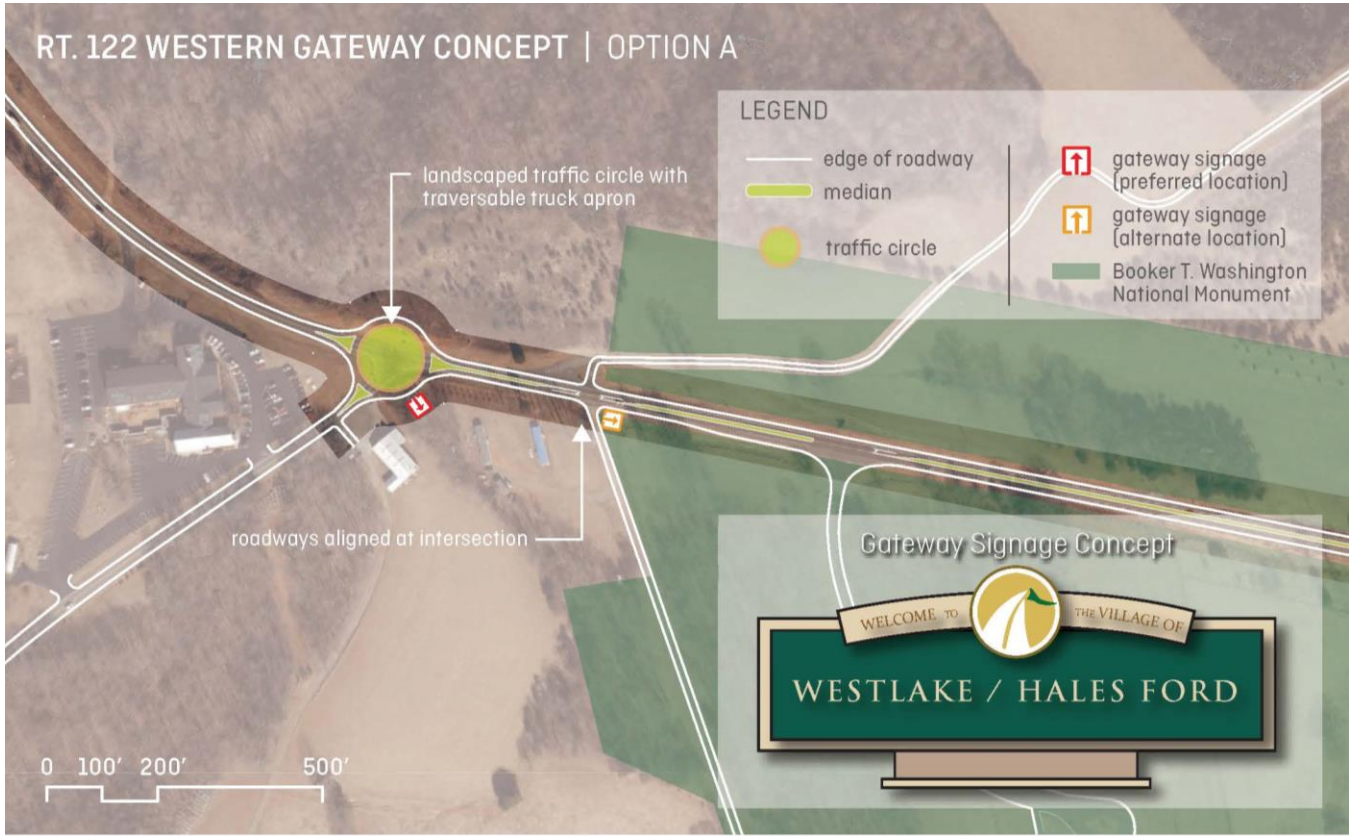
- welcome signs for westbound traffic, providing immediate visual cue that drivers have entered a new place that's distinct from the eastern shore of Smith Mountain Lake
- pedestrian connectivity across Route 122 at select locations of bustling commercial and tourism activity
- landscaped median with pedestrian refuges along Route 122
- a multiuse trail ringing the roadway

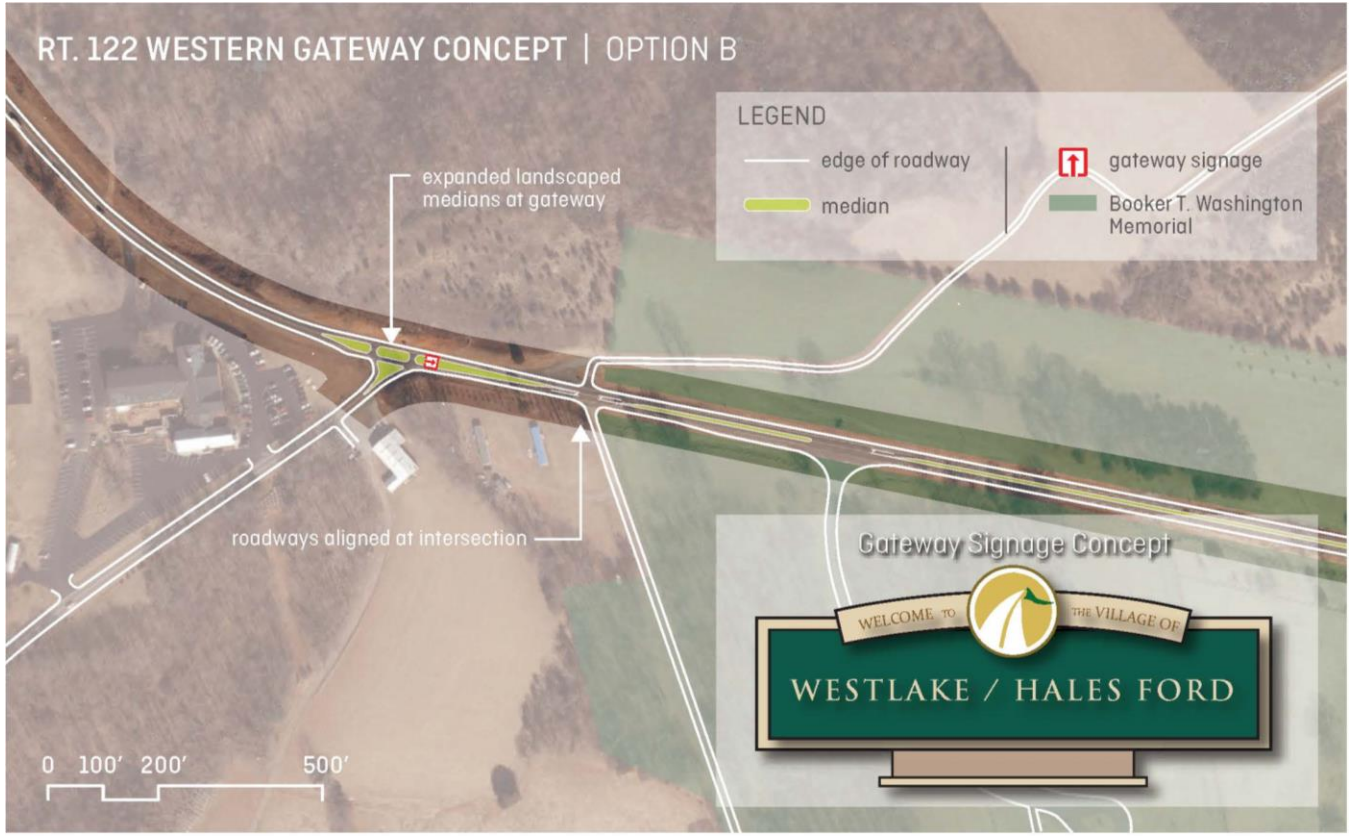
These elements in combination help to strongly identify Hales Ford as a place worth noticing, and could provide a safe, visually appealing sense of place for the community. The concept plan below illustrates these ideas.

RT. 122 EASTERN GATEWAY CONCEPT
LEGEND
multi-use paved trail
median
crosswalk
gateway signage
Gateway Signage Concept
WELCOME TO
THE VILLAGE OF
WESTLAKE / HALES FORD
0 100' 200' 500'

Western Gateway Concept

The Booker T. Washington National Monument just east of the Route 122 and Lost Mountain Road intersection serves as an unofficial entry to the Westlake- Hales Ford area, making it a natural fit for a gateway for eastbound travelers. Given the less developed nature of this area, there is no need for pedestrian crossings or refuges, but a welcome sign and median treatments can both provide visual cues to visitors as to the import of both the Monument and the area as a whole. Two different concepts are provided here, with the primary difference being the use of a roundabout at the Lost Mountain Road / Route 122 intersection.


RT. 122 WESTERN GATEWAY CONCEPT | OPTION A
LEGEND
edge of roadway
median
traffic circle
gateway signage (preferred location)
gateway signage (alternate location)
Booker T. Washington National Monument
landscaped traffic circle with traversable truck apron
roadways aligned at intersection
Gateway Signage Concept
WELCOME TO THE VILLAGE OF
WESTLAKE / HALES FORD
0 100' 200' 500'


RT. 122 WESTERN GATEWAY CONCEPT | OPTION B
LEGEND
edge of roadway
median
gateway signage
Booker T. Washington Memorial
expanded landscaped medians at gateway
roadways aligned at intersection
Gateway Signage Concept
WELCOME TO THE VILLAGE OF
WESTLAKE / HALES FORD
0 100' 200' 500'

IMPLEMENTATION

Funding Options for Infrastructure

The following is a general list of opportunities for funding infrastructure and improvements within the WHFA planning area, with a description of the requirements and standards for each. Enabling legislation and grant programs are inherently fluid and each legislative session changes the range of opportunities available. Therefore, the county should monitor these opportunities over time and look for those that are most conducive at each phase of evolution of the WHFA area over time.

Grant Programs

Transportation Partnership Opportunity Fund (TPOF) is to be used by the Governor of Virginia through the Design-Build provisions of the Virginia Code (§33.1-12(2)(b)) pursuant to the Public Private Partnership Act of 1995 (Virginia Code §56-556 et seq.). The Governor can also use TPOF monies for transportation aspects of economic development projects. Grants can be up to $5 million, while loans up to $30 million can be obtained interest free, but require repayment within 7 years. While flexible, TPOF funds are limited to use when the capacity of existing funding mechanisms has been exceeded.

Revenue Leveraging

The Transportation Funding and Reform Act of 2007 (HB 3202) allows counties to raise commercial property taxes as much as $0.25. Funds can be spent on roadway, pedestrian and transit projects.

Revenue Sharing

The Virginia Department of Transportation Revenue-Sharing Program is authorized under Virginia Code §33.1-2305. The program allows for Virginia Department of Transportation funds to match locality funds for improvement, construction or reconstruction on any functional class of roadway. A locality can request funds for projects in other localities. A locality may apply for up to a maximum of $10 million in matching allocations. Up to $5 million of these requested funds may be specified for maintenance projects.

Smart Scale (formerly HB2)

Virginia's SMART SCALE (§33.2-21.4) is picking the right transportation projects for funding and ensuring the best use of limited tax dollars. It is the method of scoring planned projects included in VTrans that are funded by HB 1887. Transportation projects are scored based on an objective, outcome-based process that is transparent to the public and allows decision-makers to be held accountable to taxpayers. Once projects are scored and prioritized, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) has the best information possible to select the right projects for funding.

Funding for project prioritization comes from two main pathways – the construction District Grants Program (DGP) and the High-Priority Projects Program (HPPP) – both established in 2015 under Code of Virginia §33.2-358. The DGP is open only to localities. Projects applying for the DGP funds compete with other projects from the same construction district. Projects applying for HPPP funds compete with projects from across the Commonwealth.

General Obligation Bond Financing

General obligation bonds provide up-front capital financed through a revenue stream backed by local government tax revenues (primarily property tax).However, there are nearly always competing priorities for the use of general obligation bonds, since they are commonly used for many local capital projects, including schools, parks, libraries, etc. Infrastructure improvements in the Westlake – Hales Ford area would need to be put in the County's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) in conjunction with local funding allocations and financing provisions.

Service Districts

Service districts may be created by any locality, by ordinance (Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2400). The locality must hold a public hearing prior to the creation of any district. Two localities may jointly act to create such a district located in both localities.

Service districts are created to provide additional, more complete, or more timely services of government than are desired in the locality as a whole. Once an ordinance creating a service district is adopted, the governing body has additional powers pertaining to the district, including:

- to construct, maintain, and operate such facilities and equipment as may be necessary or desirable to provide additional, more complete, or more timely governmental services within a service district.
- to provide construction, maintenance, and general upkeep of streets and roads, public transportation systems serving the district, including the acquisition of real estate necessary to provide such services.
- to levy and collect an annual tax upon any property in the service district subject to local taxation to pay for providing the additional governmental services. Note, however, in contrast with the Community Development Authority provisions, such annual tax shall not be levied for or used to pay for schools, police, or general government services.

In addition to the taxes and assessments provide for by the enabling legislation, a locality may contribute money from its general fund as it deems appropriate to pay for the governmental services authorized within the service district. The proceeds from any annual tax or portion thereof collected for road construction may be accumulated and set aside for such period of time as is necessary to finance such construction.

Community Development Authorities (CDA)

Community Development Authorities may be established by the governing body upon petition from 51% of the land area or assessed value of land in any tract or tracts of land in a proposed district (Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-5152).

The locality may then adopt a resolution or ordinance creating the authority, after a public hearing. The resolution or ordinance is then recorded in the land records of the circuit court for each parcel included in the district. Two localities may jointly act to create such a district located in both localities.

The main powers of a CDA are to finance, fund, plan, construct, operate, and maintain the infrastructure improvements enumerated in the ordinance establishing the district. These can include acquisition of land; construction or improvement of roads, bridges, parking facilities, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, traffic signals, storm water management and retention systems, gas and electric lines and street lights, parks, cultural and educational uses; fencing and landscaping; fire stations, water mains and plugs, fire trucks, rescue vehicles and other vehicles and equipment; and school buildings and related structures.

A CDA may issue revenue bonds, subject to terms and conditions as may be established in the ordinance or resolution establishing the district, for all costs associated with the improvements. Revenue bonds must be payable solely from revenues received by the development authority. The revenue bonds issued by a CDA do not require the consent of the locality, except where consent is specifically required by the provisions of the authorizing resolution, and such bonds are not deemed to constitute a debt or obligation of the local governing body. The CDA may provide that the locality annually collect a special tax on taxable real property within the CDA's jurisdiction to finance the services and facilities provided by the authority.

The CDA may provide that the locality annually collect a special tax on real property within the CDA's jurisdiction to finance the services and facilities provided by the authority. Unless requested by every property owner within the proposed district, the rate of the special tax cannot be more than $0.25 per $100 of the assessed fair market value of any taxable real estate.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The governing body of any county, city or town may adopt tax increment financing by passing an ordinance designating a development project area and providing that real estate taxes in the development project area shall be assessed, collected and allocated such that the future gains in tax revenues created by the improvements are used to finance the improvements (Virginia Code §58.1-3245.2).

When a public project (e.g., sidewalk improvements) is constructed, surrounding property values generally increase and encourage surrounding development or redevelopment. The increased tax revenues are then dedicated to finance the debt created by the original public improvement project.

The local assessing officer records in the land book both the base assessed value and the current assessed value of the real estate in the development project area. Real estate taxes attributable to the increased value between the current assessed value of any parcel of real estate and the base assessed value of such real estate are allocated by the local treasurer and paid into a special fund entitled the "Tax Increment Financing Fund" to pay the principal and interest on obligations issued or development project cost commitments entered into to finance the development project costs.

Tax Increment Financing typically occurs within designated Urban Renewal Areas (URA) that meet certain economic criteria and approved by a local governing body. To be eligible for this financing, a project (or a portion of it) must be located within the URA.

Conditional Zoning

Conditional zoning was enabled by the Virginia General Assembly to address the shortcomings of traditional zoning methods when competing and incompatible land uses conflict (Virginia Code §15.2-2296-2203). While it is technically a zoning tool, it is also a tool for funding infrastructure and the financial impacts of growth.

Conditional zoning allows reasonable conditions, known as proffers, to be offered by the applicant during a rezoning process as a way of mitigating the impacts of the proposed rezoning. Proffers may include land, infrastructure, cash or other conditions or constraints on the use of the property. These proffers, if accepted by the governing body as part of the rezoning approval, become part of the zoning ordinance as it applies to that property. In theory, conditional zoning allows land to be rezoned that might not otherwise be rezoned because the proffers will protect the community or area affected by the rezoning.

All proffers must be made voluntarily. A governing body is not authorized to require a specific proffer as a condition to granting a rezoning. However, there may be times, in the near or longer-term future, where an owner may indeed wish to rezone their property in the Westlake – Hales Ford area, in which case proffers could come into play.

Recommended Zoning Revisions

An identified goal of the UDA program is to better align County zoning ordinances with traditional neighborhood design (TND) principles. This includes:

- Mix of uses
- Diversity of housing type
- Well-connected streets

- Multiple means of travel
- Green space
- Conservation of land

This area plan includes the review of three particularly important zoning districts for the Westlake – Hales Ford area, in an attempt to identify changes that would improve consistency with the TND principles that are at the heart of the vision plan and development character portions of this area plan. Two planned development districts and one overlay district were reviewed.

- Residential Planned Unit Development District (RPD)
- Planned Commercial Development District (PCD)
- Westlake Village Center Overlay District

The findings of those reviews follow.

Recommended Amendments to the Residential Planned Unit Development District (RPD).

Background and Introduction:
The following potential amendments are proposed for consideration to the existing Residential Planned Unit Development District (RPD). These recommendations are designed to better implement principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design and to foster an enhanced small town and traditional neighborhood character in developments using this zoning district.

Purpose
Add language relating to the district being "consistent with the principles of traditional neighborhood design"

Permitted Uses
Add the following Permitted Uses:

- Day care
- Condominiums
- Elderly care/Senior Citizen Housing
- Neighborhood commercial uses (see section 25-304(b) [formerly special use permit]

Area Regulations

Change the minimum district area to be considered as a residential planned unit development, from the current 5 acres to 20 acres or 10 acres if located within an approved Designated Growth Area.

Off Street Parking

Add a maximum parking requirement in addition to the existing minimum parking requirements. For example, require that maximum parking be no more than 150% of the minimum requirements.

Open Space Requirements

Minimum contiguous open space - require that:

- Open spaces shall contain a minimum of 5,000 contiguous square feet
- Developed open spaces shall contain a minimum of 600 contiguous square feet

Define developed open space as areas that provide infrastructure to support active recreation of any sort. Leave flexibility in the type of active recreation that land developers employ, and encourage them to identify the needs of their consumer base and the larger community.

Special Regulations

Maximum and minimum percent of commercial use – increase the maximum percent of the gross area of the RPD project that may be occupied by buildings and structures devoted to commercial uses from the exiting 3 percent to a proposed level of at least 10 percent. Also; increase the maximum total floor space devoted to such uses from the existing 10 square feet per dwelling unit_to a proposed 30 square feet per dwelling unit.

Include a minimum percent of gross area for commercial uses at three percent of gross area and ten square feet per dwelling unit.

Diversity of residential uses – Require a minimum range of residential dwelling types. For example, a minimum of 2 residential types would be required to be developed (dwelling types would need to be defined as single family, duplex, multifamily, etc.), and no one type of residential dwelling type may comprise more than 90% of all dwellings.

Permitted Neighborhood Commercial Uses – add the following to the list of Permitted Neighborhood Commercial Uses:

- Restaurants of no greater than 5,000 square feet per establishment and without drive-through service

Streets

Add the following provisions:

- Street layout shall be a modified grid street pattern, which means that the grid should be adapted to the topography, unique natural features, environmental constraints of the tract, and peripheral open space areas.
- There shall be a minimum of two (2) interconnections with the existing public street system.
- There shall be, to the maximum extent possible, linkages to adjacent developments and neighborhoods consisting of roads adjacent to commercial or mixed-use areas, pedestrian and bicycle paths.
- Street layout shall form an interconnected system of streets primarily in a rectilinear grid pattern, modified, however, to avoid a monotonous pattern.
- The street system shall be designed to create blocks that are generally rectilinear in shape; to the greatest extent possible. Blocks shall be designed to have a maximum length of four hundred eighty (480) feet.
- Allowable street types include alleys with paved widths of 18 feet
- A sidewalk network shall be provided on all streets throughout the development that connects all dwelling units with other dwelling units, non-residential uses, and common open spaces.
- Sidewalks shall be a minimum of 5 feet in width; sidewalks in commercial areas shall be no less than 8 feet in width.

Timing of Development

The timing of construction of the non-residential portions of the RPD should be left to the discretion of the applicant(s) as long as not more than seventy five (75) percent of the total approved residential units (for the entire RPD) may be built prior to construction of at least fifty (50) percent of the approved non-residential floor area.

Recommended Amendments to the Planned Commercial District (PCD).

Background and Introduction

The following potential amendments are proposed for consideration to the existing Planned Commercial District (PCD). These recommendations are designed to better implement principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design and to foster an enhanced small town and traditional neighborhood character in developments using this zoning district.

Purpose

The purpose of this district is to promote the efficient use of predominantly commercial land by allowing a wide range of complementary land uses of various densities and flexible application of development controls in a manner that reflects traditional neighborhood development principles. The district encourages achievement of these goals while also protecting surrounding property, natural features and scenic beauty.

Permitted Uses

Add the following Permitted Uses:

- Residential uses up to a maximum of 30% of the total gross floor area

Area Regulations

Change the minimum district area to be considered as a residential planned unit development, from the current 5 acres to 20 acres or 10 acres if located within an approved Designated Growth Area

Off Street Parking

Add a maximum parking requirement in addition to the existing minimum parking requirements. For example, require that maximum parking be no more than 150% of the minimum requirements.

Open Space Requirements

Minimum contiguous open space - require that:

- Open spaces shall contain a minimum of 2,500 contiguous square feet.
- Developed open spaces shall contain a minimum of 600 contiguous square feet

Define developed open space as areas that provide infrastructure to support active recreation of any sort. Leave flexibility in the type of active recreation that land developers employ, and encourage them to identify the needs of their consumer base and the larger community.

Additional design guidelines for commercial development:

- Ground floor residential is not permitted in Mixed Use Buildings.

- Outdoor seating areas must have a minimum sidewalk width of 5 ft. between the limits of the outdoor seating area and the roadway edge of the sidewalk.

Streets

Add the following provisions:

- Street layout shall be a modified grid street pattern adapted to the topography, unique natural features, environmental constraints of the tract, and peripheral open space areas.

- There shall be a minimum of two (2) interconnections with the existing public or private street system.

- There shall be, to the maximum extent possible, linkages to adjacent developments and neighborhoods consisting roads, pedestrian and bicycle paths.

- Street layout shall form an interconnected system of streets primarily in a rectilinear grid pattern, modified, however, to avoid a monotonous pattern.

- The street system shall be designed to create blocks that are generally rectilinear in shape; to the greatest extent possible. Blocks shall be designed to have a maximum length of six hundred (600) feet.

- A sidewalk and greenway network shall be provided on all streets throughout the development that connects all dwelling units with other dwelling units, non-residential uses, and common open spaces.

- Sidewalks shall be a minimum of 8 feet in width in commercial areas; sidewalks in residential areas shall be no less than 5 feet in width.

Special Regulations

Maximum percent of commercial use – include a minimum percent of the gross area of the PCD project to be occupied by residential uses to a proposed ten percent.

Diversity of residential uses – Require a minimum range of residential dwelling types. For example, a minimum of 2 residential types would be required to be developed (dwelling types would need to be defined as single family, duplex, multifamily, etc.), and no one type of residential dwelling type may comprise more than 90% of all dwellings.

Recommended Amendments to the Westlake Village Center Overlay District.

Background and Introduction:

The following potential amendments are proposed for consideration to the existing Westlake Village Center Overlay District. These recommendations are designed to better implement principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design and to foster an enhanced small town and traditional neighborhood character in developments using this zoning district. In addition, it is recommended an expansion of the Westlake Village Center Overlay District to include the entire Designated Growth Area (DGA).

Purpose

The Westlake Village Center Overlay district recognizes that the area will serve as a focal point for cultural and commercial activity of the Smith Mountain Lake area of the county. The village center overlay district promotes a development pattern that is consistent with traditional neighborhood design concepts which bring a sense of community to the surrounding rural area with an emphasis on facilitating the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community center that provides essential goods and services to rural residents and may also include higher density housing and office and light industrial employment centers. The purpose of the overlay district is to implement key provisions of the Westlake – Hales Ford Area Plan and the Westlake Design Guidelines in order to:

- Create a sense of place.
- Create a unified architectural character where new development is harmonious, well coordinated and compatible with the historic architecture of the area.
- Create convenient, safe and comfortable pedestrian linkage between commercial and residential areas and between commercial sites.
- Create a consistent approach to location, design and landscaping of parking areas for commercial use.

- Create visual buffers between historic properties and commercial uses.
- Create an approach to signs that reduces clutter.
- Create lighting that does not pollute the night sky and does not impact adjacent uses, particularly historic sites.
- Create new development that protects scenic views.

Permitted & Prohibited Uses

Remove intensive uses such as feedlot, commercial, automobile graveyard, custom meat cutting operation, livestock market, etc.

Add Mobile / Manufactured Homes as a prohibited use (specific uses to be prohibited or removed pending legal review)

Site Development regulations

Required Landscape Area – reduce planting strip requirements from existing 20 feet to proposed 10 feet.

Minimum building setback - reduce minimum building setback from landscaped area requirements from existing 20 feet to proposed 10 feet; and change building setbacks from roadways to edge of Right of Way rather than from roadway centerline.

Off Street Parking

Add a maximum parking requirement in addition to the existing minimum parking requirements. For example, require that maximum parking be no more than 150% of the minimum requirements.

Signs

Consider limitation and duration of temporary and advertising signs and review current sign regulation in the overlay district.

Designated Growth Area Boundary

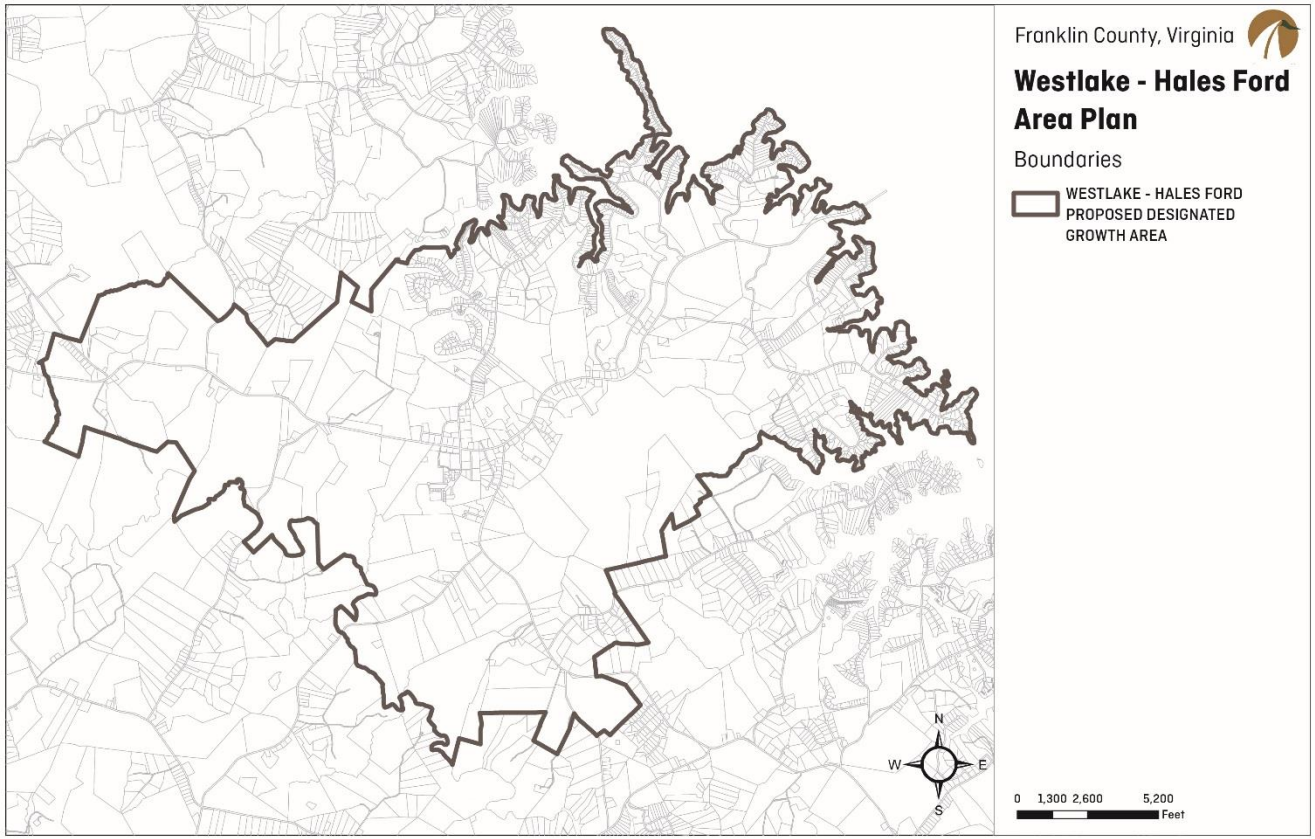
The County's DGA designation is consistent with Section 15.2–2223.1 of the Virginia State Code for urban development areas. This designation does not restrict development outside of the DGA, it merely provides clarity of purpose in future development patterns within the DGA.

Designated Growth Areas are intended to encourage development that makes use of traditional neighborhood design principles. Encouraging these principles in new development within the DGAs will help position Franklin County for growth and economic development, while maintaining its rural look and feel. It is the County's policy to encourage within the DGAs the following traditional town design principles:

- Pedestrian-friendly road design
- Interconnection of new local streets with existing local streets and roads
- Connectivity of road and pedestrian networks
- Preservation of natural areas
- Mixed-use neighborhoods and a mixture of housing types
- Reduction of front and side yard building setbacks
- Reduction of subdivision street widths and turning radii at subdivision street intersections to calm traffic on local streets, as permissible by VDOT standards.

The designation qualifies this area to potentially receive funding under SMART SCALE (formerly State House Bill 2) legislation passed in 2014 as a qualified Urban Development Area. The DGA boundary is identical to the wastewater service area and the planning area boundary for the Westlake – Hales Ford area.

Designated Growth Area/Figure 12



APPENDIX A – CHARTING A PATH TO 2030 AND BEYOND

Report of the Westlake – Hales Ford Planning Advisory Committee