

Purpose

"A village is the primary focus for local services, social activities, and community life as well as providing opportunities for employment. The commercial services include convenience shopping, general business, and professional services that serve the needs of the surrounding rural community. Community facilities include elementary schools, recreation areas, fire and rescue sites, post offices, and churches. Residential uses include farmhouses, rural dwellings, small subdivisions and apartments located on the upper floors of commercial development. Villages provide many of the daily needs of the area residents, but some services will still be provided outside of the village area. Villages maintain a "pedestrian radius" of one quarter to one half mile from the village where commerce and community facilities are located."

-2025 Comprehensive Plan for Franklin County

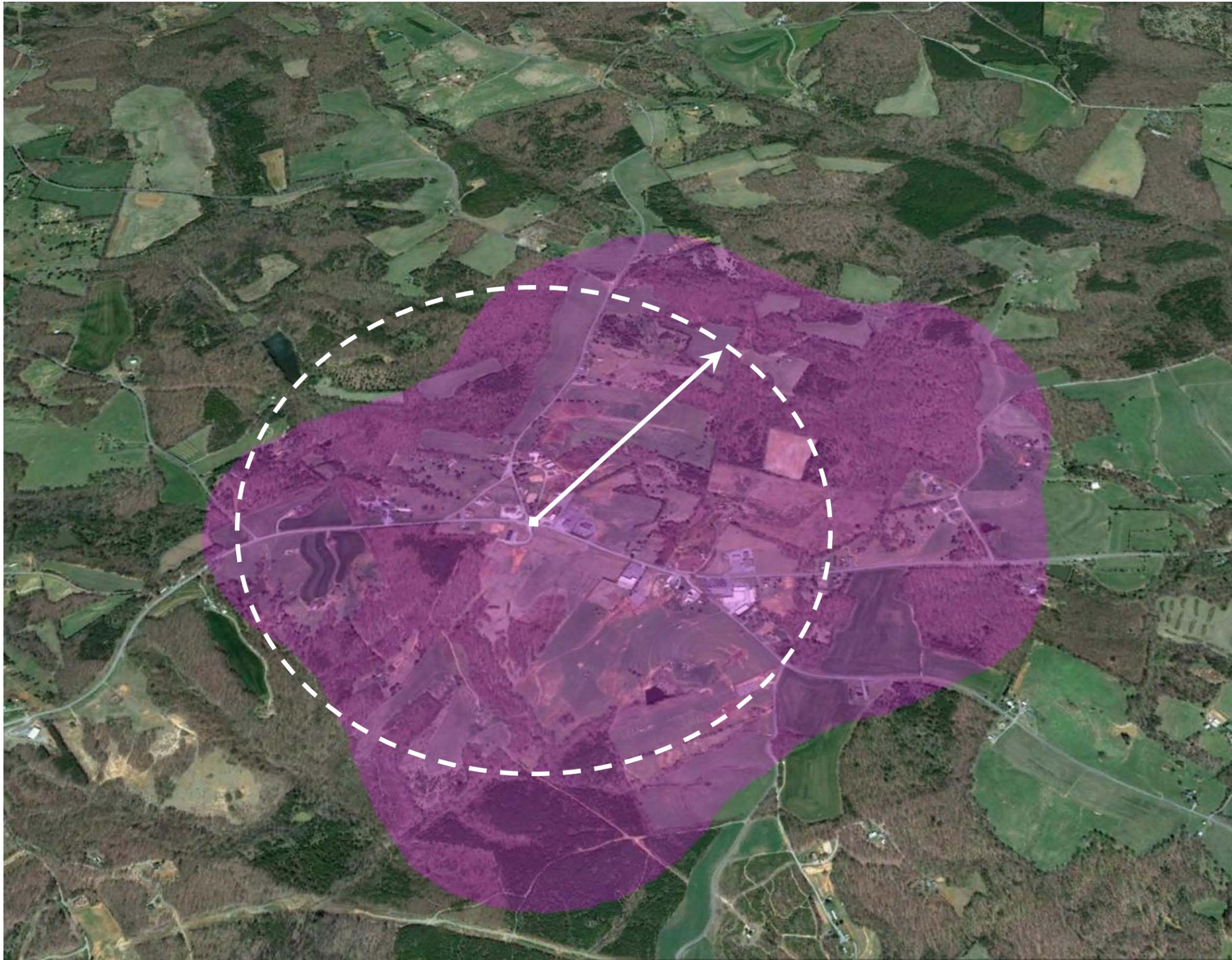
Franklin County's Comprehensive Plan seeks to strike a balance between growth, development, and an expanding population on the one hand, and the preservation of farmland, rural character, and scenic beauty on the other. To achieve this goal, the Comprehensive Plan calls for the development of well-planned village centers, where the County will invest in infrastructure and civic amenities, and the private sector is encouraged to develop a mixture of higher-intensity uses that provide for the needs of the surrounding community.

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the historic crossroads community of Union Hall as a "village," and calls for the development of a Union Hall Village Plan to establish more specific policy recommendations to guide future growth. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a planning radius of approximately ½ mile from the intersection of Rt. 40 and Kemp Ford Road, although it is anticipated that the boundaries of the planning area may be re-shaped through the village-planning process.

The Union Hall village-planning process began in March 2013 with a mass mailing/survey to all property owners within the Union Hall zip code. Out of nearly 1,500 surveys mailed, the County received feedback from more than 450 property owners on issues including the type and amount of desired commercial development; social and civic amenities; and the community's desire for a unique character and identity.

A series of public workshops were held in April 2013 to solicit input and better understand citizens' concerns. More than 180 local residents attended the workshops. In addition to the need for more commercial, convenience and social opportunities within the village center, citizens expressed a strong desire to carefully manage the development of farmland around the village as residential growth pressure increases in the future. Specifically, citizens expressed a concern about the potential impacts of by-right residential development in the A-1 Agricultural zoning category.

The Union Hall Village Plan contains a set of "concepts" that should help guide future decisions about growth and development. It intended as a guide, not as a regulatory document. The Union Hall Village Plan sets forth a set of shared values and expectations to be used by decision makers – in both the public and private sectors - when evaluating future development proposals.

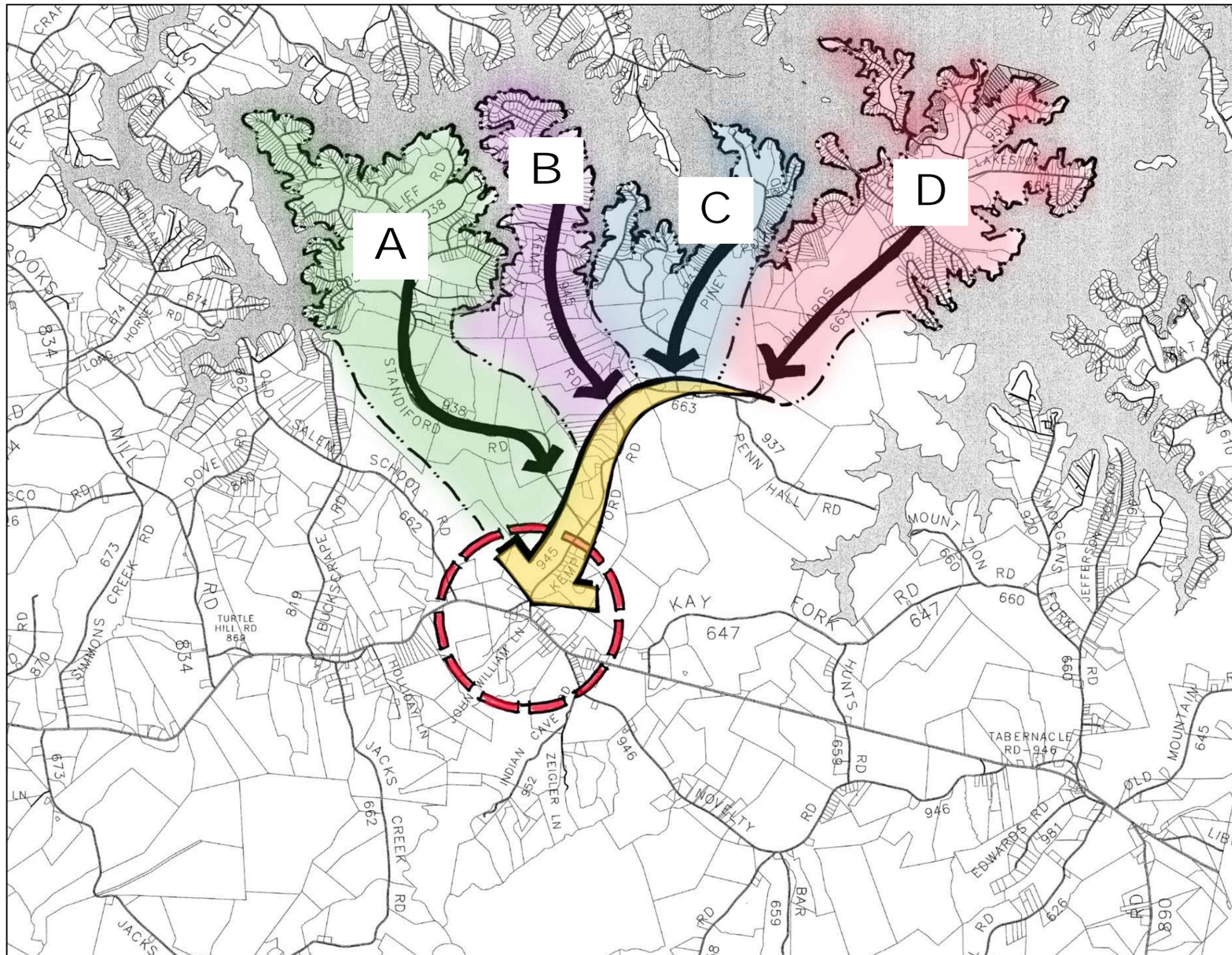


Background

Union Hall is designated as a Village Center because of its historic role as a rural crossroads where, over time, market activities developed to accommodate the needs of the local population.

The local road network originally developed in a rural setting, long before the creation of Smith Mountain Lake. Now, many lake residents find that the only way to and from their homes is to pass through the village of Union Hall. This captive traffic is a plus for local businesses. But too much traffic (and an inadequate road infrastructure) could threaten the health of the commercial village.

Below is an analysis of existing traffic patterns in the "captive" traffic shed, along with an analysis of the potential for new trip generation as undeveloped land becomes developed in the future.



 Union Hall village boundary, 1/2 mile radius, as depicted in the County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan

A Standford Road traffic shed.
Approximately 170 existing homes.
Approximately 1,030 acres undeveloped.

B Kemp Ford Road traffic shed.
Approximately 140 existing homes.
Approximately 230 acres undeveloped.

C Piney Point Road traffic shed.
Approximately 100 existing homes.
Approximately 510 acres undeveloped.

D Dillards Hill Road traffic shed.
Approximately 460 existing homes.
Approximately 1,030 acres undeveloped.

A + B + C + D = combined traffic shed

The combined traffic shed of Stanford, Kemp Ford, Piney Point and Dillards Hill roads contains a total of approximately 870 existing dwelling units. Using the VDOT average of ten (10) vehicle trips per day per dwelling unit, these existing homes produce an estimated 8,700 vehicle trips per day.

This same combined traffic shed contains approximately 2,800 acres of undeveloped land. If developed residentially at a density of one unit per five (5) acres, this undeveloped land would yield an additional 560 dwelling units, or 5,600 additional vehicle trips per day. If developed residentially at a density of one unit per acre, this undeveloped land would yield an additional 2,800 dwellings, or 28,000 additional vehicle trips per day.

Based on existing road patterns, all vehicle trips in this combined traffic shed must travel Kemp Ford Road to the village epicenter at Rt. 40.

Concept 1: Interconnectivity

Successful towns, villages, and commercial centers rely on high volumes of vehicular traffic in order to generate and maintain demand for business. Traffic congestion, on the other hand, can discourage business and erode quality of life for those who live in or near the village center. Interconnectivity helps to relieve traffic pressure by providing the traveler with multiple choices of routes. The goal is not to bypass the village center, but to offer a variety of means of accessing and traveling through the center.

 Opportunity for new road network to create interconnectivity and provide relief as traffic grows due to new development.



- 1 As undeveloped land in the suburban periphery is developed, care should be taken to ensure interconnectivity between new neighborhoods. Suburban residents should be able to visit each other without having to use more congested collector roads.
- 2 Plans have already been approved for a large commercial shopping center on the south side of Rt. 40, opposite the intersection of Kemp Ford Road. This location will likely feature a signalized intersection in the future. The shopping center represents an opportunity to develop a walkable street grid.
- 3 A new street grid is needed in order to provide "depth" to the commercial village, allowing local residents to access the center from multiple points. Existing "T" intersections (e.g. Standiford, Novelty) could be extended in order to develop this new grid.
- 4 Existing roads, such as Kay Fork, might be candidates for re-alignment and intersection improvements to tie into an expanded village grid. New or redesigned streets represent opportunities for creative traffic distribution and streetscape techniques.
- 5 With more than 1,500 undeveloped acres, AEP's "Penn Hall" property represents a significant opportunity in the future for new development, including public uses. The new street network should provide robust interconnectivity to the Penn Hall area.
- 6 Given Union Hall's proximity to nearby Penhook, opportunities may exist to link the villages with a series of back roads as an alternative to Rt. 40. Kay Fork and Novelty roads offer good alternatives, if properly integrated into the village street network.

Concept 2: Nodes as focus of activity

A successful village serves as a place of gathering and activity. Commercial, office, civic and mixed-use residential development are encouraged at key "nodes" located at key intersections within the village center.

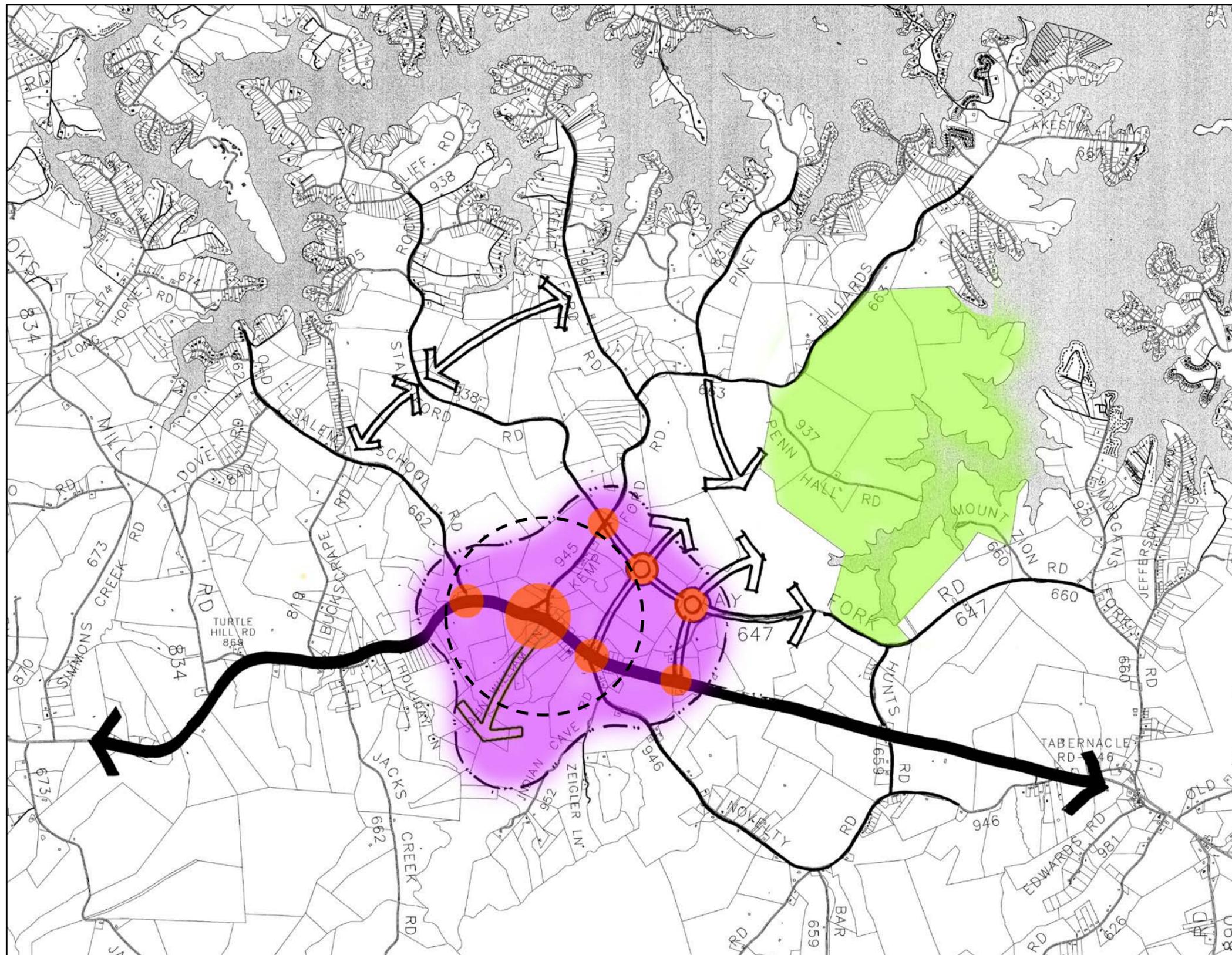
Nodes should be well-planned developments offering a high degree of pedestrian amenities. To the extent possible, parking and street access should be shared among developments to minimize traffic conflicts along Rt. 40 and other busy streets.



- a** **Old Salem School Road at Rt. 40**
Intersection is contained within the Comp Plan's existing ½ mile radius for village. Could serve as a western gateway, with opportunity for welcome signage/feature. Existing uses are somewhat passive, providing a "soft" transition from the surrounding rural area to the more intense village center.
- b** **Kemp Ford Road at Rt. 40 (+ Berger Loop)**
Considered the epicenter of the village, with established business uses. Major commercial project has been approved for the south side of Rt. 40 opposite this intersection, including grocery store and out-parcel development. Will eventually include a traffic signal and additional turn lanes. Berger Loop is used by residents as a "bypass."
- c** **Novelty Road at Rt. 40**
Intersection is within the Comp Plan's ½ mile village radius. Site of several existing businesses, which have driveway entrances on both Rt. 40 and Novelty Road. Intersection is poorly aligned.
- d** **Kay Fork Road at Rt. 40**
Intersection is outside Comp Plan's ½ mile village radius. Site is zoned for business, may become site of national retailer. If included in the village, may present opportunity for eastern gateway and intersection improvements.
- e** **Standiford Road at Kemp Ford Road**
Intersection is just outside Comp Plan's ½ mile village radius. Site of historic church. County owns property near the intersection, to be developed as a green box site.
- f** **Potential new intersections, nodes**
As the street grid is extended off of Rt. 40, new opportunities for nodes and activity centers can be created. Need not be exclusively commercial. Civic, recreational, and higher-density residential uses might also be considered.
- g** **Kay Fork and Standiford (Extension)**
If new development is successful in extending Standiford eastward and realigning Kay Fork to improve access to Rt. 40, then the intersection of a realigned Kay Fork with an extended Standiford becomes an important node, particularly given the development potential of AEP's 1,500-acre "Penn Hall" property to the east.

**Village Plan for
Union Hall, Virginia**
Adopted March 18, 2014

**Concept 3:
Village boundary**



-  Union Hall village boundary, 1/2 mile radius, as depicted in the County's 2025 Comprehensive Plan
-  Development around key intersections, or "nodes," should be places of activity, providing strong visual interest
-  Proposed Union Hall village boundary, incorporating key intersections and nodes of activity
-  AEP-owned Penn Hall property. Approximately 1,500 acres. Potential for future residential, civic and mixed-use development

The existing Union Hall village boundary, as depicted in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan, does not include all of the areas along Rt. 40 that are currently developed with commercial uses, or are zoned for commercial use in the future. Rather than a simple circle, existing conditions suggest more of an "amoeba" shape.

The village boundary should incorporate all key commercial intersections and nodes of activity, including those nodes that might be created by future expansion of the village street grid.

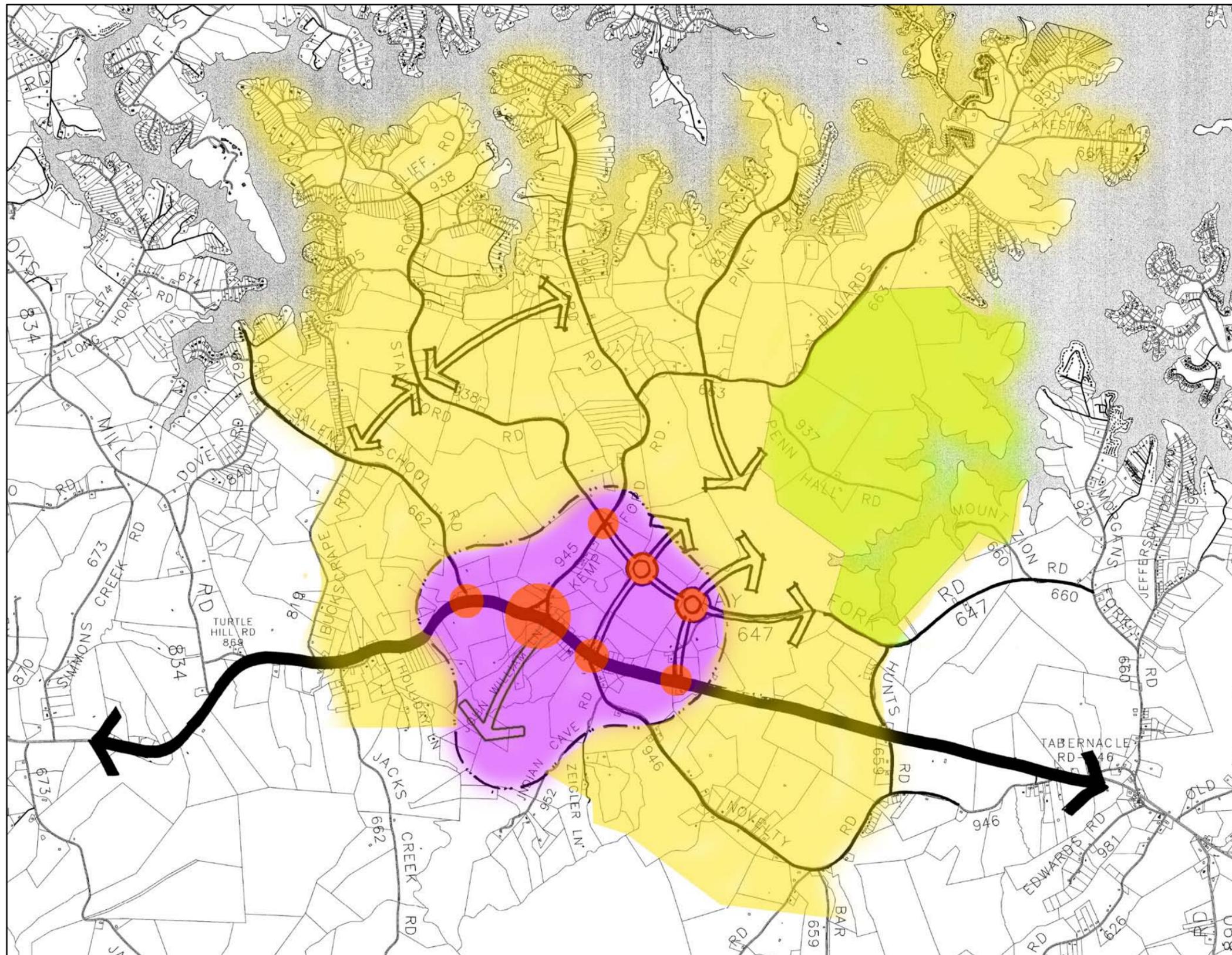
The epicenter of the village is likely to remain at the intersection of Kemp Ford Road and Rt. 40. A major commercial project is planned and already approved for the south side of Rt. 40 opposite this intersection. This project, which includes a grocery store and out-parcel development, also includes significant acreage to the south. It has been assumed that much of this land will be needed for mass drainfields to support the commercial center. However, if public water and sewer are developed in Union Hall, much of this acreage could be developed with a mixture of uses, including residential uses. Such development should be integrated into the commercial core, with strong pedestrian connections and opportunities for social interaction.

Given the presence of commercial development and zoning at the intersection of Kay Fork Road and Rt. 40, and the potential use of Kay Fork as a means of access to the Penn Hall property, it is recommended that the village boundary be extended to the east to capture this important intersection.

The village boundary is not intended to be a rigid border. Decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis when considering the development potential of land around the edges of the village.

Where new development at the edge can demonstrate that it will tie into identified village nodes (through shared access, vehicle cross-connection and pedestrian connectivity), then such development may be considered a logical extension of the village. Where proposed edge development cannot be integrated into village nodes, then such edge development should be discouraged.

**Concept 4:
Suburban area of influence**



-  Proposed Union Hall village boundary, incorporating key intersections and nodes of activity
-  AEP-owned Penn Hall property. Approximately 1,500 acres. Potential for future residential, civic and mixed-use development
-  Area of suburban influence around the Village of Union Hall. To be considered a study area for comprehensive rezoning.

The combined traffic shed of Standiford, Kemp Ford, Piney Point and Dillard's Hill roads already contributes more than 8,700 daily vehicular trips through the village of Union Hall. Additional development of currently-vacant land in this traffic shed will increase traffic, potentially leading to congestion and a loss of rural character.

Beyond this combined traffic shed, it must be recognized that AEP's Penn Hall property, at more than 1,500 acres, represents a significant game-changer if ever developed in the future. Kemp Ford Road simply cannot handle the traffic potentially generated by the development of Penn Hall. Other means of access are required.

It is recommended that the Village Plan for Union Hall include an area of suburban influence, beyond the village boundaries, as an area of study for comprehensive rezoning. The goal is to allow for continued farming, forestall operations, and general agricultural activities, while applying some means of scrutiny for any new residential development.

New large-scale residential development should be subject to the rezoning process, rather than allowed by-right under existing agricultural zoning. The rezoning process should be used to negotiate:

- desired ROW widths
- street interconnectivity
- pedestrian amenities
- open space
- civic amenities.

It is recommended that any undeveloped tract of land larger than five (5) acres within the identified suburban area of influence be evaluated for potential comprehensive rezoning. The County's zoning ordinance should be adjusted to include a "suburban" agricultural category that would allow for continued agricultural use, but would not allow by-right residential development at densities greater than one unit per five (5) acres. As development is proposed in the future, the rezoning process should be used to encourage well-planned, interconnected neighborhoods with significant open space and pedestrian amenities.

AEP may represent a willing partner in the comprehensive rezoning process. Comprehensive rezoning of Penn Hall, as a first step, could help set the stage for subsequent comprehensive rezoning.

Concept 5: Opportunity for Right-of-Way improvements



-  Existing village street segments, linking key intersections and nodes of activity. Represent opportunities for ROW improvements.
-  New village street segments, linking key intersections and nodes of activity. Opportunity to implement new design themes.

Union Hall today is not a very pedestrian-friendly place, due in large part to Rt. 40's role as a primary thoroughfare for local residents, through-commuters, and truck traffic. The Plan envisions a future in which Union Hall becomes a destination rather than a pass-through, a place where the traveling public is invited to stop, shop, gather and trade.

As a general rule, the Plan calls for the slowing of traffic through Union Hall. As new development occurs, the County and VDOT should negotiate with property owners to make improvements to the village streets. The following is a list of opportunities for ROW improvements:

Rt. 40, Old Salem School Road to Kemp Ford Road
Specify in advance the desired ROW width. Request ROW dedication upon any rezoning activity. Consider a tapered landscaped median to signal arrival, begin slowing and dividing traffic.

Rt. 40, from Kemp Ford Road to Novelty Road
Specify desired ROW width. Request ROW dedication upon any rezoning activity. Consider landscaped divided median. Include strong pedestrian connectivity.

Rt. 40, from Novelty Road to Kay Fork Road
Specify desired ROW. Request ROW dedication upon any rezoning activity.

Kemp Ford Road, from Standiford Road to Rt. 40
Specify desired ROW width. Request ROW dedication upon any rezoning activity. Include strong pedestrian connectivity.

Kay Fork Road realignment
Specify desired ROW width and alignment. Negotiate alignment, intersection improvements through rezoning process. Seek grant, alternative funding sources for improvements.

New street grid, linking Rt. 40, Kemp Ford and Kay Fork
Provide strong pedestrian connectivity. Provide bicycle accommodations to allow cyclists to pass through the village without having to use Rt. 40 itself.

New streets within commercial shopping center
Provide strong pedestrian connectivity within the center.

 **Gateway features.** To help establish Union Hall as a destination for the traveling public, the Plan recommends the installation of welcoming gateway features along Rt. 40. These features may take the form of enhanced landscaping, welcome signage, or thematic wayfinding signage.

Concept 6: Street context and design criteria

context	VILLAGE CENTER			NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER			NEIGHBORHOOD		RURAL CLUSTER	
	Commercial Street	Village Main Street	Residential Street	Village Main Street	Residential Road	Rural Road	Residential Street	Rural Road	Residential Street	Rural Road
Traveled way realm										
Target (posted) speed	35 mph	25 mph	25 mph	25 mph	25 mph	25 – 35 mph	25 mph	25 mph	23 – 35 mph	25 – 35 mph
Number of travel lanes	2 – 4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Lane width	10' – 12'	10' – 12'	10' – 11'	10' – 12'	10' – 11'	11' – 12'	10' – 11'	11' – 12'	10' – 11'	11' – 12'
Parking lanes	7' – 8'	7' – 8'	7' – 8'	7' – 8'	7' – 8'	n/a	7' – 8'	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bicycle lanes / shoulders	4' – 5'	4' – 5'	4' – 5'	4' – 5'	4' – 5'	10' multi-use path or min 4' shoulder				
Horizontal radius (min. radius) VDOT Road Design Manual	GS-7 593'	GS-7 273'	GS-3 108' – 251'	GS-7 273'	GS-7 273'	GS-3 108' – 465'	GS-8 273'	GS-4 108' – 760'	GS-4 108' – 760'	GS-4 108' – 760'
Vertical alignment (max. grade based on terrain)	8%	5%	11%	5%	11%	9%	11%	9%	11%	9%
Medians	optional 14' – 15'	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none	none
Access management	Limit the number of driveways and encourage alley or parallel street access on all streets (with the exception of rural roads).									
Typical traffic volume range (vpd)	1,000 – 10,000	500 – 5,000	400 – 2,000	1,000 – 10,000	500 – 5,000	500 – 5,000	200 – 1,000	400 – 2,000	100 - 500	200 – 1,000
Intersection realm										
Crosswalks	yes	yes	optional	yes	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Curb return radii / edge of traveled-way	15' – 25'	10' – 20'	10' – 20'	10' – 20'	25'	50'	25'	50'	25'	50'
Roundabouts	Consider single-lane roundabouts at intersections with less than 20,000 entering vehicles per day (vpd) and double-lane roundabouts at intersections with less than 40,000 entering vpd.									
Roadside realm										
Sidewalk width	10' – 16'	10' – 16'	5'	5'	5'	n/a	5'	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lighting	Pedestrian-scaled lighting is encouraged on all streets (with the exception of rural roads) placed 50' apart on center.									
Street trees	tree well	tree well	planting strip	tree well	planting strip	n/a	planting strip	n/a	n/a	n/a
Examples of streets & street segments for each context category:										
	Rt. 40, from Old Salem School to Kemp Ford Rt. 40, from Kemp Ford to Novelty Rt. 40, from Novelty to Kay Fork Kemp Ford Road, from Standiford to Rt. 40 Standiford Road (extended) to connect to Kay Fork Kay Fork Road (re-aligned)			Novelty Road, south of Rt. 40 Berger Loop New streets within shopping centers, nodes			New streets within nodes New streets within neighborhoods		New streets within neighborhoods Existing rural roads	

Streets will play an important role in shaping the character of Union Hall as a village. As new development occurs – in the form of commercial development within the village, or new residential development surrounding the village – the existing street network will come under stress. New development will almost certainly require road-widening, turn lanes, stop lights, and new intersections. Rather than being seen as a threat, such right-of-way improvements can be seen as an opportunity to manage traffic, accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, and establish a pleasant streetscape.

To that end, the Union Hall Village Plan offers detailed design criteria for streets in and around the village, based on the accepted design standards contained in VDOT's 2010 Smith Mountain Lake Corridors Study. These standards presented here are meant as a guide, not a rule. The standards are flexible and offer choices, based on the street's context and functional characteristics.

The following street "context zones" are excerpted from VDOT's 2010 Smith Mountain Lake Corridors Study:

Village Center

Distinguishing Characteristics: Village Centers are neighborhood scale, compact, mixed-use areas, integrated into residential area.
General Character: Supports the Downtown Core with a mix of uses, residential types, amenities. When applied to the Neighborhood, it is a focal point. Nearby residential densities can support some of these activities, however its market area may extend beyond the ¼ mile radius by 1 to 2 miles.

Neighborhood Center

Distinguishing Characteristics: Neighborhood Centers consist of community facilities, such as schools, parks or libraries, accessible or integrated into neighborhoods.
General Character: Focal point of the community where residents come together for a civic purpose, local shopping, or for recreation. Neighborhood centers generally contain some form of public open space and/or provide connections to natural features. These centers can usually be accessible by multiple modes of transportation, including bicycles, bus, cars, or by foot.

Neighborhood

Distinguishing Characteristics: Neighborhoods are generally defined as areas that meet a balanced range of human needs. They are the basic components of community design.
General Character: Primarily single-family residential with walkable development pattern and pedestrian facilities, dominant landscape character.

Rural Cluster

Distinguishing Characteristics: Rural clusters are small settlements located in the rural area. These clusters serve as the focal point for an existing rural community. Rural clusters generally include areas within ½ mile of a focal point. The focal point is usually located at the intersection of two rural roads.
General Character: Detached residential clusters draw development into a compact center and preserve open space at the perimeter of the development. Clusters allow for the protection of viewsheds, open space, agricultural lands, and important wildlife habitats, and often provide shared common space at the center of the development.