

# Town of Stanardsville Comprehensive Plan

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**July 11, 2011** | Adopted by Stanardsville Town Council

## CONTENTS

Introduction .....	3
Economic Development .....	8
Community Design and Land Use .....	14
Infrastructure .....	20
Housing and Community Services.....	25
Historic and Natural Resources.....	29
Reference Maps .....	31

Adopted by Stanardsville Town Council on July 11, 2011

Recommended by Greene County Planning Commission on May 18, 2011

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### **Greene County Planning Commission**

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## **VISION STATEMENT**

**Stanardsville will support economic vitality and improve the quality of life for citizens in the following ways:**

- **Capitalize on special assets, including a location convenient to major employers and research institutions in the region, the presence of Greene County’s educational and governmental services, the Town’s historic character and attractions, and its identity as a gateway to Shenandoah National Park.**
- **Enhance the quality of life of all residents and diversity of population by age, race and cultural interest.**
- **Attract new residential development that meets the present and future needs of the Town.**
- **Attract specialty shops, personal service providers, and professional businesses to locate in Stanardsville.**
- **Upgrade water, sewer, and communications infrastructure to promote health, welfare, public safety, and business development.**
- **Seek to retain the friendliness, peaceful pace, and small town atmosphere of Stanardsville.**

## INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Stanardsville guides future development and physical growth within the Town for the next ten to twenty years, with the purpose of supporting economic vitality and improving quality of life for all residents. The plan considers existing conditions of the Town from a range of perspectives, including population growth and demographic change, land use and design, infrastructure, housing and community services, and historic and natural resources . Based on historic trends and the present state of the Town, goals and objectives are provided for each topic to align future actions with the vision for the Town shared by citizens of Stanardsville.

The Comprehensive Plan is general in nature, forming the “big picture” for the Town. While it does not go into detail about development prospects, capital improvements, or specific zoning language, it does set the stage for further work in a range of projects that have a higher degree of specificity. The Comprehensive plan is to be equally accessible and, to the greatest extent possible, understandable to all residents of the Town.

This plan is prepared pursuant to Code of Virginia § 15.2-2223, which establishes the expected content and process for Comprehensive Plans from all localities within the Commonwealth. The intent is to revisit the plan in five years to either reaffirm the Town’s goals or to adjust and update them. The Greene County Planning Commission, which serves jointly as the Town of Stanardsville Planning Commission, has prepared this plan on behalf of the Town Council and the residents of the Town.

### PLANNING PRECEDENT

The 2011 Town of Stanardsville Comprehensive Plan builds upon the goals and strategies set for the Town in previous Comprehensive Plans, allowing continuity with the past while addressing present needs and future outlook of Town residents. The Town of Stanardsville adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1978. An update was adopted in the 1980s and another in the 1990s. Prior to the adoption of the 2011 Plan, the 1998 Comprehensive Plan functioned as the guiding document for the Town. A number of the goals and objectives put forward in the 1998 plan remain relevant today and have been incorporated into the content of this update.

The Town of Stanardsville, incorporated in 1921, is included in the 2010 Greene County Comprehensive Plan. A workshop was held for Stanardsville residents to offer input into the County’s plan, and comments were solicited from Stanardsville residents throughout the process. The Town of Stanardsville lies within the plan’s designated growth area, and the downtown is defined as the County’s only “Mixed-use Town Center.” The interests of Greene County and the Town of Stanardsville are closely aligned, and the respective governing bodies have forged an ongoing and productive working relationship. Every effort is made in this plan to include any relevant goals within the wider county-wide context set by the Greene County Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to previous Comprehensive Plans from the Town and County, the following plans have been used as sources and incorporated into the content of this plan: a 2004 Town of Stanardsville Safety, Circulation and Beautification Plan from the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission; a 2006 Town of Stanardsville Economic Revitalization Plan from Virginia Commonwealth University student Leah Griffith; a 2007 Town of Stanardsville Water and Sewer Rehabilitation Study from WW Associates; three documents from \*STAR\*, a 2008 Economic Restructuring of Downtown Stanardsville, a 2008 Visioning and Marketing Position for The Stanardsville Area, and a 2008 Program for Town of Stanardsville Downtown Streetscape Revitalization Project; and a 2009 Multimodal Corridor Study for the US 29 and US 33 Development Areas in Greene County from the Renaissance Planning Group.

## GENERAL TOWN PROFILE

### HISTORIC SETTING

The Town of Stanardsville was established in 1794 by William Stanard, a grandson of an original land grantee in the area. He subdivided 45 acres of his land into half-acre lots, and platted them along an even street grid. Within a year, a tavern was built to meet the needs of travelers on their way from Richmond over the Blue Ridge mountains. Two original houses from this time period remain on the east side of Stanardsville Run. By the early 19th century, the Town had grown into a thriving



*Stanardsville Streetscape: Main Street in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century*



*Stanardsville Streetscape: Main Street in 2011*

community with numerous services. The federal-style Lafayette Hotel was built in 1840. Originally a hotel and restaurant, the property served many different functions, before being restored to its original intent.

Greene County, once part of Orange County, was officially designated as an independent county in 1838, and Stanardsville was selected as the County seat. The Civil War and an ensuing economic depression halted growth in Stanardsville for several years, but development began to increase by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Homes with Queen Anne, Victorian, Italianate, and Federalist architectural features began to fill in the Town of Stanardsville. The construction of Greene County's first major school, William Monroe School, in Stanardsville in 1925 and the creation of the Shenandoah National Park in the following decade were formative events for the Town.

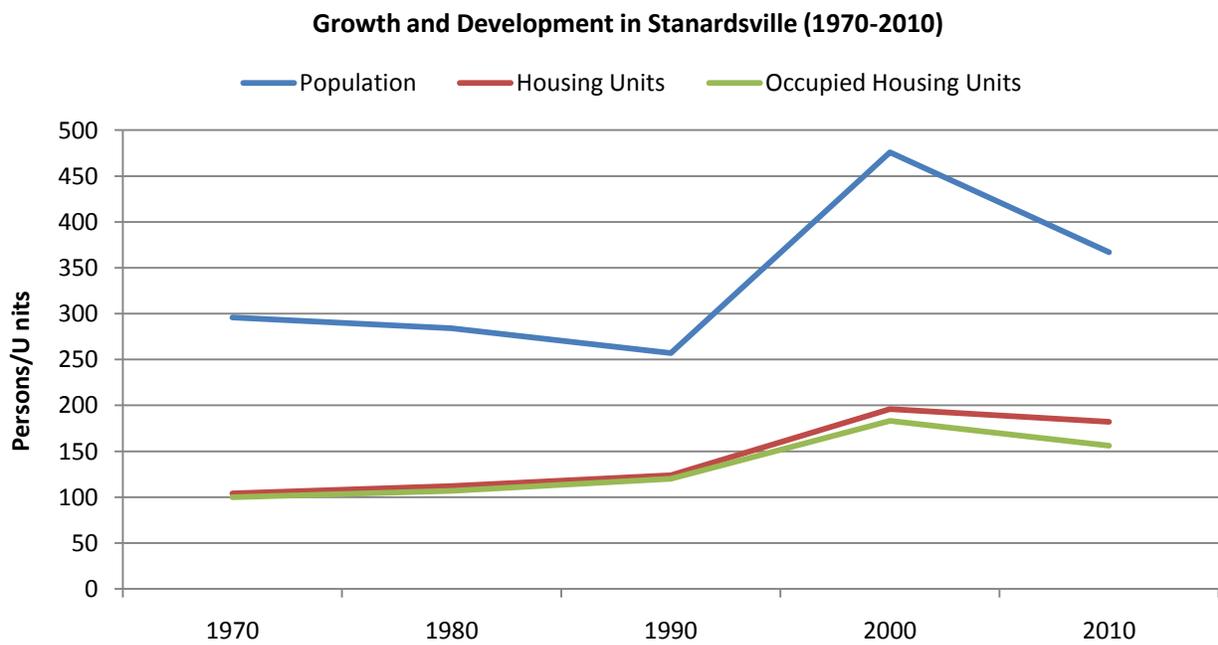
Stanardsville, today, is a peaceful and serene place nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Town has adopted a quieter ambiance since the days when its taverns were known as rowdy gathering places. It continues to host the county’s public activities, with the County Courthouse, Greene County Administration Building, the Greene County branch of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, and the museum of the Greene County Historical Society close together in downtown. The small-town feel and historic character of the Town is what attracts residents and visitors alike.

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**POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The population for the Town of Stanardsville remains roughly the same as it was when incorporated in 1921. After decades of gradual decline, the Town grew by a remarkable 85% between 1990 and 2000, only to drop back by 23% over the course of the next decade. The growth in the 1990s can be explained by the development of homes along William Mills Drive. Over the last decade, the Town has experienced a decrease in the number of housing units and a decrease in the housing occupancy rate. Greene County has grown rapidly during this same period. While 6% of all Greene County residents lived in Stanardsville in 1970, currently 2% do.

It should be noted that the 2010 census population count of 367 people for the Town of Stanardsville may not accurately reflect the full population of the Town. The number fell short of recent estimates from the Weldon Cooper Center, as well as local knowledge. There is also a larger population in the surrounding area that supports, utilizes, and depends on Town facilities. The town boundaries were constricted in the 1930’s and do not completely encompass the full number of people who would identify themselves as members of the Stanardsville community.



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census*

There are several likely causes of the lack of growth in the Town of Stanardsville over the years. When a 4-lane bypass was constructed around Stanardsville in 2001, much of the traffic that local businesses and services depend on was diverted from town. Furthermore, the town’s water and sewer capacity require upgrades to adequately facilitate an expanding population. A clear understanding of these causes helps to inform many of the solutions that are presented in this plan.

Future population projections are difficult to make for the Town of Stanardsville. There are many variables that influence the growth rate for the Town, and no obvious trend line emerges from an evaluation of historic data. Given the small size of the Town, significant population variance can be experienced with even a single development. Nevertheless, an estimate can be attempted. The Stanardsville Town Council and the Greene County Board of Supervisors have each expressed a desire for the Town to grow in population, and projects are underway to enhance the attractiveness of the Town to new residents. Given these stated goals, the Town’s growth rate could mirror the Virginia Employment Commission’s predicted growth rate for Greene County in the future. With annual growth of 2%, the Town of Stanardsville would have 450 residents by 2020 and 550 residents by 2030.

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The Town of Stanardsville has grown more racially and ethnically diverse over the last decade. In 2000, 89% of all Town of Stanardsville residents were Non-Hispanic Whites, but this proportion fell to 77% by 2010. Despite an overall population loss in the Town during this period, the Black or African American population grew by 59% and the Hispanic or Latino population grew substantially. Several Stanardsville residents, 18 in total, identified themselves as “some other race” on the 2010 Census.

### Demographic Characteristics in Town, County, and Region

	Town of Stanardsville	Greene County	Thomas Jefferson region
Characteristic	Percent of Total	Percent of Total	Percent of Total
<b>Race (2010)</b>			
White	77%	90%	79%
Black or African American	17%	6%	13%
Asian	0%	1%	3%
Other	5%	3%	5%
<b>Ethnicity (2010)</b>			
Hispanic or Latino	4%	4%	4%
<b>Age</b>			
Under 18 (2010)	24%	25%	21%
Over 65 (2005-2009)	41%	11%	13%
<b>Total Population (2010)</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>18,403</b>	<b>234,712</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census and American Community Survey

This demographic shift is not unusual for incorporated towns in the region. On average, towns in the Thomas Jefferson region had fewer Whites and more Blacks in 2010 than in 2000. The Hispanic population in towns region-wide increased by 433% over the same period, an even greater increase than that of Stanardsville. The proportion of Hispanics in the Town of Stanardsville is now equal to Greene County and the region as a whole.

Four out of every ten residents of Stanardsville are beyond retirement age, yet about a quarter of the population is under the age of 18. These figures reveal that Stanardsville is quite an intergenerational community, with a relatively even household balance between families with children and senior households. Although two-thirds of all children in Town are Non-Hispanic Whites, minority households are more likely to have children. Increased racial diversity has also resulted in an increase in children over the last decade.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Town of Stanardsville currently plays an important role in the regional economy that can be expanded upon and broadened to the benefit of Town residents and the owners and workers in local businesses. A well-coordinated and concerted economic development effort has the potential to shape the Town into a thriving commercial and civic center. This section presents the Town's existing assets, both its workforce and employment opportunities, and charts the course for well-balanced growth and development.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### EMPLOYMENT

The Town of Stanardsville and the immediate surrounding area remains one of the major employment bases for Greene County, hosting an estimated 28% of all jobs in the County in 2008. There are 45 employers in the Town of Stanardsville, including self-employed households and Greene County agencies. Another 19 employers are located right outside of the Town, producing 632 jobs in total. Although many of the major employers are situated just outside of the Town limits, they carry a considerable influence over the Town nevertheless.

#### Employment and Workforce in the Stanardsville Area (2009)

Industry Classification	Primary Jobs in Stanardsville Area		Workers Who Live in Stanardsville Area	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Professional, Technical, and Real Estate	30	5%	17	7%
Educational Services	251	40%	46	20%
Health Care and Social Assistance	150	24%	40	17%
Accommodation, Food, and Recreation	40	6%	19	8%
Public Administration	106	17%	9	4%
Information, Finance, and Insurance	13	2%	11	5%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	6	1%	32	14%
Manufacturing, Construction, and Utility	6	1%	38	16%
Private Administration and Management	30	5%	22	9%
<b>All Industries</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>100%</b>

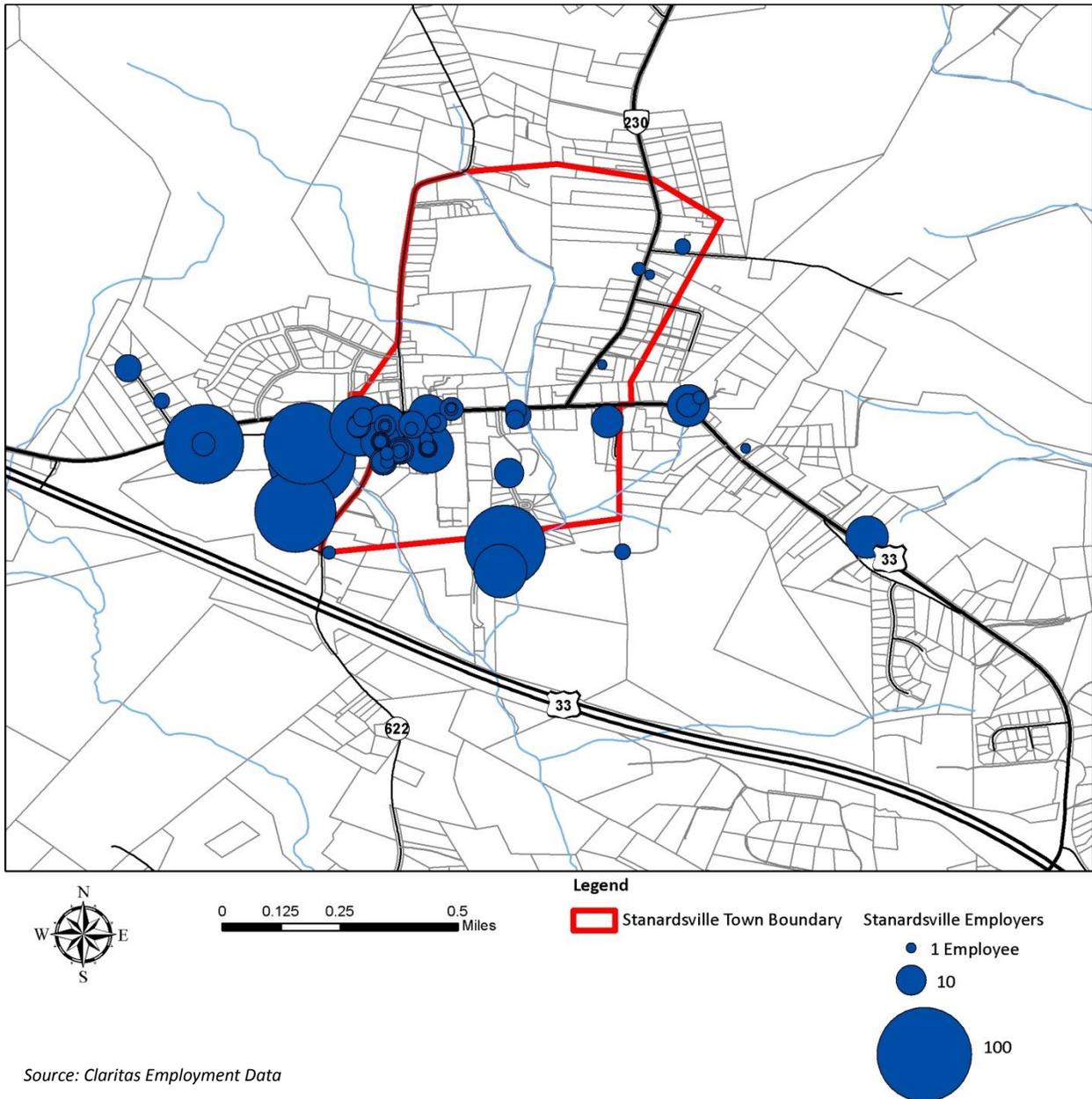
*Source: U.S. Census Bureau LEHM data adjusted with school employment data from Claritas*

As an employment center, Stanardsville is currently highly specialized in educational and government services, with a significant presence of health care jobs due to the Evergreene Manor care facility. This clearly reflects its position as the Greene County seat and the presence of three public schools nearby. Roughly half of all employment in Greene County is in the public-sector, and many of these

jobs are located in the Stanardsville area. Two-thirds of all people employed in Stanardsville live in Greene County, with the rest commuting in mostly from Albemarle, Madison, and Rockingham counties.

The workforce in Stanardsville and the immediate surrounding area is more diversified. Teachers comprise a fifth of all workers, and the rest is fairly evenly distributed across both higher-wage and lower-wage industries. Only 15% of the Stanardsville area workforce stays within the Stanardsville area for their job. The rest commute to Albemarle County (32%), Greene County outside of Stanardsville (14%), the City of Charlottesville (11%), or another county in Virginia.

### Employment in Stanardsville and Surrounding Area



Source: Claritas Employment Data

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## TOURISM

Stanardsville is uniquely situated to become an important tourist destination, drawing visitors from within and outside of the region alike. With many attractions and amenities within close proximity to the Town, area businesses can leverage these strengths and provide necessary services and accommodations to visitors.

The Town has an ideal location in the shadow of the Blue Ridge Mountains, as a gateway to the Shenandoah National Park. The Swift Run Gap entrance to the park, one of four, is directly accessible from US 33. In 2009, the National Park Service recorded 1.12 million visitors to the park, many of whom visit in the Fall to experience the colorful foliage or hike through along the Appalachian Trail. Beyond outdoor recreational tourism, agritourism also presents opportunities to the Town. There are sixteen vineyards within a 45 minute drive of the Town. On average, Virginia wineries each have 5,000 visitors annually according to Virginia Wine News, which would put 80,000 visitors within 45 minutes of Stanardsville each year. The Stanardsville Farmers Market draws visitors in the warmer months from around the region to purchase locally-grown produce.

Stanardsville and Greene County have hosted a number of special events including the Battle of Stanardsville Reenactment that has attracted thousands of visitors, the Stanardsville Festival of Lights and Christmas Parade, the Greene County Fair, the Strawberry Festival, the Christmas Tree Ceremony, the Stanardsville Independence Day Celebration, and the Discover Virginia wine festival, among others. Additionally, Stanardsville's designation as an historic district in the National Register of Historic places serves to draw visitors to the Town.

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## RETAIL AND SERVICES

Stanardsville's position in regional retail markets has waned considerably over the years, with many potential customers opting to shop in other locations. The heavily-travelled US 29 corridor has gained a significant retail presence first in Albemarle County, and more recently in Greene County. A Super Wal-Mart shopping center opened at the intersection of US 33 and US 29 in 2010, along with a Lowes Home Improvement store. The Town also faces competition from Harrisonburg across the Blue Ridge Mountains. According to a 2008 survey of merchants in the Stanardsville area conducted for an Economic Restructuring Study, the majority of businesses serve a local clientele rather than engage in the regional market.

There are other challenges faced by retail and services in the Town of Stanardsville. The construction of the US 33 bypass around Stanardsville in 2001 shifted away much of the traffic needed by a commercial district to maintain its vitality. Total traffic counts dropped 39% from 1999 to 2006 after the bypass was built, but unfortunately the truck traffic grew from 3% of the total to 9% of the total during the same period because of the opportunity to use a shortcut through downtown to northbound US 29.

The conversion of much of the ground floor space in downtown Stanardsville from commercial to

residential space due to the decline of commerce in downtown has only exacerbated the problem. Maintaining a contiguous set of ground-floor shops or restaurants is an important principle for any retail district. Incompatible gaps in streetscape can lead to disinterest or confusion from customers. With much of the Town constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the mixed-use setting offers potential only if the more intense uses directly engage the street.

Stanardsville businesses are in the process of reorienting their business models to adapt to these challenges. Ruckersville is not perceived by the Town and its businesses as a retail competitor, but simply as a different niche in the overall regional market. Stanardsville does not wish to compete in the large-scale retail arena, but it can play to its inherent strengths to establish a unique market position. The presence of government and educational services, especially since the installment of a Piedmont Virginia Community College satellite campus in town, offers a distinct opportunity to cater to the needs of employees and students. Though the US 33 bypass negatively impacted business in downtown Stanardsville in the short-term, the resulting quieter village of Stanardsville has the opportunity to remake itself as a tourist destination and center of unique specialty shops and services.

The Town also has the opportunity to provide essential goods and services for residents of the immediate area. As gas prices continue to rise, many households may decide to shop closer to home in the future, perhaps even within walking distance, rather than travel to a major regional retail location.

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Over the last decade, the Stanardsville Town Council and the Greene County Board of Supervisors joined with concerned citizens to develop a course of action to revitalize the Town. The efforts led to the creation of the Stanardsville Area Revitalization (\*STAR\*) program. \*STAR\* was formed in 2005 and has been a major catalyst for the Town to turn its previous course and begin down the road to revitalization. Funds raised locally from public and private sources have been leveraged by grants from state and federal agencies to implement key physical improvements.

\*STAR\* released a Vision Plan in 2008 that describes a potential future for the Town to work toward. The plan envisioned a broad range of locally-owned retail and services clustered in the downtown area, a permanent home for the Farmers Market, a professional building to house new tech firms, new small parks, and a range of housing types within walking distance of the downtown. Given the comprehensive nature of the Vision Plan and its 15-year outlook, many of its elements have been incorporated into the Goals and Objectives stated in this plan.

The Town of Stanardsville is also served by County-wide organizations, Greene County Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Greene County Chamber of Commerce, as well as the regional Thomas Jefferson Partnership for Economic Development. The Piedmont Virginia Community College offers many educational and training programs throughout the region, and the presence of a satellite campus in Stanardsville will enhance those opportunities.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Continue the current efforts to revitalize the Town of Stanardsville and encourage additional revitalization efforts that contribute to the area’s economic and social development.
  - Pursue grants and funding from public-sector and non-profit foundation sources to aid in revitalization efforts.
  - Maintain and expand the presence of private-sector business and development that contribute to the revitalization of Stanardsville.
- Create a robust and expanded commercial base with numerous retail and service establishments, encouraging local ownership.
  - Work with Greene County Economic Development Authority on business recruiting efforts targeting a strong and viable mix of downtown businesses.
  - Identify and develop an appropriately-scaled economic anchor in downtown Stanardsville that increases foot traffic and generates positive spillover effects for all businesses in Town.
  - Develop and implement an effective and multifaceted marketing campaign for the Town.
  - Create a business start-up Revolving Loan Fund with use of a Community Development Block Grant.
- Enhance Stanardsville’s role as a headquarters for regional tourism activities and an important tourist destination in its own right, based on inherent strengths detailed in this plan.
  - Consider becoming a designated Trail Town through the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.
  - Collaborate with other communities around the Shenandoah National Park to market the Town of Stanardsville as a geotourism destination, as defined by the National Geographic Society.
  - Participate in any programs that associate the Town of Stanardsville with historic attractions in the region, including presidential homes.
  - Capitalize on Stanardsville’s location along the Journey Through Hallowed Ground historical and cultural route between Gettysburg and Monticello.
  - Work with Virginia Department of Transportation to increase tourism-oriented signage both within Town and leading into Stanardsville.

- Develop new public amenities in downtown to attract visitors and provide services to community residents.
  - Sponsor seasonal, and eventually bi-monthly, events and programs.
  - Consider acquiring property for reuse as a downtown visitors' center or a neighborhood community center.
  - Consider acquiring and developing two new small parks in neighborhoods and a downtown parcel as an outdoor performance venue.
  
- Enhance those economic capabilities of the citizens of Stanardsville which can help them achieve a satisfactory and fulfilling life.
  - Support job recruitment services to reduce the unemployment rate and provide gainful livelihoods for all households.
  - Continue to provide meaningful vocational training opportunities in order to prepare citizens for new job openings and in order to provide a ready labor pool for potential employers.
  - Encourage non-polluting industries to locate close to the town limits of Stanardsville to provide well-paying jobs for skilled trades workers.

## COMMUNITY DESIGN AND LAND USE

In a well-functioning town, the use and form of individual parcels, as well as the public spaces around them, all fit together to present a cohesive sense of place to everyone who lives, works, shops, or visits the Town. The purpose of this section is to outline the Town of Stanardsville's land use plan, what the Virginia State Code calls "coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development." This requires an evaluation of the current land uses and legal codes, as well as workable strategies for encouraging private and public sector implementation of the plan.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### EXISTING LAND USE

The primary concentration of commercial uses exists along Main Street near the intersection with Ford Avenue. This is the historic center of the community, situated on the top of a rolling hill. There are 18 commercial buildings in the downtown, and 16 are currently occupied. An additional three non-profit organizations operate in the area. There are 12 residential buildings comprising 30 units. A few of these units are historic homes, and others were commercial uses that have been converted to homes in recent years. There are two private parking lots directly fronting Main Street in this area.

Court Square, set to the south of Main Street, hosts many of the civic functions for the area, including the County Court house and various Greene County agencies. The Greene County Public Library is connected to this square to the east and shares a parking lot. William Monroe High School, William Monroe Middle School, Nathanael Greene Elementary School, and Greene County Primary School are sited adjacent to the Town. Although they are not a part of the Town of Stanardsville, the educational institutions exert an important influence. Greene County offices are either in or adjacent to the Town.

Residential areas in Stanardsville are arranged in a traditional pattern fronting both primary and secondary routes through Town, especially Main Street/Spotswood Trail, Madison Road, and Ford Avenue. The only stand-alone subdivision, built in the 1990s, exists along William Mills Drive. The majority of multifamily dwellings are on the west side of Ford Avenue, although most apartments in this neighborhood are actually located right outside the Town limits in Greene County.

The primary off-street parking options are associated with the Greene County Library and the Courthouse. On-street parking is available on one side of Main Street, and on one side of most streets in the core of town. Court Street hosts diagonal spaces in a very convenient location to most Town destinations. Two small parking lots front Main Street and present gaps in the streetscape that may deter pedestrian activity. There is no public park or formal recreational facility, although Town residents have access to nearby public school grounds and there is a small green space owned and maintained by the Methodist Church at Court House Square. A majority of the land in the Town remains undeveloped, especially the area north of Main Street and a large parcel directly south of

Court House Square. Both of these privately-owned areas are directly connected to downtown and offer opportunities for a seamless expansion of the Town.

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## CURRENT ZONING CODE

A zoning code can be viewed as the legal expression of the Town’s vision for its land use and development, and the zoning code and Comprehensive Plan are expected to be mutually supportive. The current Zoning Ordinance in the Town of Stanardsville was adopted in 2005. Roughly half of all land within the town limits is zoned as R-1, defined as “quiet, low-density residential and open areas.” Another 32% of the total land area is zoned as R-2, defined as “residential areas of relatively low density.” Low densities are ensured by regulations such as minimum lot sizes, minimum setbacks, height limits, and off-street parking requirements. A small area, 6% of the Town, is zoned R-3 to allow multi-family units in addition to single-family and duplex residential. The core of Town along Main Street is zoned as RC-1 to encourage both commercial and residential development. This comprises 13% of the total land area. In this zone, there are no density or set-back restrictions, and a greater range of uses are allowed, although off-street parking requirements still apply.

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## TOWN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Different areas in the Town of Stanardsville call for different design approaches, with more intense activity concentrated in the center fanning out into more peaceful residential neighborhoods on the periphery. The downtown of Stanardsville can be defined as a quarter-mile walking distance from Court House Square along any of the roadways, although the stretch of Main Street to Madison Rd is a logical area for expansion of the downtown area. The following basic guidelines can maintain Stanardsville’s form as a traditional American small town while meeting the present and future needs of commerce. Design guidelines can be provided as voluntary recommendations or written into Form-Base Codes within a land use ordinance.

### **Downtown Design Guidelines:**

**Streetscape** Wide sidewalks, preferably with street trees and other amenities such as benches, can help pedestrians feel safe and welcomed. Crosswalks should be clearly marked. Bulb-outs, or extensions of the sidewalk into the roadway, can reduce crossing distances. People with disabilities should be able to comfortably navigate anywhere.

**Buildings** Buildings should be built directly to the lot line with no setback. Ground floors should be dedicated to commercial or other public use, and the ground floor façade of each building should beckon passersby to enter. Awnings can extend into the public right-of-way to provide shade and distinguish public entrances. Building heights should be sized tall enough to give the street a comfortable sense of enclosure, but not so high as to be incompatible with adjacent structures.

**Use Mix** Commercial use is preferred on ground floors, and office or residential use is appropriate for floors above. Civic uses such as churches and government buildings are proper landmarks. A healthy mix of uses ensures vibrancy and safety both during the day and at night.

**Open Space** Small outdoor squares or parks can create a healthy complement to a retail environment and highlight important uses. Open space should be designed for heavy use, rather than left in a natural state.

**Parking** On-street parking is preferred where space allows, given its efficient use of space and traffic calming effect. Where off-street parking is necessary, it should be relegated to a space behind buildings or to the side as space allows.

**Neighborhood Design Guidelines** (outside of downtown):

**Streetscape** Narrower streets should be used whenever possible to slow traffic, as well as reduce stormwater runoff and construction expenses. More connected streets (illustration on page 22) provide benefits to pedestrians or motorists. All streets should have sidewalks, with a planting strip between the sidewalk and roadway. Design should be friendly to all ages, and accessible to all ability levels. Bike lanes can improve safety on busier roads.

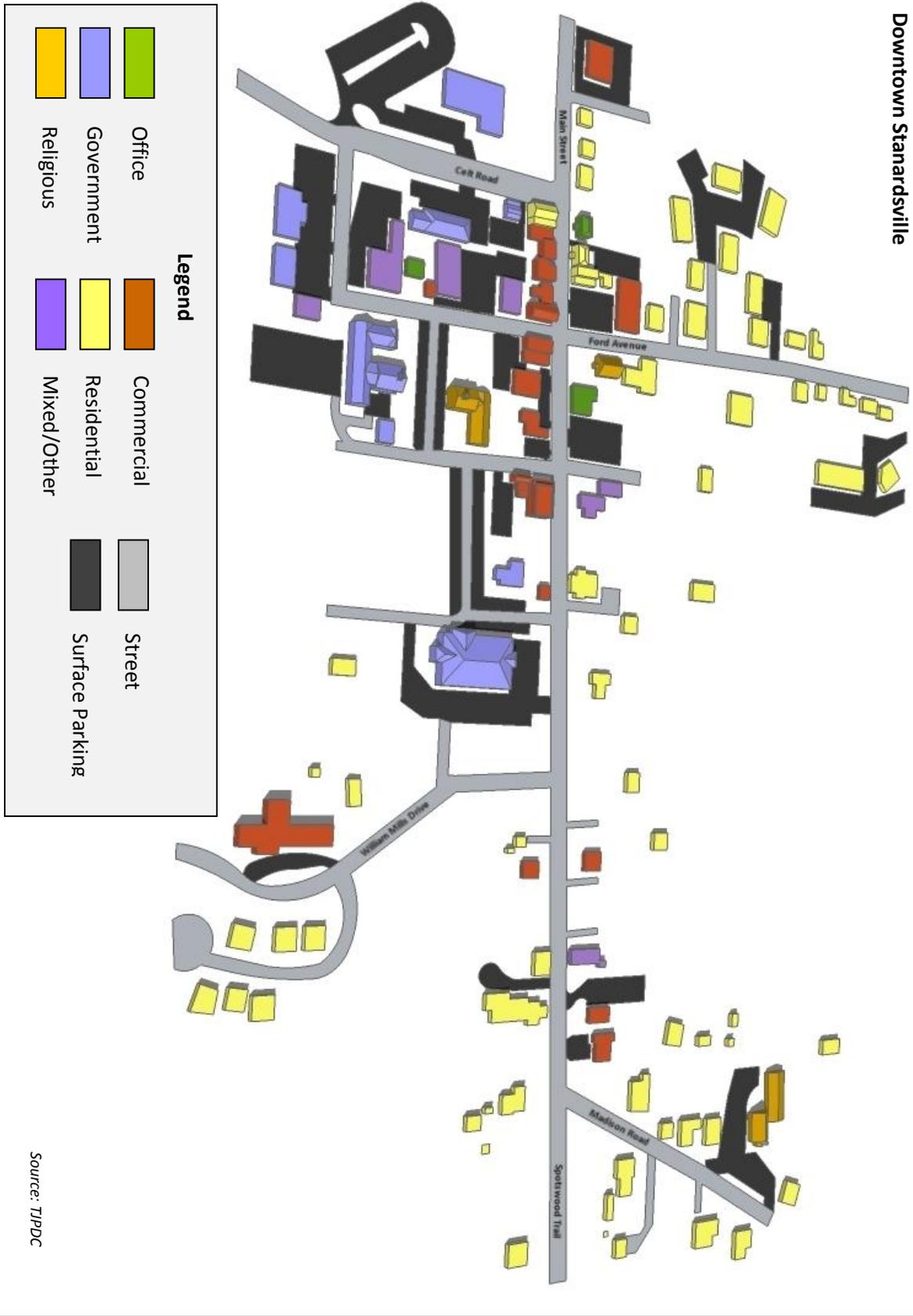
**Buildings** Buildings should be setback a consistent distance from the street, ideally no greater than 30 feet. Height limits should be flexible enough to allow some different uses, but not so high as to overshadow the residential character of the neighborhood.

**Use Mix** The primary focus of neighborhoods is residential. However, there may be other appropriately-scaled uses that serve the residents in the immediate vicinity. Uses can be single-family or multi-family residential, small retail or food service, as well as churches and other civic places.

**Open Space** Natural amenities are important to the livability of these areas. A small park, playground, or community garden can serve local residents. Streams that pass through Town can be buffered from development to provide linear greenways.

**Parking** On-street parking is preferred, and most homes will have private parking on property. With the exception of some civic uses, no off-street parking should be necessary.

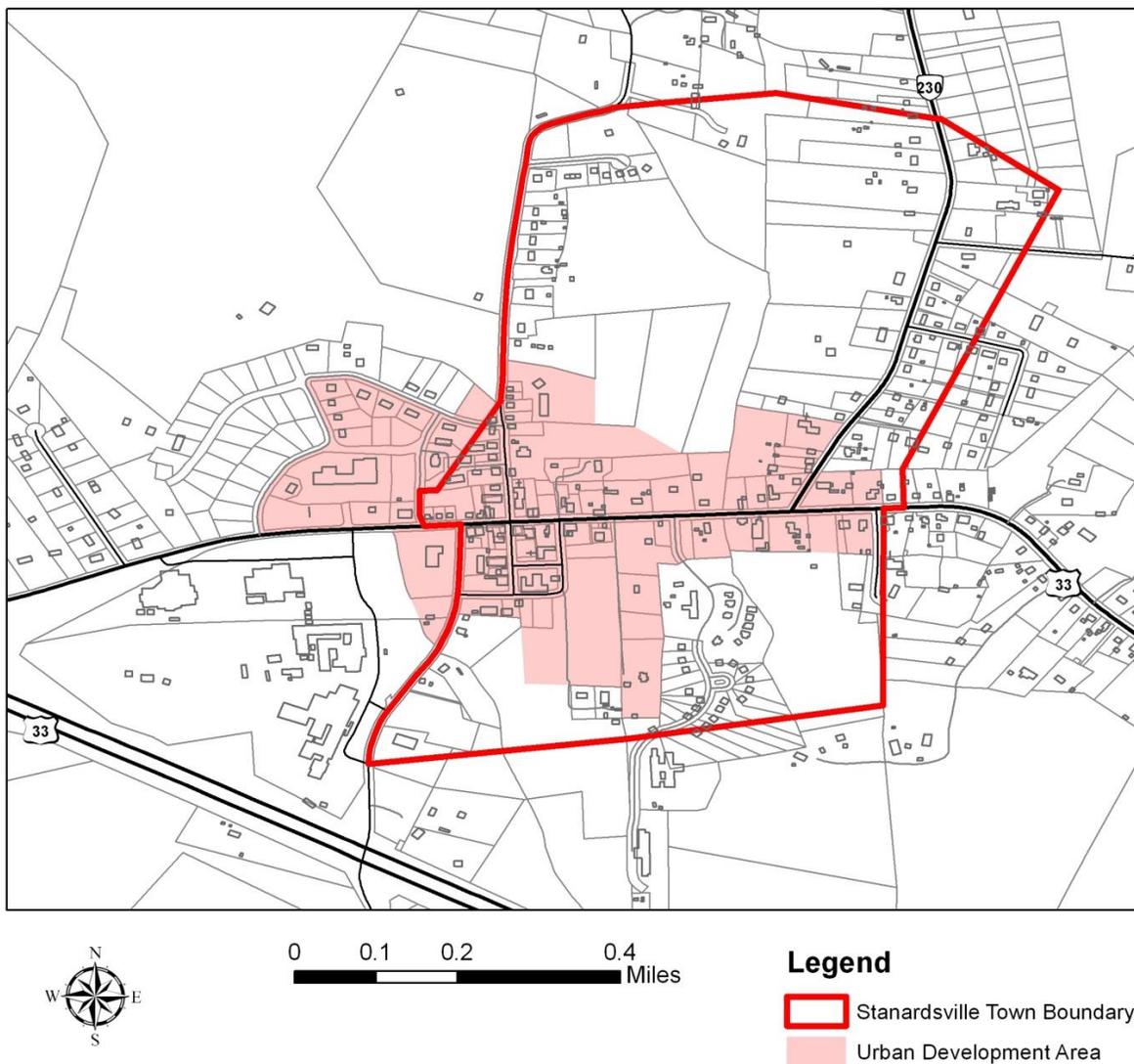
**Existing Land Uses in  
Downtown Stanardsville**



Source: T/PDC

The 2010 Greene County Comprehensive Plan designates the Town of Stanardsville and the surrounding area as a growth area, a place where the Board of Supervisors wishes to encourage new development to occur. Within this growth area, the core of the Town of Stanardsville is designated as a “Mixed-Use Town Center” that conforms with Code of Virginia requirements of an Urban Development Area. The Town of Stanardsville designates the same area as their UDA. These areas are to be predominantly commercial and civic in character and, according to the Virginia Code, “incorporate principles of new urbanism and traditional neighborhood development.” As indicated in the Greene County Comprehensive Plan, the UDA will accommodate at least six dwelling units per acre and a minimum floor to area ratio (FAR) of 0.4 for commercial development.

### Town of Stanardsville and Greene County Urban Development Area



## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: COMMUNITY DESIGN AND LAND USE

- Improve the attractiveness and functionality of the downtown streetscape with particular attention to Main Street.
  - Implement Main Street improvements and School Complex/Shopping Center improvements with federal TEA-21 grant.
  - Develop and place new downtown banners and directional signage with federal TEA-21 grant.
  - Encourage the ground floors of buildings in downtown to contain retail or other publicly-oriented uses.
  
- Initiate a well-designed restoration effort of buildings downtown, including the conservation of existing buildings and new infill development.
  - Implement a façade improvement program along Main Street and an apartment rehabilitation program throughout Town with use of grant funds.
  - Encourage infill development to create more compact places.
  - Receive commitment from a well-qualified developer to build a building for professional services and high-tech service providers.
  
- Recommend that all new development in Stanardsville include traditional neighborhood design principles in keeping with the existing character of the Town.
  - Develop design guidelines or models that define and illustrate traditional neighborhood principles best suited to Stanardsville.
  - Consider acquiring vacant parcels, especially along Main Street, for discounted sale to a developer for development according to community standards.
  
- Foster the creation and preservation of vibrant public spaces scaled to the Town's needs.
  - Encourage churches and community groups in volunteer efforts to beautify and maintain the Town's public realm.
  - Develop Courthouse Square into a central outdoor space that becomes a community gathering place.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructure in a developed area, whether visible or behind the scenes, plays a critical supportive role in the function of any community. Adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of residents and businesses is a fundamental requirement for economic growth and retaining existing activity. This plan proposes to build upon the strengths and resolve any weaknesses of Stanardsville's existing infrastructure, in order to achieve the range of goals stated in this plan.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### WATER AND SEWER

Water and Sewer infrastructure in the Town of Stanardsville is in need of substantial rehabilitation improvements. The lack of capacity is a primary impediment to growth for the Town. The original water and sewer infrastructure for the Town was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930's, and a large portion of the Town still relies on this aging network for service. The water and sewer infrastructure is currently owned and operated by the Rapidan Service Authority (RSA). The Town relies on the Stanardsville Waste Water Treatment Plant, constructed in 1989, for wastewater service and three water storage tanks (Stanardsville Tank, High Tank, and Quinque Tank) for water service and fire protection.

A 2007 engineering report by WW Associates identified deficiencies in the systems and made recommendations for improvements. The sewer network has shown signs of sanitary sewer overflows, inflow and infiltration, and other forms of leakage. The report recommends a larger, high-elevation water tank, wider water mains, replacement of sewer pipes, and construction of new pump stations.

### TRANSPORTATION

The Town of Stanardsville exists at the crossroads of Business Route 33 and Route 230, where 18<sup>th</sup> century tavern-keepers could serve travelers passing through and 19<sup>th</sup> century founders of Greene County could find an easily accessible place for the seat of their government. Business Route 33 and 230 are both classified as two-lane minor arterials, and they see about 9000 and 4000 vehicles per day respectively. The lower-capacity Celt Road, which enters into Stanardsville from the south, carries around 5000 vehicles on an average day. A 4-lane bypass for Route 33 was constructed in 2001, skirting the Town along its southern border. Over 9000 vehicles per day take the bypass around Stanardsville on their way between Ruckersville and points west over the Blue Ridge Mountains. Travel demand models indicate that all roadways in the Stanardsville area have sufficient capacity to handle projected traffic into the foreseeable future.

The Main Street of Stanardsville currently sustains an excessive amount of truck traffic, 9% of all vehicles. This leads to heightened safety concerns, increases need for roadway maintenance, and generates pollution and noise in close proximity to businesses and homes. The route is utilized as a

shortcut by trucks travelling eastbound on Route 33 to northbound on Route 29, although there is little evidence that this alternative route saves time on average. The Town Council has engaged the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) with the intention of creating an alternative through-route for trucks.

Downtown Stanardsville features sidewalks and pathways for pedestrians. Main Street, between Celt Rd. and Rectory Lane has intact sidewalks on both sides, and one side beyond this three-block area. The sidewalk network continues a distance north along Madison Rd, south along Ford Ave., and south along Celt Ave. An off-street sidewalk connects the Greene County Primary School with the center of Stanardsville, and other walking paths exist around the County Office Building.

Sidewalks vary considerably in their state of repair, and a need for better pedestrian access through sidewalk repairs and the creation of new sidewalks and crosswalks has been identified by prior studies and community workshops. A federal Transportation Enhancement grant was awarded to the Town of Stanardsville in 2008, and these funds are currently being used to implement many of the recommended improvements. Subsequent phases of the project will include a planned walking/cycling path besides Mitchell Creek and extending sidewalks east and west along Main Street.

Greene County Transit provides fixed-route bus service from Stanardsville to Charlottesville each weekday, and demand-response service to locations within Greene County. In 2009, approximately 56,000 passengers rode Greene County Transit. Ten percent of those passengers were elderly and seven percent were people with disabilities.

One beneficial feature of most traditional towns is their high degree of connectivity in their street networks. This is exhibited in the very center of Stanardsville, around Court House Square, but the Town never had the population growth to expand into a full-blown grid pattern. Highly connected street networks benefit all road users. Pedestrians enjoy more direct walking routes from one place to another and greater safety, because traffic is dispersed rather than concentrated onto particular roadways. Drivers benefit from greater access to their destinations. Although the practice of laying out highly connected streets fell out of favor for several decades, VDOT now requires it for new subdivisions.

The following illustration depicts how Stanardsville's street network could grow into a loosely gridded pattern that maintains the form of the Town's precedent while meeting future growth and development needs. The illustration also includes greenways with multi-use paths along the streams running through Town. Clearly, this expansion would be the result of numerous phases carried out by a wide range of private and public actors.

### Stanardsville 2010: Current Street Network



### Stanardsville 2030: Conceptual Illustration of Growth with Connected Street Network

Diagram intended for illustrative purposes only and does not depict exact location of proposed infrastructure improvements



Source: Greene County  
Multimodal Corridor Study,

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: INFRASTRUCTURE

- Reconstruct or expand water and sewer utilities to handle existing needs and future development.
  - Provide adequate water pressure and supply for Stanardsville by implementing completed engineering design to encourage commercial and residential development.
  - Ensure the integrity of wastewater treatment facilities through comprehensive system upgrades throughout the area.
  - Promote water conservation to preserve natural resources and reduce demand on infrastructure.
- Coordinate transportation planning with land use strategies to provide multiple travel options and improved accessibility for every user of the transportation system.
  - Maximize walking and biking opportunities by encouraging all new transportation improvements to meet context-sensitive design standards.
  - Preserve connectivity of the street grid with use of short block lengths and multiple access points, providing internal connectivity for all new subdivisions.
  - Construct off-road multiuse paths alongside several waterways in town to facilitate walking and cycling between destinations.
- Promote safe travel for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.
  - Implement traffic safety improvements to divert heavy through truck traffic from Main Street.
  - Work with VDOT and Greene County to establish an alternative route for through truck traffic.
  - Create safe walking or bicycling routes between homes in Stanardsville and each of the public schools serving the Town with use of Safe Routes to School funds.
  - Apply traffic calming techniques along Main Street and in new development as appropriate.
  - Encourage sidewalks and planting strips, medians, bicycle lanes and narrow streets on all new or reconstructed roadways, especially in the downtown.
- Improve telecommunications infrastructure to attract high-tech businesses and facilitate home-based entrepreneurs.
  - Engage in initial work on installing a high-speed, broadband network throughout the Town.

- Promote additional intra-county and external transit options between Stanardsville and other major destinations.
  - Plan for local transit service between Stanardsville and other parts of Greene County identified as Mixed-Use Village Centers through development of an “internal loop” bus route.
  - Consider the feasibility of providing additional commuter transit to key employment destinations, including demand-response services.

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Every family needs a safe and decent home they can afford to live in, and a healthy Town can offer this opportunity to those households that choose to live there. The range of housing options should match the range of occupants, from a wealthy retired couple to a family just getting their feet on the ground. Furthermore, community services can enhance the quality of life for all residents while also meeting essential needs. This section explains how these housing and community services can be improved and fit together with the Town's overall vision.

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

#### INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

The population of Stanardsville currently spans all lifecycles, and the Town wishes to maintain its intergenerational nature, facilitate interaction across age groups, and provide amenities and activities that are beneficial to everybody. The presence of the major Greene County Schools in close proximity to Town is a major benefit for families with children in Stanardsville. The Greene County Superintendent of Schools has affirmed a renewed commitment to open up school buildings and grounds for public use throughout the year, making valuable public facilities available for a variety of uses.

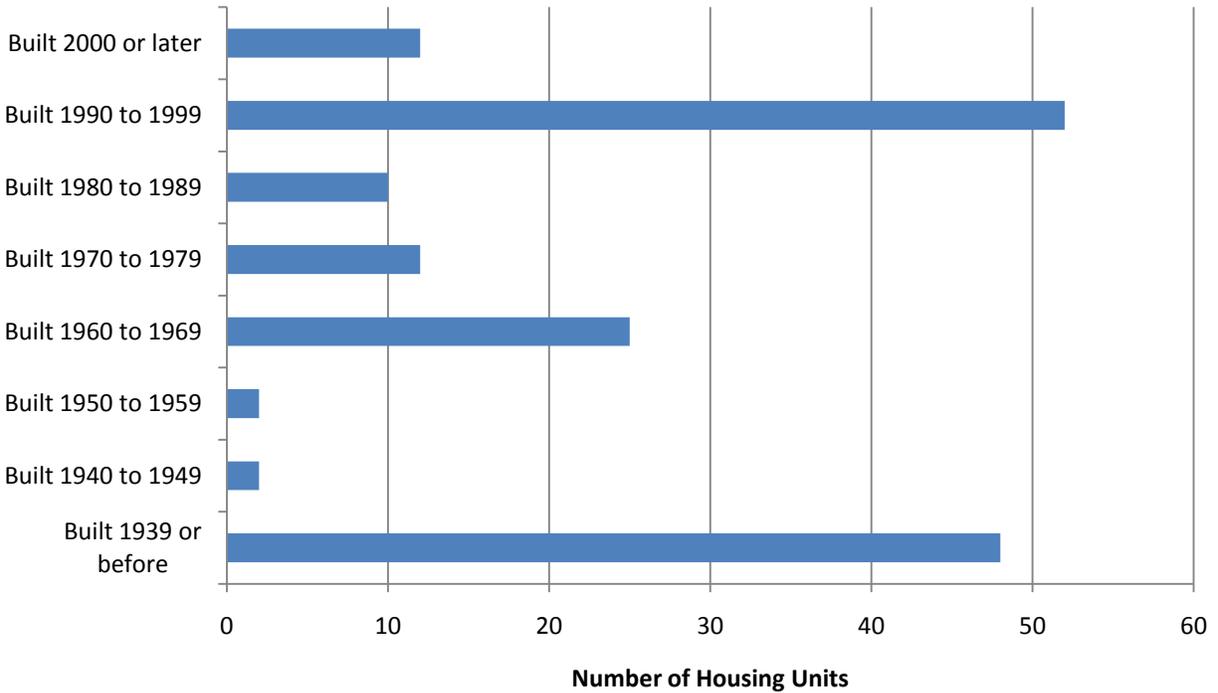
The Greene County branch of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library was completed in Stanardsville in 2003. The library branch also hosts many activities for children, teens, and adults. The library also functions as a full-service senior center operated by the Jefferson Area Board of Aging (JABA). The Senior Center includes Adult Day Health Care, and the office of the JABA Case Manager. Most recently, the Piedmont Virginia Community College plans to operate a satellite campus out of the upper floor of the building.

Stanardsville has its own volunteer fire department, and the Greene County Sheriff's Office is located just east of Town limits on Business Route 33.

#### HOUSING AGE AND CONDITION

On average, existing homes in Stanardsville are much older than those in the surrounding area. With the exception of a large subdivision in the 1990s along William Mills Drive, the majority of homes in the Town were built before 1940, and a few homes date back well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century or even earlier. Some of these older buildings have been well-maintained and beautifully restored, but others have fallen into varying states of disrepair. A 2007/2008 property condition survey of buildings in the downtown of Stanardsville indicated that 6% were dilapidated and another 17% required major repairs. Homes that are not adequately maintained can present an unhealthy living environment and have a negative impact on the surrounding area.

### Year Built for Homes in Stanardsville



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2005-2009

#### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Compared to many other locations in the region, the Town of Stanardsville offers relatively inexpensive housing choices, and there exists a healthy mix of rental and owner-occupied housing options. A 2007 survey of households in Stanardsville indicate that the average rent for a unit is \$600 per month, and there are a few households that utilize Housing Choice Vouchers to supplement their rental payments. Between 2005 and 2009, the average owner-occupied home in Stanardsville was valued at \$180,000, which is one-third lower than the regional average home price of \$270,000.

However, assessing affordability must take into account money available for housing as well. The median household income in Stanardsville from 2005 to 2009 was just over \$30,000, or 45% lower than the median regional income of \$55,000. Also, no households were reported by the Census as using transportation other than a car for trips to work, and commute distances tend to be longer in Stanardsville than the regional average. These considerations seem to infer that the number of cost-burdened households in Stanardsville is likely not insignificant.

### Housing Characteristics in Town, County, and Region

	Town of Stanardsville	Greene County	Thomas Jefferson Planning District
	Percent of Total	Percent of Total	Percent of Total
<b>Housing Type (2005-2009)</b>			
Single-Family Detached	49%	85%	70%
Attached Home or Duplex	3%	4%	8%
Multifamily Units	45%	2%	16%
Mobile Homes	4%	9%	6%
<b>Tenure (2005-2009)</b>			
Homeowner	42%	82%	67%
Renter	58%	18%	33%
Median Age of Structure (2005-2009)	1974	1986	1981
<b>Total Housing Units (2010)</b>	182	7,509	105,453

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census and American Community Survey 2005-2009*

#### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Facilitate new residential development downtown, or elsewhere in Stanardsville and the surrounding area, with easy linkages to downtown.
  - Encourage and recruit well-qualified developers to build homes in Stanardsville.
  - Encourage an assortment of housing types in the medium to high density range (4-16 units per acre) to meet the diverse needs of anticipated new residents.
  
- Provide an adequate supply of safe, decent housing which matches the varied needs and income levels of the Town’s present and future population.
  - Assist citizens residing in inadequate housing in taking advantage of available opportunities to bring their homes up to the minimum health standards, or if necessary to relocate to sound housing.
  - Increase supply of housing that is accessible to people of all abilities.
  - Locate higher density housing in proximity to shopping, employment, and community facilities.

- Encourage community development non-profit organizations and governmental agencies to initiate projects in Stanardsville to benefit low-to-moderate income residents.
  - Coordinate affordable housing needs with the county’s housing arm, Skyline Community Action Program, and the Greene County Habitat for Humanity Affiliate, and Piedmont Housing Alliance.
  - Work with Regional Disabilities Service Board to promote universal design features in housing and infrastructure accommodating to persons with disabilities.
  
- Provide ample opportunities for life-long learning and vocational training for residents of Stanardsville.
  - Support efforts to build the approved expansion of the Piedmont Virginia Community College in Stanardsville, and create a welcoming environment for students and faculty once it is operational.
  - Continue to support the Greene County branch of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, and coordinate special events and programs between the library and the Town.
  
- Increase the ability of older adults to age with dignity and achieve independence in their chosen residence.
  - Work with JABA to design new programs for seniors and intergenerational groups.
  - Encourage development of a variety of quality affordable and accessible senior housing options integrated within the community.
  - Increase access to preventative and emergency health care.
  
- Create an environment that is welcoming and safe for families with children.
  - Support efforts from Greene County Public Schools to open up their facilities for public use.
  - Encourage the Town Council and Stanardsville community to work with the Greene County Sheriff’s Office to sustain efforts to create a safe and civil environment in downtown Stanardsville.
  - Create parks and greenways within neighborhoods for easy access to natural amenities.
  - Encourage after-school programs for area youth.

## HISTORIC AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Two of the strongest assets the Town of Stanardsville possesses are its rich history and its bucolic setting near one of the great National Parks. Given that these characteristics will be primary drivers of economic development, they must be preserved for revitalization to be sustained for any length of time. Stanardsville's history lives on in the architectural expression of buildings and the stories residents tell. The Town's natural setting exists both within Town limits and outside its borders into Greene County. This section serves as a guide for preserving and enhancing these resources.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### TOWN OF STANARDSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Town of Stanardsville possesses numerous historic and cultural resources to showcase its rich heritage. Since 2004, a large portion of the Town of Stanardsville has been recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior as an entry in the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register. Despite sporadic fires occurring during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the County Clerk's Office explosion of 1979, the townscape survives much as it did during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

There are a total of 168 resources, whether buildings or important sites, that contribute to its historic designation. Four churches of various denominations and dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries survive in excellent condition. The oldest existing commercial structures date back to the 1940s. Robert L. Pritchett, the first Greene County Clerk, built what is known today as the Lafayette Hotel to accommodate travelers along the Richmond Road, and two large brick homes were constructed on Main Street shortly thereafter. Many early homes were also located directly on Main Street, although several multi-family structures were built on Ford Avenue in the 1920s and 1930s.

The County Courthouse is the most significant structure and is individually recognized on the National Historic Register. Completed in 1839 at a cost of \$6,832, the Courthouse stands in the center of the Courthouse Square and displays the Roman Revival style so favored by Thomas Jefferson. Shortly after its completion, a classically inspired County Jail was constructed to the east and a Clerk's Office to the west of the courthouse. The jail was restored as the Greene County Historical Society Museum in 2007. It is open to the public every week, drawing visitors for genealogical research and exploration of Greene County's history.

Although a few historic buildings have been maintained meticulously, previous plans have expressed a need for a broader historic preservation effort for the downtown area. Many handsome structures are obscured or made visually unattractive by overgrown and inappropriate landscaping, and others can appear unwelcoming due to deteriorated sidewalks and entrance ways. Some commercial buildings have fallen into disrepair, and have been subdivided and converted into housing units. A lack of downtown vitality in recent years has impeded the private investment needed to maintain the historic buildings.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: HISTORIC AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- Respect, preserve, and enhance historic and architecturally significant buildings and all other elements which establish the unique character of Stanardsville.
  - Encourage conservation and preservation of the historic and architecturally significant structures with, among other things, use of federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits in order to enhance and reinforce its heritage.
  - Consider developing a Historic District Ordinance which would balance specific protections for structures contributing to the Stanardsville Historic District with the rights of private property owners.
  - Facilitate the siting and creation of a new museum to display local historic materials with use of existing funds.
  
- Consider creating a network of greenways along stream corridors with multiuse trails for recreational and transportation use and natural stream buffers to protect waterways.
  - Develop a greenway along Mitchell Creek.
  - Develop a greenway along the stream between Greene County schools and Celt Road.
  - Actively encourage the development and preservation of park and recreational space in the Town in order to retain the charm and beauty that is Stanardsville.
  
- Encourage Low-Impact-Development techniques in new development to preserve water quality and the conservation of environmental resources.
  - Reduce minimum parking space requirements for commercial and residential uses and encourage landscaping in parking lots to allow water filtration.
  - Explore developer incentives to preserve existing trees on new development sites.
  - Develop and publish guidance, in cooperation with Greene County, on low-impact development and green building techniques, such as pervious pavements, green roofs, and recycled building materials. When feasible, offer incentives for use.
  
- Support Greene County's efforts to preserve the rural character of the countryside and promote the agricultural heritage of the area.
  - Celebrate the area's farming activities through continuation and expansion of the farmers' market and participation in campaigns to support local food markets.
  - Assist existing agritourism businesses, including wineries, by encouraging supportive services within Stanardsville.
  - Increase growth and development within Stanardsville in order to help relieve development pressure on the pristine rural areas surrounding the Town.

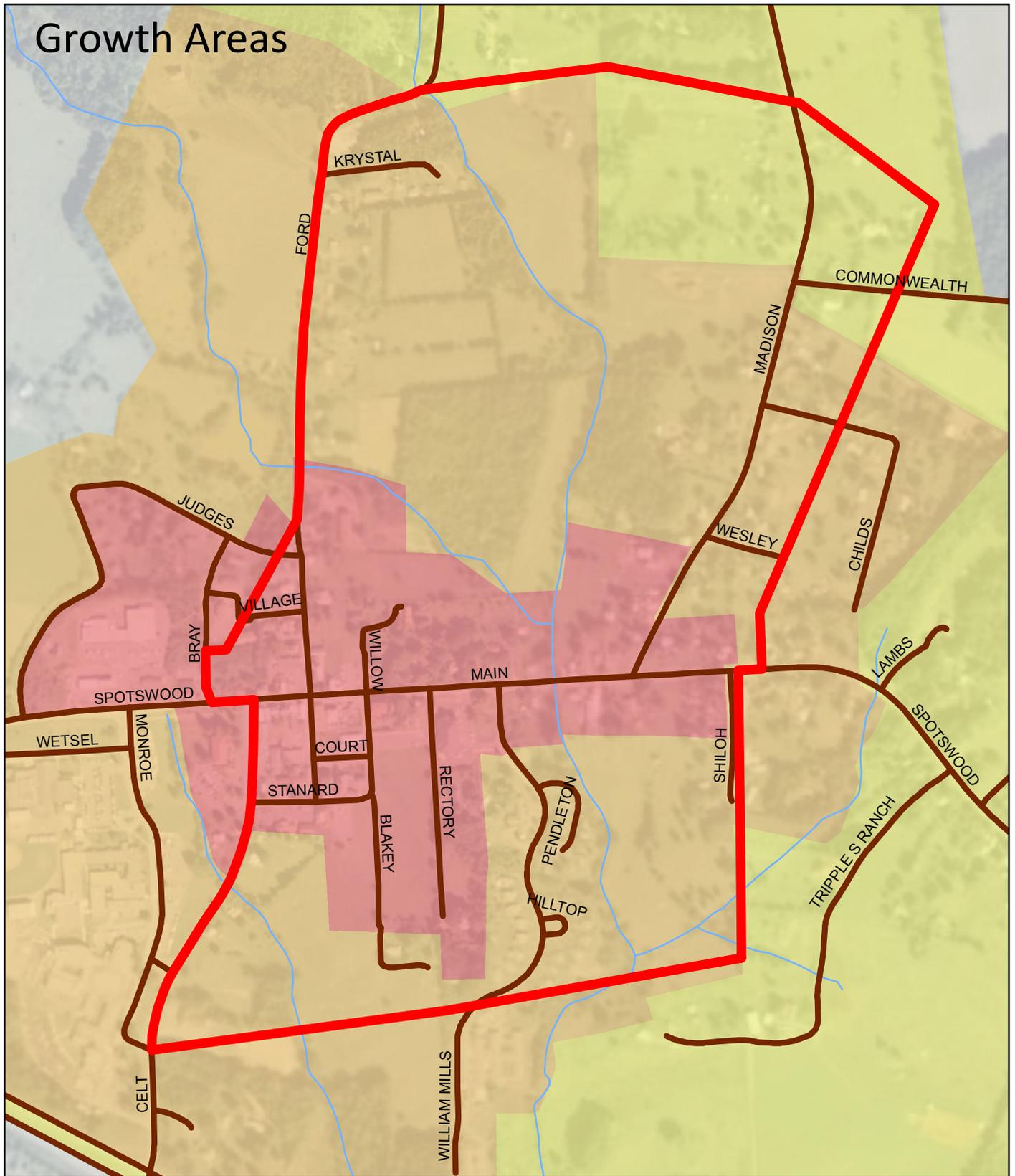
# Town of Stanardsville Comprehensive Plan Maps 2011

-  Town Boundary
-  Waterway
-  Roadway
-  Parcels



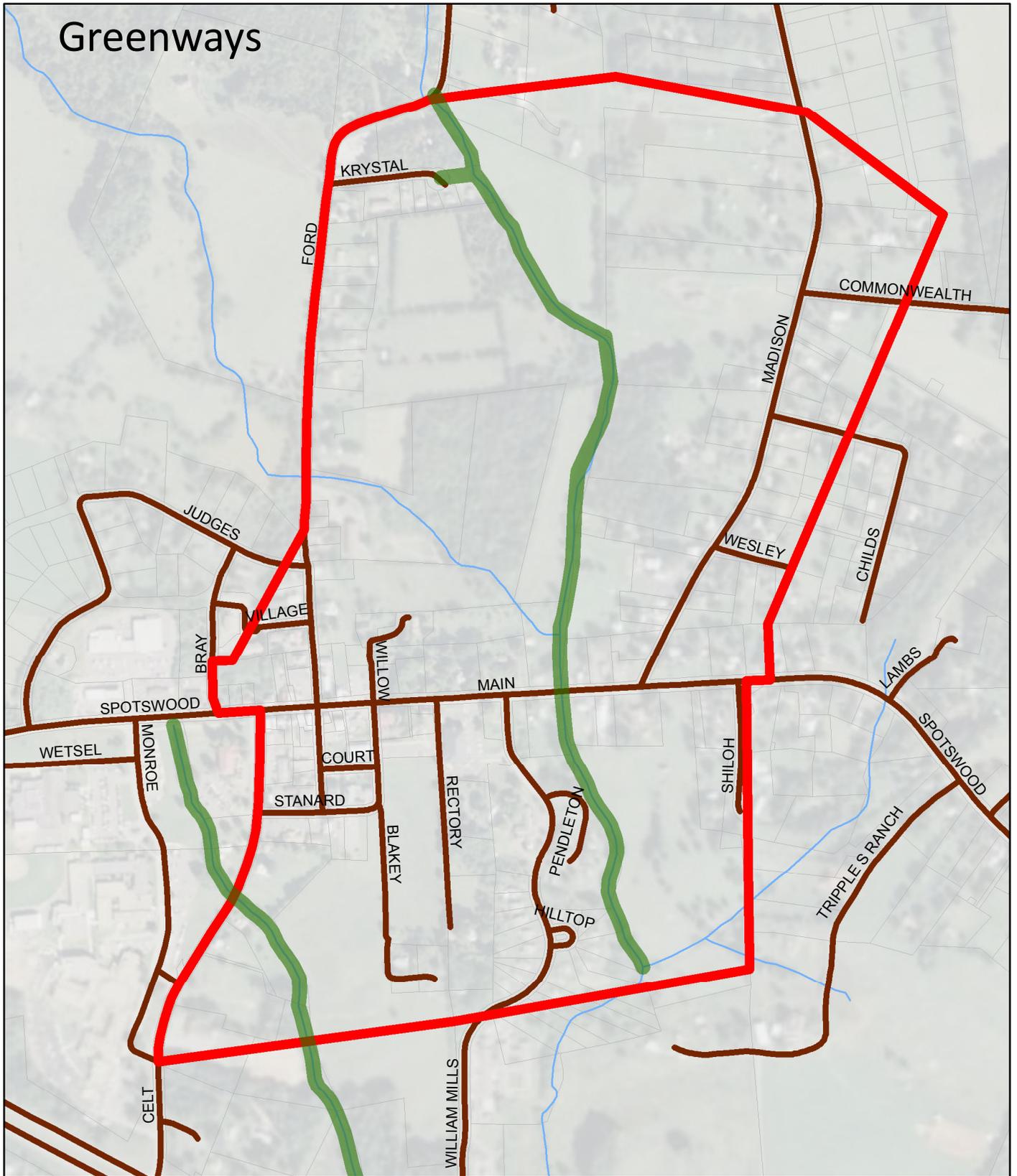
# Town of Stanardsville Comprehensive Plan Maps 2011

- Mixed-Use Town Center
- Mixed-Use Residential
- Suburban Residential



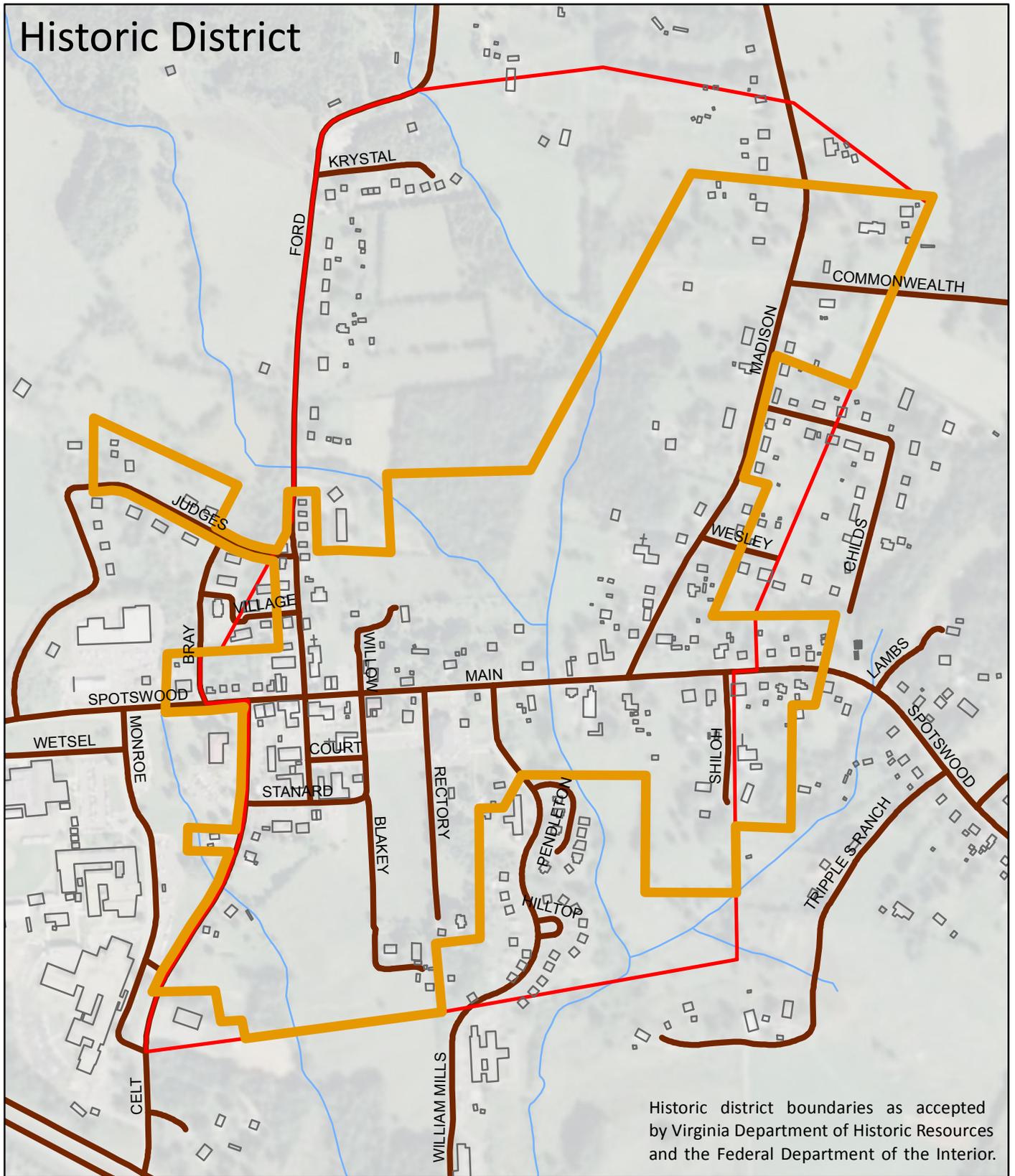
# Town of Stanardsville Comprehensive Plan Maps 2011

 Proposed Greenway Trails



# Town of Stanardsville Comprehensive Plan Maps 2011

— Stanardsville Historic District  
— Buildings



Historic district boundaries as accepted by Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the Federal Department of the Interior.

