

# MASTER PLAN

VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN, MICHIGAN



2007

# MASTER PLAN

## VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN MICHIGAN

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Acknowledgments.....	i
Table of Contents .....	ii
List of Tables .....	iii
List of Figures.....	iii
List of Maps .....	iii
<b>Chapter One: Planning Goals for Franklin.....</b>	<b>1-1</b>
Introduction.....	1-4
Vision and Goals.....	1-4
<b>Chapter Two: Inventory and Analysis .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
History of the Village of Franklin and Environs .....	2-1
Environmental Profile.....	2-4
Community Profile .....	2-12
Infrastructure Profile.....	2-15
Land Use Profile .....	2-19
<b>Chapter Three: Village Character and Neighborhoods.....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
Community Character .....	3-1
Challenges to Character .....	3-2
Recommendations for Maintaining Character .....	3-3
<b>Chapter Four: Historic Areas: Appearance and Identity.....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
Franklin's Built Heritage .....	4-1
Threats to Historic Character .....	4-3
Recommendations .....	4-5
<b>Chapter Five: The Village Center - Commercial .....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
Village Center History .....	5-1
Appearance and Identity.....	5-2
Village Center Character.....	5-3
Accomplishments .....	5-4
Relevant Issues .....	5-5
Recommendations .....	5-6
<b>Chapter Six: The Village Center - Residential, Recreational, and Cultural .....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
Context .....	6-1
Relevant Issues .....	6-2
Recommendations .....	6-5
<b>Chapter Seven: Community Facilities and Open Space .....</b>	<b>7-1</b>
Village Services .....	7-1
Coordinated Services .....	7-4
Recreation and Open Space .....	7-4



<b>Chapter Eight: Trees and Vegetation Management .....</b>	<b>8-1</b>
History .....	8-1
Accomplishments Since 1997 .....	8-2
Relevant Issues .....	8-2
Recommendations .....	8-4
<b>Chapter Nine: Traffic and Circulation.....</b>	<b>9-1</b>
History and Present Context.....	9-1
Circulation System Issues .....	9-4
Recommendations .....	9-8
<b>Chapter Ten: Implementation .....</b>	<b>10-1</b>
Methods.....	10-1
Organization .....	10-2

## LIST OF TABLES

---

Table 1: Franklin Village Population Growth .....	2-12
Table 2: Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years or Older in Franklin Village, 2000.....	2-14
Table 3: Labor Force Characteristics for Franklin Village, 2000.....	2-14
Table 4: Franklin Village State Equalized Value of Real and Personal Property, 1969-2005.....	2-15
Table 5: 2004 Tax Rates, in Mills .....	2-16
Table 6: Franklin Community Facilities and Open Spaces in 2000 .....	2-16
Table 7: Franklin Village Land Use.....	2-19
Table 8: Franklin Village Center SWOT Analysis, February 27, 2006 .....	6-3
Table 9: Franklin Village Traffic Counts, 1991-1995 and 2004.....	9-3
Table 10: Traffic Crashes at Franklin Village Intersections, 2000-2004 .....	9-4

## LIST OF FIGURES

---

Figure 1: Population by Age Groups in 1990 and 2000 .....	2-13
---	------

## LIST OF MAPS

---

Map 1: Regional Context .....	1-2
Map 2: Future Land Use.....	1-13
Map 3: Historical Properties .....	2-5
Map 4: General Relief.....	2-7
Map 5: Soil Types.....	2-8
Map 6: Environmental Features .....	2-9
Map 7: Existing Land Use .....	2-21
Map 8: Traffic Analysis .....	9-5

# CHAPTER ONE

## Planning Goals for Franklin

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### INTRODUCTION

This Plan provides Franklin Village residents with a means for successfully managing future change in the community. By following the goals and planning recommendations presented in this Plan, effective management of growth and change will be possible, and a high quality environment ensured. The beauty and rural nature of the Village will be enhanced, the natural and man-made environments preserved, and historical character protected.

### Planning Approach

The process of drafting the 2006 update to the Master Plan commenced in 2005 with review of the 1997 Master Plan, a task that was spearheaded by Planning Commissioner Pam Hansen. During this initial review period, meetings were held with the Village Council and the Zoning Board of Appeals, and ideas were solicited from the community at large. This effort resulted in the production of a document titled Planning Commission Priorities, a document that the entire Planning Commission contributed to.

By the fall of 2005 the Planning Commission saw the need to test their ideas about planning priorities with the public in a public meeting. On October 6, 2005, a community meeting was held at which time participants were given the opportunity to identify and vote on their priorities. The meeting confirmed many of the planning priorities that had already been identified, but also shed new light and emphasis on certain priorities, such as roads, traffic, and pedestrian access.

Work on the 2006 update to the Master Plan began in earnest after the October public meeting. An approach was agreed upon, whereby Planning Commission members would take individual responsibility for a particular section, with McKenna Associates, Inc., having major writing

responsibility.

In the process of writing each section, additional input was sought from citizens and business leaders. For example, on February 27, 2006, there was a special meeting to gather input from business and property owners in the Village Center.

### Regional Context

Franklin Village is centrally located in the southern portion of Oakland County and is part of the Detroit Metropolitan Area (see Map 1). Rapid urbanization has been common in Oakland County, and much of the urbanization has been coincident with the construction of freeways and major arteries. Regional access to and from Franklin Village is convenient given the location of Interstate 696 to the south of the Village and Telegraph Road (M-24) to the east. Access to areas adjacent to Franklin is also convenient due to the presence of Northwestern Highway, and Twelve, Thirteen and Fourteen Mile Roads.

Regional planning for the entire area is the responsibility of Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), although other agencies have a role in some aspect of regional planning, such as the Road Commission for Oakland County, Michigan Department of Transportation, and the Oakland County Drain Commissioner.

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## PLANNING GOALS

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Insert Map 1: Regional Context

Oakland County and other communities in the region are particularly important to the Village because they provide and maintain a number of regional services and employment centers which are important to the residents of the Village. Communities near to the Village provide the major portion of the daily needs of Village residents. Franklin residents commute to Auburn Hills, Birmingham, Detroit, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Troy and other places for employment, goods and services, such as professional services, entertainment, furniture, clothes and appliance purchases.

Franklin is a green island surrounded by the more typical urban development prevalent in Oakland County. Increased urbanization in surrounding communities has caused development pressure in the Village for wider roads, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, and requests to rezone land for more intensive uses. The 1997 Master Plan recognized these pressures and suggested zoning ordinance changes to limit density, many of which have been recently implemented.

## Local Context

Between 1920 and 1950, recorded land planning efforts were limited to simple subdivision practices by George Wellington Smith.

By 1954, formal incorporation of the Village was concluded and a zoning ordinance adopted which continued zoning controls then in effect in Southfield Township. Additional efforts to manage growth included the completion of Master Plans in 1969 and in 1977, the latter updated in 1997.<sup>1</sup>

The planning efforts of the 1950s and 1960s were largely in response to major shifts of population which occurred in the Metropolitan Region. At the time of incorporation, less than 1,000 persons resided in the Village. During the next 15 years, the Metropolitan area sought the amenities of the Village, and Franklin's population grew to over 3,300. During the 1970s, though, the pace of population growth slowed appreciably. In the

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<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive Development Plan, August, 1969 and General Development Plan, 1977.

1970s through the 1990s, planning efforts were largely in response to pressures to use undeveloped land within the Village, install public sewers and stem perceived degradation of Village character.

The same kinds of pressures have also been experienced by adjacent communities that responded somewhat differently. Development in Southfield and Bingham Farms in particular has been rapid and has emphasized commercial, as well as residential, growth. These developments have placed pressure on the Village to rezone certain properties to more intensive land uses, especially those properties along Telegraph Road.

Additional housing growth pressures were placed on the Village by the installation of pressure sanitary sewers that made previously undevelopable property more suitable for development.

Further pressures to develop may be placed on the Village by regional highway construction. Improvements to Telegraph Road or Northwestern Highway would make it even more convenient for commuters to reach major employment centers from Franklin Village. However, it would also increase passage through Franklin by commuters from other communities.



Development pressures like these have tremendous implications for the Village relative to future land use, as well as for the maintenance of its existing character. Presently, the distinctive character of the Village is rooted in its history and



in the early Nineteenth Century architecture of the Village Center, in the quality of the Village's large, treed residential lots, in quiet residential neighborhoods and along the river. Development and redevelopment, particularly as it has occurred by replacing smaller houses with much larger ones, has threatened the Village's existing character. The Village responded to this threat by implementing a contextual zoning ordinance in 2005 to preserve neighborhood character and visual open space.

Evidence remains in the Village Center area of the historic or essential character of early settlement. Reflecting this early settlement character is a mix of residential and commercial uses which are in close proximity to each other. The residential lots have landscaped, enclosed lawns and mature trees that make major desirable contributions to the environment of the Village Center. However, traffic and parking pressures, as well as a lack of routine maintenance, have led to a reduced visual quality of the Village Center. Additionally, the vibrancy of the Village Center has been difficult to sustain due to a lack of a defined essential purpose that could brand the downtown area with a recognized focus.

Because Village residents prize the rural, historic and open qualities so highly, it is essential that their basic nature remain unchanged. Recommendations regarding future planning efforts reflect this inherent pride and serve to protect and enhance the Village's existing character as much as possible.

## **VISION AND GOALS**

This Master Plan is based upon a vision and a set of twelve goals. These reflect the desires and attitudes of the Village residents, as discerned and stated by the Planning Commission and as adopted by both the Planning Commission and the Village Council.

The Planning Commission, with the assistance of the citizens of Franklin Village, the Village Council, and other citizen committees, will develop strategies to bring the goals and objectives of this updated plan to realization.

## **Visioning Process**

Work completed in preparation for the 1997 Master Plan Update to define a vision for the Village of Franklin remains valid in 2006. The visioning process began with statements made by Franklin Village residents at a futuring town meeting in January of 1996. Residents were asked to imagine themselves living in Franklin Village twenty years into the future. Residents then talked about what they imagined would make Franklin an ideal place to live. Their statements were recorded and compiled into a draft vision, which was reviewed and refined by the Planning Commission. Recently, as part of the current Master Plan Update, this vision was largely reaffirmed by Village residents and the Planning Commission.

## **Vision Statement**

*Despite the impacts of massive suburbanization in Southeast Michigan, the Village of Franklin has moved into the 21st century as one of the most desirable places to live within Michigan. Residents and businesses in Franklin Village enjoy a rich quality of life and are reaping the benefits of commitments made years ago. The visual, social and economic characteristics that initially attracted residents to the Village have not only been maintained over time, but enhanced.*

*The Village of Franklin is comprised of widely spaced houses with large lawns, thickly planted tree lined streets, extensive naturally vegetated ravines and protected wetlands, curvilinear streets without curbs, and a small, compact commercial center with buildings no taller than three stories, in part comprised of and surrounded by historic structures. The Village appears to be a small rural town that stands out as an oasis in the suburbs of Southeast Michigan. It is locally known with pride as "The town that time forgot".*

*Franklin Village is a tree-covered residential community of single family homes, and possesses a charming, historic, rural character in the midst of bustling suburbia. There is a sense of entry to the Village due to unique signs that reflect the historic flavor of Franklin Village and its unique character of well-maintained, attractive homes on large, tree covered lots. Franklin Village is different in appearance from surrounding communities, because of a rural character comprised of more trees, homes which are farther apart and*

*many dead-end and winding streets. There is also more wildlife. Horses and other animals are kept in some of the larger yards with paddocks and small barns, some of which are more than one hundred years old. Franklin Village is more peaceful and has less stressful traffic conditions than surrounding communities.*

*Many homes reflect a period of prior centuries, while others are contemporary to the early, middle or late twentieth century. All homes sit comfortably on their lots among a mix of bright flowering ornamental trees and shrubs and plants with a more naturally occurring appearance than most communities in Southeast Michigan.*

*Residents appreciate and take care of the natural environment, protecting wetlands and floodplains from encroachment and from siltation or dumping. Villagers plant and maintain buffer vegetation that helps increase water quality by filtering runoff and cooling flowing water. The extensive ravines and creeks are protected and flourish with natural vegetation and clean flowing water. A wide range of species contribute to both plant and animal diversity. As a result, Franklin is a model of residential resource protection, a haven for wildlife and a lush view for the eye. Each generation learns about being stewards of their community from spending time with the previous generation via walks along the trails and natural areas of the Village.*

*The Village has a small, thriving, historic commercial area of various types of businesses. Residents of the Village can shop, bank, put gas in their cars, stop for coffee, or to go to a restaurant in the Village Center. Parking is largely out of view and pedestrians are delighted by architectural and landscape beauty. There are spring flowers, brick walks and attractive buildings of scale, colors and architectural detailing that remind people of the nineteenth century. Traffic is slow through the Village Center.*

*People are comfortable and secure while shopping or participating in community events steeped in tradition, such as Winter Fest and the Labor Day Round-Up. Parents enjoy watching their children play on the Village Green and adjacent open space.*



*The Village Center is connected to all the residential areas by open spaces, pedestrian and bike paths and narrow, winding two-lane streets. Open spaces and paths follow natural features such as woods and the Franklin River. The Village Center includes several public and community facilities including the Village Green, the Village Hall, the Franklin/Bingham Farms Police Station and the Franklin Community Church and provides a center for residents to participate in a diverse spectrum of activities.*

*The Historic District lies within the Village Center and has many authentic period homes, public and commercial buildings with special lights, street pavement, signs and plantings that contribute to an attractive, unified appearance.*

*Franklin Village continues to be a modern, efficiently-run Village with a Village Administrator and administrative staff complemented by volunteers and elected and appointed officials. Its public services are housed in a building that fits with the Village character.*

## **Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

In the context of this plan, goals are high level aspirations that provide general guidance and direction. Their scope can be very large, but they can be very specific. Goals are descriptive, not wordy, with a clear intention.

An objective is an action statement related to achieving the goal. An objective may or may not be a task, depending on the scope of the objective. An objective will have implementation steps tied to it.

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## PLANNING GOALS

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A policy is a statement of belief, a principle that will guide behavior. A policy describes an action that Village officials will take to maintain integrity of the master plan goals. Policies set limits or define the scope of action that can be taken.

### ***GOAL 1: VILLAGE CHARACTER***

**Preserve, promote and enhance the rural character of the Village through open space and predominance of large lot, single-family residences, with a single downtown Village Center that serves as a gathering place and includes a commercial district, residences and public facilities.**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Maintain zoning elements that reflect standards and techniques to protect Village character.
2. Incorporate additional contextual zoning regulations into the Zoning Ordinance to preserve neighborhood character and open space.
3. Maintain a Village Center reminiscent of a small rural village.
4. Encourage the use of underground utilities where feasible.
5. Encourage deed restrictions.
6. Strengthen ordinance enforcement provisions.
7. Promote new wireless communication facilities and technologies to enhance wireless voice and data transmission in a manner that is compatible with the aesthetics, character, and environment of the Village.

#### **Policies:**

- A. Preserve natural resources. See Goal #3.
- B. Encourage creative design and planning for both housing structures and land development that produces visual harmony without monotony, preserve special physiographic features, and protect vital natural resources.

- C. Preserve the simple rural atmosphere of Franklin by maintaining and enhancing the rural scenic nature of roadways.
- D. Maintain large residential lots except in the Village Center.
- E. Encourage the establishment of land conservancies and the donation of land to the Village as a means to augment open space within Franklin.
- F. Encourage the creation and use of special designations of roadways or properties that further maintains its rural character.
- G. Limit new residential development to detached single-family housing.

### ***GOAL 2: HISTORIC IDENTITY***

**Preserve, promote and enhance the historic identity of the Village in terms of its heritage and the physical appearance of its Historic District as a Nineteenth Century Michigan Village.**

#### **Objectives:**

1. Maintain zoning elements pertaining to the Historic District to protect historic character.
2. Maintain Historic District designation.
3. Ensure the continuation of an effective Historical District Commission.
4. Build Franklin officials' and residents' awareness of both the requirements and the benefits of historic designation.

#### **Policies:**

- A. Encourage the preservation of historic structures and spaces in the Village Center and Historic District.
- B. Promote use of architectural materials, trees and shrubbery in the Village Center to emulate and improve the Village's Nineteenth Century rural and historic character.

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## PLANNING GOALS

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- C. Ensure that site development in the Village Center relates to and is compatible with nearby buildings, land uses and the rural and historic character of the Village.
- D. Provide residents with information on assistance programs for preserving and restoring historic properties.
- E. Maintain the historic pedestrian orientation of the Village Center while ensuring the safety of the pedestrian environment.
- F. Submit proposed land use changes in the Village Center to the Planning Commission and the Historic District Commission for review and approval as may be provided for by ordinance.
- G. Encourage the creation and use of special designations of roadways or properties that further the Village's historic context.
- H. Ensure Franklin officials have knowledge of preservation techniques and zoning procedures.

### ***GOAL 3: NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION***

**Preserve the natural resources of the Village, including its open spaces, woodlands, wetlands, the Rouge River Valley and floodplain, and visual resources along thoroughfares to prevent damage to the environment or harm to these resources.**

#### **Objectives:**

- 1. Define and implement a vegetation management plan for Franklin Village that provides direction for Franklin Village residents in protecting and perpetuating its tree canopy and other vegetation that contributes to rural character.
- 2. Acquire conservation easements, where possible to the banks of the Franklin branch of the Rouge River and to wetlands, including buffers along edges of wetlands.

- 3. Develop guidelines that promote and regulate land acquisition for use as public space and as a means to preserve environmentally sensitive lands.
- 4. Develop design guidelines for use by private property owners in managing their properties to protect sensitive natural resources.

#### **Policies:**

- A. To the extent possible, develop, maintain and enforce ordinances to ensure residential development that provides a harmonious relationship between the natural landscape and waterscape and people's use of the land and water. A harmonious relationship is one in which residential development and recreational use fosters the continued biological and physical health of water, plant and animal communities and appreciation of the beauty people derive from natural landscapes.
- B. Protect sensitive environmental lands and open spaces by directing development to the more buildable portions of a parcel.
- C. Preserve the natural water bodies and drainage ways, flora and fauna, and unique physiographic and geologic land forms.
- D. Prohibit development of floodplains and wetlands, and avoid disrupting or infringing upon environmentally sensitive slopes and woodlands.
- E. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands to the extent possible, and consider public acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands for open space and passive recreational purposes.
- F. Use natural drainage systems along streets and roads.

### ***GOAL 4: BALANCING PROPERTY-OWNER RIGHTS***

**Preserve and promote the rights of the individual property owner. Balance the rights of the individual landowner and the need to enhance property values with actions necessary to preserve the public good.**



**Objectives:**

1. Encourage individuality in the design of new construction and renovation that both complements and helps protect the rural character of the Village.
2. Adopt zoning requirements to protect Village character, neighborhoods and incumbent property owners.

**Policies:**

- A. Strongly support the interests of the homeowners when considering land use and environmental preservation regulations to ensure the preservation of the rural character of the Village.
- B. Enforce Village ordinances and regulations to promote and preserve individual property owner rights as well as public interests inherent in preservation of the rural character of the Village.

***GOAL 5: VILLAGE CENTER***

**Enhance and support the economic vitality and attractive appearance of the Village Center.**

**Objectives:**

1. Define a vision for the Village Center, including a cohesive image for Village Commercial District (businesses/shops), and develop and implement recommendations to achieve the vision.
2. Provide design guidelines that protect and enhance the historic visual character.
3. Improve auto and pedestrian circulation within the Village Center.

**Policies:**

- A. Participate whenever possible in Federal, State, and County initiatives to maintain and improve the Village Center.
- B. Require property owners to maintain structures and grounds attractive condition, consistent with the Village Center objectives and Historic District design guidelines.

- C. Encourage property and business owners to pro-actively define and participate in efforts to improve the commercial vitality of the Village Center and attract small business.

***GOAL 6: VILLAGE PERIPHERY***

**Maintain the integrity of the periphery of the Village as a residential area and prevent intrusion or encroachment of intense development, such as commercial, office, multi-family residential or highway development into the Village.**

**Objectives:**

1. Use zoning regulations to preserve low intensity residential development at the Village periphery.
2. Periodically evaluate the public acquisition of property along the Village periphery, including environmentally sensitive properties, such as wetlands, ravines, and floodplains.

**Policies:**

- A. Encourage the maintenance and updating of private deed restrictions and plat restrictions on minimum lot size and area.
- B. Encourage the construction of land and vegetative buffers to shield residential properties from adjacent non-residential development.
- C. Consider converting existing commercial properties along the periphery to residential in order to preserve the residential intensity of the Village periphery.

***GOAL 7: UNIQUE IDENTITY***

**Enhance and maintain a unique, coherent Village visual, social and jurisdictional identity, distinct and separate from surrounding communities.**

**Objectives:**

1. Develop a unified street and public facility sign system that reflects the character of the Village.

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## PLANNING GOALS

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2. Maintain distinctive entry signs for major road entries into the Village.
3. Develop and maintain a tree management program that ensures a continuous tree canopy throughout the Village and especially along public streets.

### **Policies:**

- A. Encourage the design of residential development that will contribute to the character, identity, diversity, and individuality of the Village.
- B. Protect the safety and security of Village residents and assist surrounding communities in protecting their residents.
- C. Maintain and ensure continuance of the Village Police and Fire Departments, Library, and other institutions within the Village Center.
- D. Support actions that will secure the economic vitality of the Village Center commercial district.
- E. Maintain and, if appropriate, seek opportunities to enhance joint operating agreements with Bingham Farms.
- F. Encourage citizens to participate in volunteer organizations.

### ***GOAL 8: REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT***

**Protect the Village and the community against development that endangers the essential services and security of Franklin residents.**

### **Objectives:**

1. Encourage lands that abut the Village to be developed in ways that either buffer properties in the Village or are compatible with Village land uses.
2. Develop cooperative relationships with adjacent communities so that Franklin Village

will be a partner in adjacent municipalities' planning efforts affecting lands adjacent to the Village.

### **Policies:**

- A. Participate in planning and development activities with adjacent communities and regional planning bodies.
- B. Through the Village Council and Planning Commission, monitor and present to the appropriate bodies the Village's position for proposals for development by private and public organizations in lands adjacent to the Village.
- C. Encourage lands that abut the Village to be developed in ways that either buffer properties in the Village or are compatible with Village land uses.
- D. Encourage adjacent communities to minimize the expansion of development that places burdens on Franklin Village services.

### ***GOAL 9: VILLAGE BUSINESS***

**Conduct day-to-day Village business through a small, professional staff while relying on volunteer and elected officials for policy decisions.**

### **Objectives:**

1. Continue to employ a professional Village Administrator and small support staff to manage Village operations.
2. Upgrade the Village web site as a means to communicate timely Village information to residents and other interested parties.

### **Policies:**

- A. Utilize citizen committees to assist Village officials in carrying out their responsibilities.
- B. Encourage open communication and discussion of Village policies and proposed actions between Village officials, employees and citizens.

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## PLANNING GOALS

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- C. Encourage volunteer citizen participation in Village activities.
- D. Ensure that Village officials have training in zoning, land use planning and historic preservation.

### ***GOAL 10: PATHWAYS***

**Develop pathways throughout the Village that lead to the Village Center.**

#### **Objectives:**

- 1. Create a network of safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists to move around the Village.
- 2. Develop pedestrian and bicycle links between the residential neighborhoods and the Village Center.

#### **Policies:**

- A. Encourage the development of pedestrian ways and bicycle paths connecting major activity points in the Village, utilizing open areas, floodplains or road rights-of-way.
- B. Maintain the Village Center as a destination point for community activities.

### ***GOAL 11: TRAFFIC***

**Encourage measures to improve traffic safety and reduce congestion, including traffic and parking regulation and enforcement.**

**Discourage and oppose projects that have as their primary benefit the enhancement of traffic flow or parking at the expense of the environment or quality of life in Franklin.**

#### **Objectives:**

- 1. Develop scenic road corridor plans for the major roads in the Village, taking into account traffic calming methods, pedestrian and bicycle safety and scenic qualities.
- 2. Approve site plans that provide for planting and other site design elements that contribute to Village character but that do not block sightlines.
- 3. If possible, develop an access loop through the parking areas behind buildings in the Village Center.

- 4. Develop and implement traffic calming strategies to minimize the effects of traffic on the Village.

#### **Policies:**

- A. Enforce existing traffic regulations.
- B. Encourage the continued design of local roadways as country lanes in order to preserve the rural character of the Village and to protect existing roadside vegetation.
- C. Encourage the efficient use of existing roadways and parking areas before changes are made for increased capacity.
- D. Encourage roadside and open space buffer strips of vegetation, both to enhance the visual appeal of the Village and to protect land uses adjacent to the roadway from traffic noise, dirt and glare.
- E. Maintain a circulation and parking system that encourages the maintenance of the rural character of the Village.
- F. Limit the installation of curbs and storm sewer drains to areas where such improvements are essential for public safety and to reduce the impediment to groundwater recharge.

### ***GOAL 12: SIGNAGE***

**Provide signs in Franklin Village that are informative, contribute to safety, enhance the businesses of the Village Center and contribute to and reinforce rural character.**

#### **Objectives:**

- 1. Evaluate the volume and design of Franklin's traffic signs and implement a process that will eliminate the cluttered appearance while contributing to safety and a consistent, rural character.
- 2. Develop and communicate illustrated design guidelines for signs in the Village Center that help business owners attract business while protecting Franklin's rural character and individual expression.

## PLANNING GOALS

3. Develop street signs that project and reinforce Franklin's rural character consistently throughout the Village.

### Policies:

- A. Limit traffic signs to the minimum necessary for the safe travel on Village streets.
- B. Enforce regulations, such as speed limits and weight limits represented by traffic signs.
- C. Encourage business to use creative, but understated, signs to identify and advertise.
- D. Limit signs on residential properties to real estate for sale signs.
- E. Maintain a sign ordinance to ensure signs in Franklin Village reflect a rural character and the high level of achievement of Franklin residents.

## Future Land Use

The intent of the Future Land Use Map is to maintain the Village of Franklin as a predominantly large lot, single family community in a rural setting, with a single vibrant, historic, mixed use Village Center.

Consistent with the Goals and Objectives, which call for protecting the periphery of the Village from nonresidential encroachment, nonresidential development is reserved for two areas only: the Village Center and the southwest corner of Thirteen Mile and Telegraph Roads. The desire is to concentrate commercial, governmental, and civic functions in the Village Center so as to enhance its economic vitality, attractive appearance, and sense of place.

In terms of the pattern of development in the Village Center, most of the commercial development is planned on the east side of Franklin Road, with parking located to the rear. Farther east off of Franklin Road, Medium High Density Residential (the Village's highest density residential classification) is planned, consistent with existing condominium development in the area.

Continuing south in the vicinity of German Mill, Carol, and Bowden Roads, Medium Density Residential is planned, respecting the historic settlement pattern and density of the nineteenth century. The Huda School, a private school that is planned as Public & Quasi-Public, anchors the Village Center at the south, at the corner of Romany Way and Franklin Road.

The most prominent feature on the west side of Franklin Road in the Village Center is the large swath of Public & Quasi-Public land that encompasses the Broughton House, the cemetery, the community church, the Village Green, and the FCA grounds. The Village Center is truly the center of village activity and the main place that residents gather when they come together in the Village of Franklin.

North of Wellington on the west side of Franklin Road there is a block of historic homes, that are classified as Medium Density Residential. Between Evelyn and Vincennes Roads, with the exception of the Fire Station at the corner of Vincennes and Franklin Roads, older homes on shallow lots have been converted into commercial. Some of these buildings have historic value. This block frontage is designated Office or Commercial on the Future Land Use Map, except for the Fire Station, which is designated Public & Quasi-Public.

The residential land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map correspond closely to similarly named zoning classifications, as noted in the following chart:

Future Land Use Classification	Corresponding Zoning Classification	Minimum Lot Size
Estate Residential	R-E, Estate Residential	130,000 (2.98 ac.)
Large Lot Residential	R-L, Large Lot Residential	65,000 (1.49 ac.)
Modified Low Density Residential	R-M, Modified Low Density Residential	42,000 (0.96 ac.)
Low Density Residential	R-1, Low Density Residential	30,000 (0.69 ac.)



## PLANNING GOALS

Future Land Use Classification	Corresponding Zoning Classification	Minimum Lot Size
Medium Low Density Residential	R-2, Medium Low Density Residential	22,500 (0.52 ac.)
Medium Density Residential	R-3, Medium Density Residential	15,000 (0.34 ac.)
Medium High Density Residential	R-4, Medium High Density Residential District	12,000 (0.28 ac.)

There is a single large area of Estate Residential in the center of the Village, east of Franklin Road and north of Thirteen Mile Road, extending as far north as the Franklin Branch of the Rouge River. Along most of the Franklin Branch of the Rouge River, the land is designated Large Lot Residential, which is appropriate from an environmental perspective. Two other areas are designated Large Lot Residential, one in the southwest corner and another in the vicinity of Oak Leaf Lane and Kirk Lane.

Most of the remainder of the Village's residential areas are designated Low Density Residential, with the exception of Medium Density Residential areas designated at the northwest, northeast, and southeast corners of the Village.

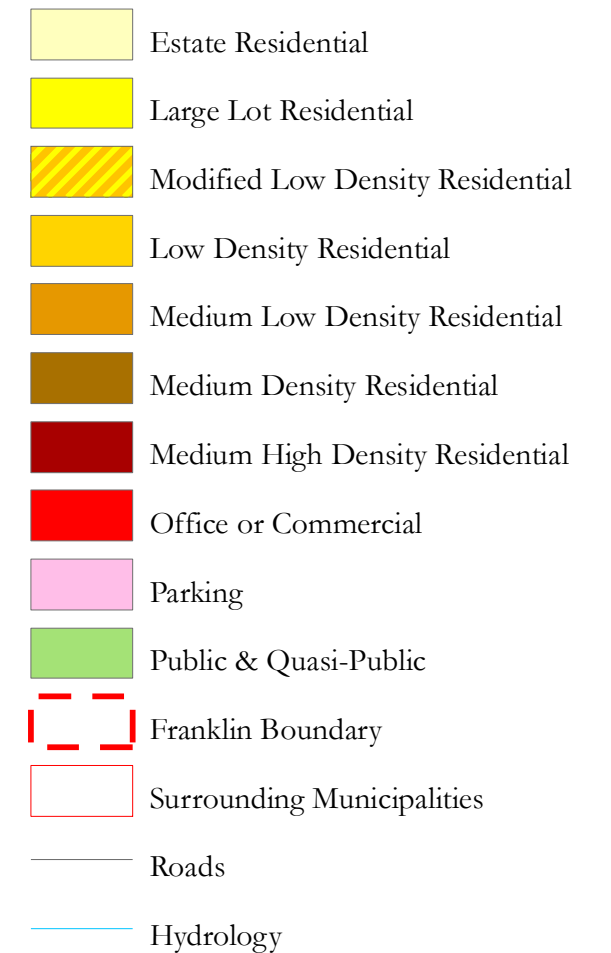
Over ninety-seven percent of the Village's land use is planned as residential, with Low Density Residential being the predominant land use in the Village, as noted in the following chart:

Future Land Use Classification	Acreage	Percent
Estate Residential	161.4	11.3
Large Lot Residential	421.0	29.6
Modified Low Density Residential	164.0	11.5
Low Density Residential	460.8	32.3
Medium Low Density Residential	163.4	11.5
Medium Density Residential	11.6	0.8

Future Land Use Classification	Acreage	Percent
Medium High Density Residential	4.2	0.3
Office or Commercial	10.5	0.7
Parking	0.4	0.0
Public & Quasi-Public	27.1	1.9

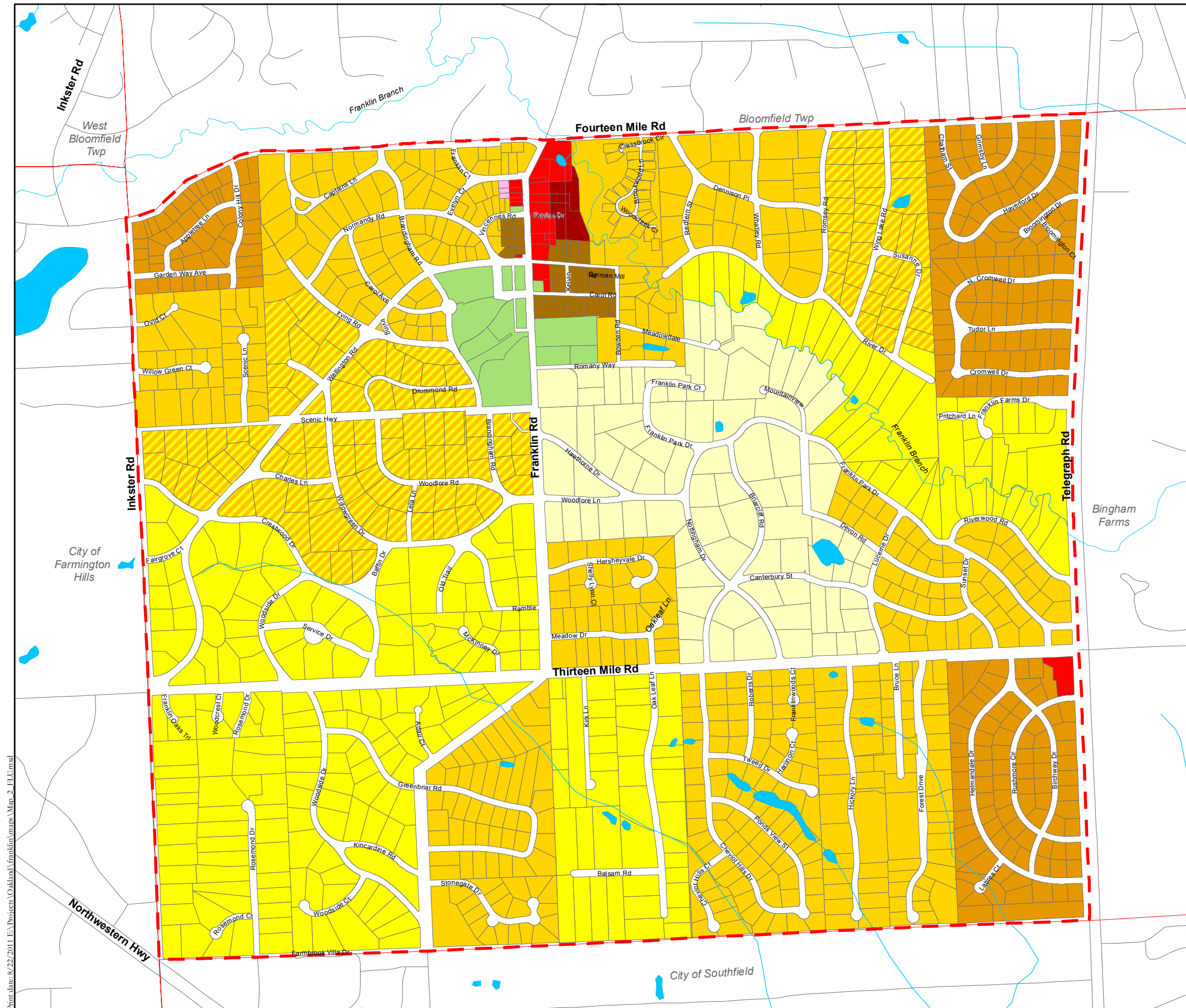
# Map 2 Future Land Use

Village of Franklin,  
Oakland County, Michigan



Base Map Data Source: Oakland County GIS, 1st Quarter 2006.

FLU Source: General Development Plan, Franklin Village Master Plan Update 1997.



## CHAPTER TWO

# Inventory and Analysis

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Effective planning for Franklin Village must be based upon a thorough understanding of the unique resources and characteristics of the Village. Therefore, an information base composed of those relevant facts describing the resources and characteristics of the Village has been established. This information base is the cornerstone of the Master Plan and, consequently, should be referred to as adjustments to the Plan become necessary.

### HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE OF FRANKLIN AND ENVIRONS

With the gradual recession of the glaciers 12,000 years ago came the first appearance of nomadic man in the Franklin area following the trails of mammoths and mastodons. As the ice receded northward, the mammals and the hunters followed. The fertile lands did not remain vacant long, for they soon became the home of a resourceful people - the Paleo Indian. A skillful hunter, he lived on the elk, deer, and bear that flourished in the wake of the larger animals. Streams and lakes were fished and traversed in dugout canoes.

It was around 100 B.C. that the Hopewell Indians moved into this area of Southeastern Michigan. Named for an Ohio farmer on whose land their remains were first found, this group is known for extensive earthworks and burial mounds. Their society was the most complex to date and diversified for effectiveness.

They raised corn, squash, beans, and possibly tobacco, developing and perfecting agricultural methods and implements. Extensive burial mounds were erected to commemorate the dead. To provide a variety of exotic materials to produce tomb gifts, the Hopewells established far ranging trade routes. They obtained conch shells from the Gulf Coast, obsidian from the Rocky Mountains, copper from the Upper Peninsula, and mica from the Appalachians. Highly skilled artisans, their talents are seen in carved pipe bowls, which take the form of humans and

animals, and in cloth woven from the inner fibers of bark.

Around 700 A.D., the Hopewells vanished for unknown reasons. Archaeologists speculate that their social system may have broken down under increased population, or perhaps that their affluence and wealth were overly tempting to less skilled, aggressive neighbors.

The Hopewells' disappearance opened the way for many diverse groups, with the dominance of no single band. Tools were further developed, lands tilled, and hunting, fishing, and pottery skills perfected. The tribes recognized no boundaries and frequent warfare broke out over lands or possessions.

By the time of the arrival of the French explorers and missionaries, Oakland County provided a home to many established tribes united only by the various dialects of the common Algonquin tongue. Although there were frequent skirmishes, the founding of Fort Pontchartrain in Detroit in 1701 united the Indians in fur trading. With the opening of the fort, Indian trails became major arteries. The best known, the Saginaw Trail, became Woodward Avenue.

Formalized treaties with the territorial and state government pushed Indians slowly north and westward. For a time there were three reservations in Oakland County: two on the south bank of the River Rouge in what is now Southfield, and the third on 145 acres on the shore of Orchard Lake, including Apple Island. The last of these was sold at government auction in 1827.

By 1824, all the Indian tribes that had once lived in Oakland County had been dispersed. Speaking some fifty years after settlement, but with a remembrance for the awe the first white settlers felt when they discovered that their fields had been tilled centuries previously, O. Poppleton gave an address before the Oakland County Pioneer Society:

*“Oakland County is not barren of tradition and legendary events of deep interest to the historian and to her people. When the Jesuit fathers and French fur traders first visited this region of the county, and following them the very early pioneers, they found many evidences of a prior occupation in the tillage of the soil by unknown and extinct agriculturists of a very remote period. Many crude agricultural implements have been found in the clearing and tillage of the land and by excavations. Traditions were that corn, beans and other vegetables and grains were raised on aboriginal fields - that they sustained a numerous population, who were proficient in the arts of silver and copper ornaments, stone axes, hammers, mortars and pestles, flint arrow heads, graining and skinning knives, many of which have been found during early explorations of the missionaries and traders and since by the first settlements of the pioneers of the county.”*

## **Early Settlement**

Although Detroit had been a growing center for over a century, Oakland County and the area north were not rapidly settled. The surveyors, who ventured little past the southern swamps and bogs, took them as indicative of the entire territory. Their reports of Michigan and Oakland County characterized the land as:

*“...low, wet, intermittent with bad marshes - uniformly covered from six inches to three feet (and more at times) with water ... Taking the county altogether so far as has been explored, it is so bad there would not be more than one acre out of a hundred, if there would be one out of a thousand, that would in any case admit of cultivation.”*

As can be readily seen, this report, which was the only information available to prospective settlers in the east, would not particularly be encouraging.

Another important factor in settlement was the availability of transportation. Although steam vessels were known on Lake Erie since 1818, the trip overland from New York City to Buffalo was both lengthy and expensive. The main route west for settlers was the easily navigable Ohio River,

miles south of Michigan. Oakland County's settlers, largely New Yorkers and the New Englanders, came with the completion of the Erie Canal in 1826. By the 1830s, thousands of hearty settlers would use this route to speed their journey westward.

Once begun, Oakland County's settlement continued at a phenomenal rate. The county was organized in 1820 with fewer than twenty families, but by the 1830 Federal census, there were 4,910 people, and by 1840, 23,646 people.

Following county organization, townships were platted. Southfield Township was among the earliest. Transactions in 1821 linked the Township with the educator John Monteith and the French merchant Peter Desnoyer. It is doubtful if either ever saw the property. Each purchased the land for speculation or investment.

The first settler in Southfield Township was John Daniels, who in 1824 purchased property in Section 4. Franklin Village, which lies in Sections 5 through 8 of Southfield Township, was settled later that same year

In 1824, Dillucena Stoughton purchased the east half of the northeast quarter of Section 6 (the area roughly bounded by the present Fourteen Mile Road, Franklin Road and Scenic Road) and built a house the following year. Elijah Bullock joined Stoughton in 1825, purchasing the 240 acres west of Franklin Road between Fourteen Mile Road and the Cemetery.

The clearing and establishing of a settlement took great effort, usually achieved through the cooperation of neighbors and family. Bullock arrived with four sons, and his son-in-law, George Gage. Stoughton was soon joined by his father, Amaziah Stoughton, Sr., and four brothers, William, Amaziah, Jr., Charles, and James, who settled in the southwest corner of Section 6 (present Thirteen Mile and Inkster Roads).

Dr. Ebenezer Raynale arrived in the Stoughton and Bullock Settlement (as it was then known) and established his medical practice early in 1828. He was the only physician among widely scattered homesteads. Raynale obtained the establishment of a Franklin Village post office in the winter of



1828, having himself named postmaster. Mail was distributed along with his calls on the sick.

The fledging community of 1828-29 contained nine families with skills including the doctor, Raynale; a blacksmith, Henry S. Smith; a carpenter joiner, Richard Bignall; a mason and bricklayer, Dorus Morton; and a shoemaker, Harvey Lee. Within a decade of the settlement of the Village, the roster of businesses included flour and feed mills, lumber mill, brick and tile yard, wagon shop and sleigh maker, cooperage, distillery, and small factories or shops that produced soap, harnesses, shoes and boots.

### **Growth of the Village**

An important moment in Franklin's development was the prospect of a railroad. In 1830 a charter was granted to the Pontiac and Detroit Railroad Company, granting the right to build a line between those cities. This was the first charter in not only Michigan, but also the entire Northwest Territory.

Methods of construction and materials were not perfected, the terrain was difficult, and the tools primitive. The track from Detroit to Royal Oak took four years to lay. From there to Pontiac, two routes were proposed. One paralleled the Saginaw Trail northward through Birmingham, contending with the lowland and hills. An alternate route, it is thought, was proposed to go through Franklin to Orchard Lake and on to the county seat. In Franklin, a lot was set aside for the proposed depot. Although Birmingham was much smaller than Franklin, the commissioner decided to construct the Birmingham route.

With the completion of the line, Birmingham prospered and grew at a tremendous rate. Franklin, bypassed by the rail line and removed from any major road, settled back into a contented, quiet existence.

1828 saw the erection of the first frame house in the village, that of Henry Smith, and the establishment of a school under the charge of Miss Sophia Gotie. In 1829, Dillucena Stoughton built a brick house, which was not only the first of its kind in the Township, but is reputed to be so for the county. The bricks made of Franklin River

Clay came from Bigelow's kiln, less than a mile west in Farmington. Dorus Morton built the house in exchange for property on which to build his own house. This bartering or trading of goods and services was characteristic of early settlements and settlers.

Improvements continued in the settlement, keeping pace with the increasing settlement. In about 1840 Dr. Raynale, now with an established practice, returned to Pennsylvania for a wife. Although his absence was only for 25 days, he found upon his return that forty families had come in and settled within four miles of Franklin.

Elijah Bullock built the first public house, a log structure, in 1830. The same year William Houston of New York opened the first Village store. Bullock countered with a store of his own the next year above his tavern.

Peter Van Every moved to Franklin from Detroit in 1837, purchasing Dorus Morton's property. Van Every constructed a grist mill on the river north of town. For a number of years, attempts at milling further upstream had failed, but Van Every's venture proved successful.



For a time Every's was the only grist mill in Oakland County where a farmer could sell wheat for money. Water was delivered by a long millrace from the upstream dam to a wooden undershot wheel. Along the south bank a wooden spillway was constructed. The wheel was replaced in the 1920's by James Flynn who installed a giant overshot waterwheel, which is still in seasonal use to grind and press apples for cider.

By 1877, the size and composition of the Village had undergone very little change. At that time a church, schoolhouse, post office, temperance hotel, two flour mills, three general stores, a drug store, a hardware, tin shop, four blacksmiths and two wagonmakers were located in the Village. These businesses served the scattered farms around the Township. For other items, farmers and settlers journeyed to Pontiac, two hours away by horse and wagon.

## **The Automobile Age**

Life in the Village had no reason to change until the advent of the automobile and the subsequent construction of improved highways. By 1920, both cars and roads were improved to the point that it was possible to work in Detroit and live as far away as Southern Oakland County.

In the 1920's, a local developer laid out a plan calling for curving roads and large single-family lots. Building restrictions were established to maintain a high quality of construction.

Steady growth along these lines has continued to occur. In addition, many residents have moved into older houses in the Village, enthusiastically restoring or building new additions, often modeled on older lines. Gradually, however, the character of the Village Center began to change. Private residences were converted into offices or stores. Older buildings were demolished and replaced by nondescript ones. As a result, a committee appointed by the Village Council set out in 1971 to implement some method of preserving the early character of the Village. Their efforts resulted in the designation of the Franklin Village Center as one of the first registered Historical Districts in the State of Michigan (see Map 3: Historical Properties).

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROFILE**

The natural context refers to those ecological systems that describe the physical and biological character of an area. Geology, physiography, soil

characteristics, hydrology, and vegetation are all important factors in Franklin Village, and each plays an important role in both the visual character of the Village and the quality of life. It is important to understand that these factors exist in relation to each other and, in combination, affect the overall capacity of the environment to accommodate development and change.

A variety of local ordinances have been adopted to protect these resources and natural features, including floodplains, wetlands, and wooded areas.

## **Geology**

The surface geology of the Franklin Village area is entirely of Wisconsin glacial origin. Glacial ice covered the region as recently as 13,000 years ago and waters of the Maumee and Whittlesey glacial lakes occupied parts of the region even more recently. Franklin Village straddles the boundary zone between the Inner Defiance morainic upland and the Maumee Whittlesey lake plain.









Within the morainic zone, large blocks of ice that broke off from the glacier, became buried, and eventually melted formed small depressions, or kettles. These kettles tend to be poorly drained and often intercept the groundwater table, creating small lakes.

The lake plain consists of well-sorted sandy and clayey sediments 150 to 200 feet thick. Most of the lake plain has a veneer of clay and sandy clays. As the lakes receded, bars and beach ridges remained to mark former shorelines. These features provide relief in the otherwise gentle plain, but more importantly, they consist of well-drained sands and gravels.

Before the glacial lakes inundated the area to the southeast, extensive deposits of till were laid down by the glacial ice. These deposits were then covered by a clay veneer of lacustrine origin. It is this mantling of clay deposits which is responsible for the poor soil percolation characteristics of the southeast area.

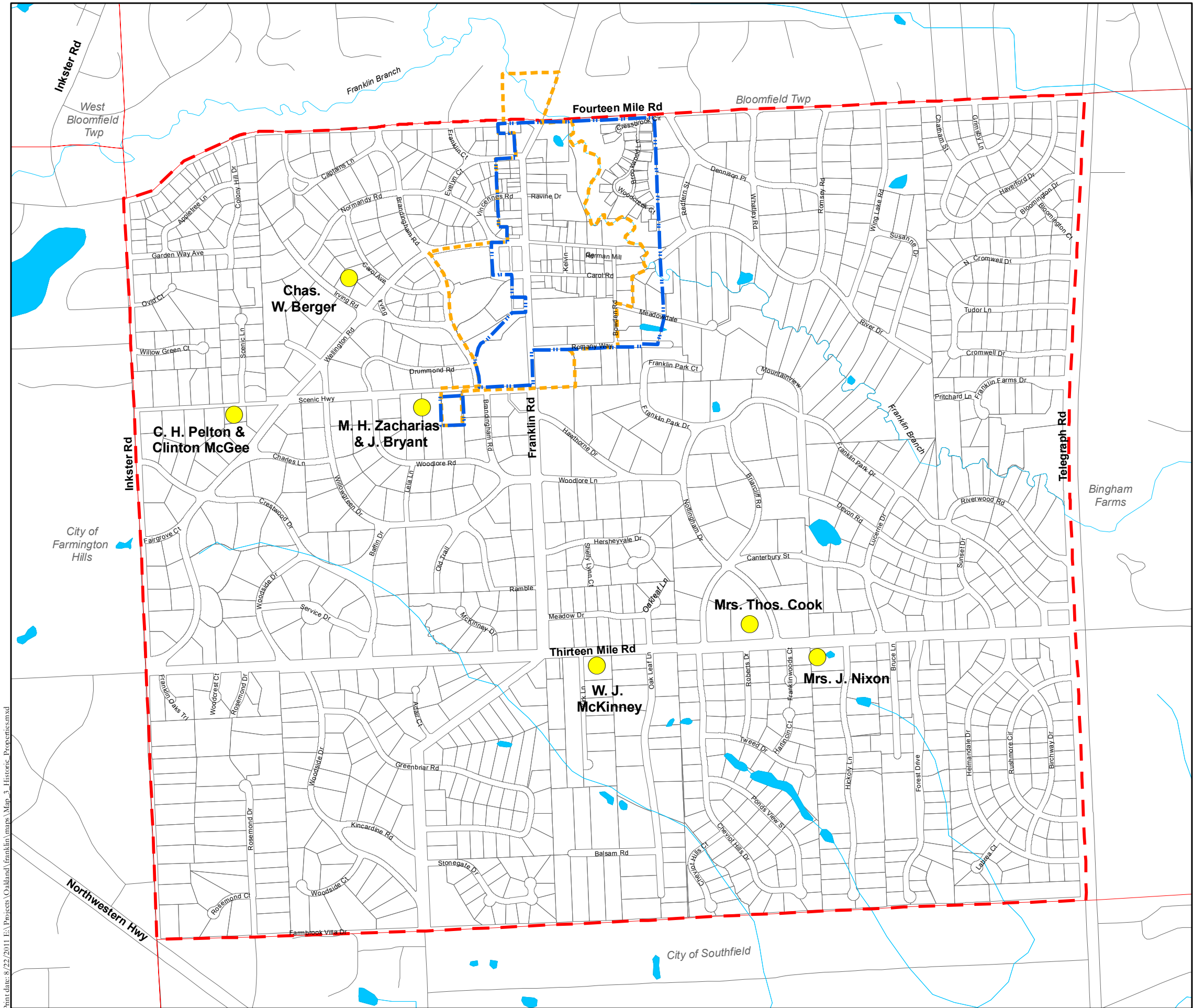
# Map 3 Historical Properties

## Village of Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan

-  Believed to be First Settlers
-  Local Historic District
-  National Historic District
-  Franklin Boundary
-  Surrounding Municipalities
-  Parcels
-  Roads
-  Hydrology

Base Map Data Source: Oakland County GIS, 1st Quarter 2006.  
Historical Data Sources: Village of Franklin Historic District Design Guidelines and Village of Franklin Master Plan Update, 1997.

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Feet



Three bedrock formations underlie the extensive glacial deposits of Franklin Village.

These bedrock formations are not known to be near the surface anywhere in Franklin Village. Therefore, they do not present any significant environmental problems or opportunities for the Village.

Coldwater and Sunbury shale underlie the northwest portion of the Village. Both of these groups are members of the Marshall formation, which is the most consistently reliable source of water among the formations in the region.

Most of the Village is underlain by the 140-foot thick Berea formation. This sandstone has low permeability and is not a good source for large water supplies, although in many places it will yield sufficient water for small domestic supplies.

## **Physiography**

Franklin Village is characterized by a sharply contrasting topography that reflects the effects of the Wisconsin glacial period. The western and northern portion of the Village is a rolling, often rugged morainic upland, while the eastern and southern portion is predominantly a level lake and till plain (see Map 4: General Relief).

Elevations range from over 850 feet above sea level in the morainic zone to about 700 feet above sea level on the plain. Except for some subtle rises associated with former beach lines, relief on the plain is virtually unnoticeable. Within the upland, however, relief of as much as 100 feet is common, resulting in numerous steep slopes generally ranging from twenty to forty percent. Considerable relief also exists where the Franklin River abuts morainic ridges.

## **Soils**

Most soils in the Franklin Village area are derived from the parent glacial deposits and from the lacustrine sediments of the glacial lakes. Sands and loamy sands predominate in the morainic northwest portion of the Village, whereas silts and silt loams predominate in the southeast lake plain. Muck soils are found in poorly drained lowlands. The floodplain of the Franklin River is generally comprised of alluvial soils, which are compositionally diverse.

A soil survey of the Village was conducted by the US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. The Soils map (Map 5) is based on this survey. As shown, most of the Village, particularly to the north and west, is dominated by the Arkport loamy fine sand. Except on steep slopes, this soil has few to no limitations for septic fields or building development. Some of the loamy sands in the northwest pose septic limitations because of excessively rapid percolation.

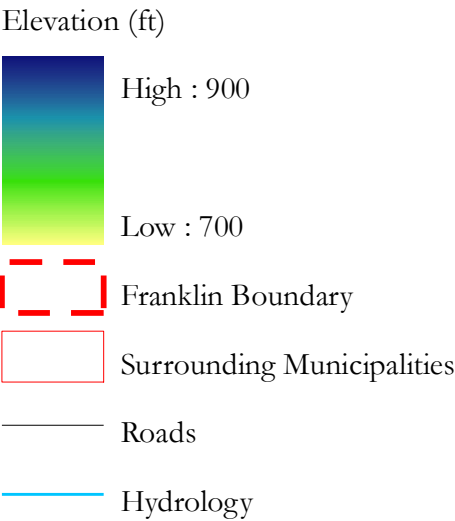
The Blount and Lenawee silt loams predominate in the east and southeast areas. These soils tend to be poorly drained, having slow percolation rates and high groundwater tables and posing severe limitations for conventional septic tank systems. Other silt loams in the southeast area have no serious limitations for development.

Since steep slopes, often up to forty percent, characterize an appreciable area of Franklin Village, the potential exists for serious soil erosion. Although the sandy soils of the morainic area tend to be the most erodible, all soil types in steep slopes may undergo serious erosion if revegetated. Moreover, soils that are inclined in slopes of twenty-four percent or more have limited utility as private septic drain field sites.



# Map 4 General Relief

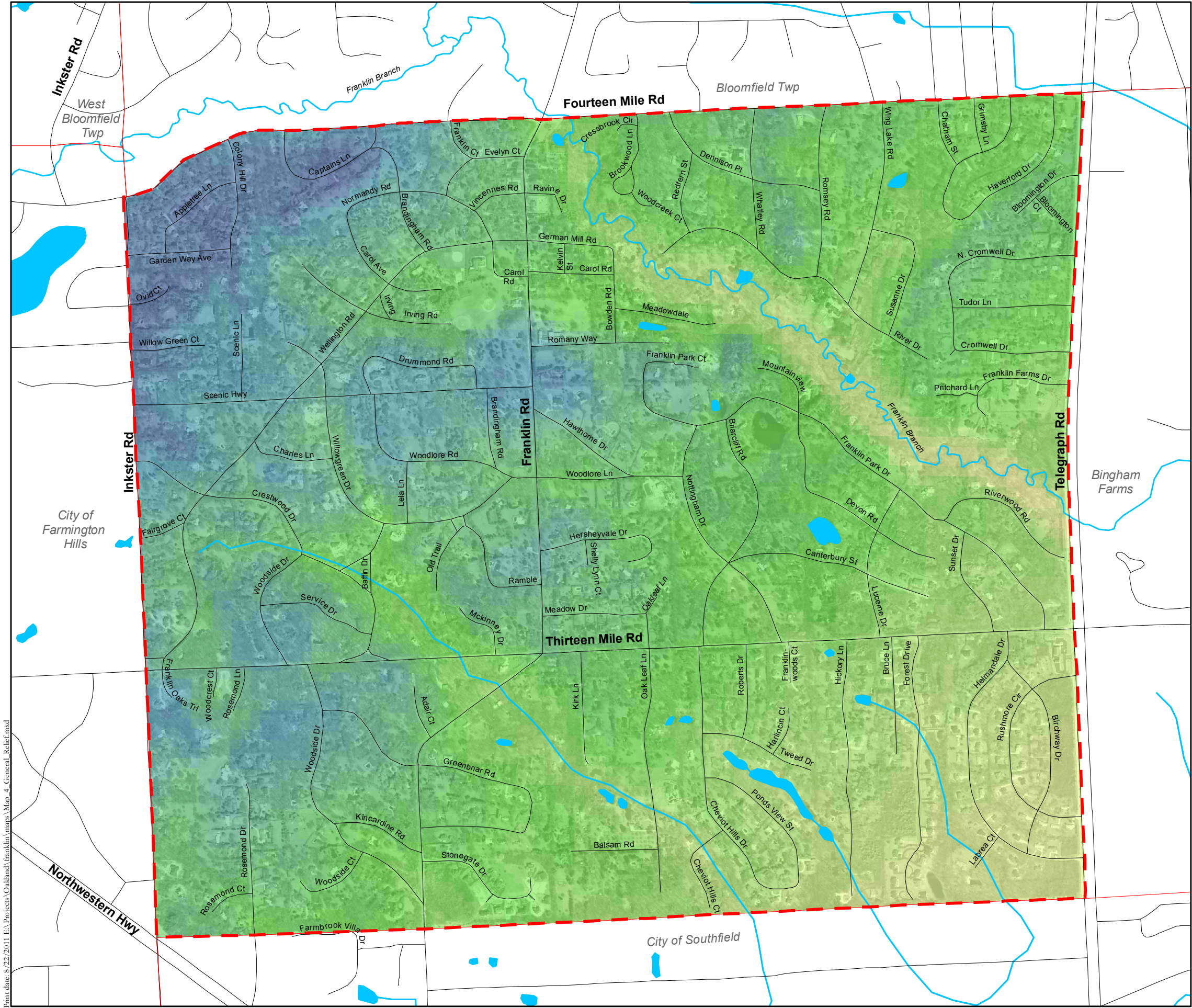
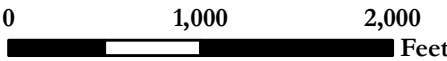
## Village of Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan



Base Map Data Source: Oakland County GIS, 1st Quarter 2006.

Elevation Data: Digital Elevation Model, Oakland County, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, May 2006.

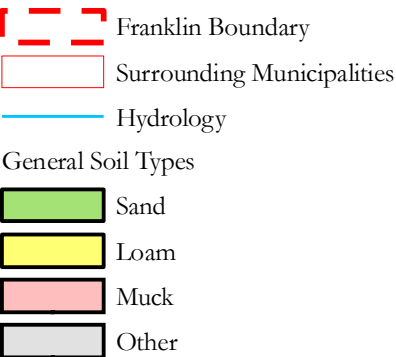
Aerial Photo: Oakland County GIS, 2002.





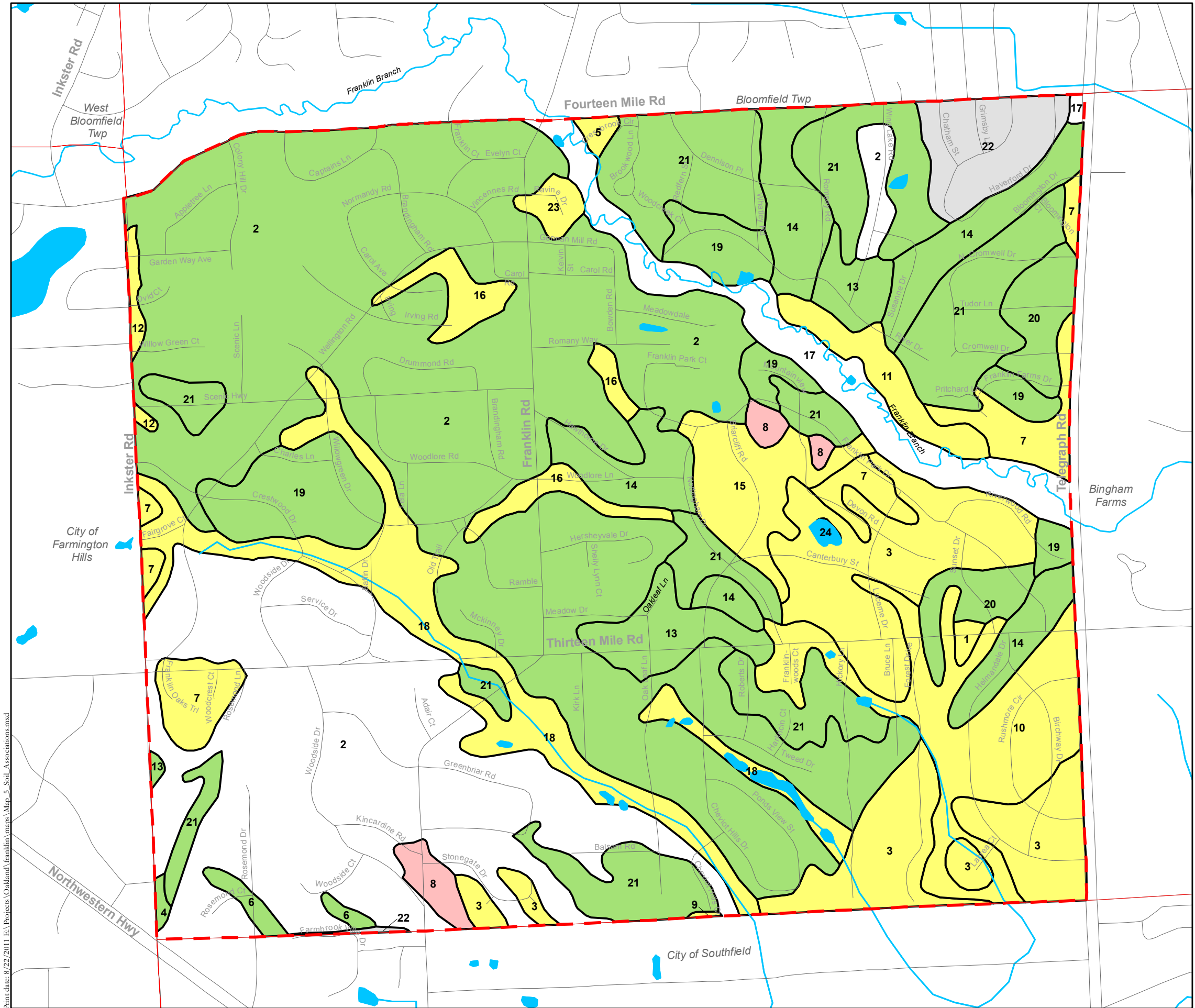
# Map 5 Soil Types

## Village of Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan



Label	Soil Type
1	Aquents
2	Arkport loamy fine sand
3	Blount loam
4	Dixboro loamy fine sand
5	Gilford sandy loam
6	Granby loamy sand
7	Gynwood loam
8	Houghton and Adrian mucks
9	Kibbie fine sandy loam
10	Lenawee silty day loam
11	Marlette loam
12	Marlette sandy loam
13	Oakville fine sand
14	Oshtemo-Boyer loamy sand
15	Owosso sandy loam
16	Sebewa loam
18	Sloan silt loam
17	Sloan-Marlette
19	Spinks loamy sand
20	Tedrow loamy sand
21	Thetford loamy fine sand
22	Urban land
23	Wasepi sandy loam
24	Water

Base Map Data Source: Oakland County GIS, 1st Quarter 2006.  
Soil Data: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, USDA Soil Survey, Oakland County.





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# Map 6 Environmental Features

Village of Franklin,  
Oakland County, Michigan

## Wetland Type

- Emergent
- Forested
- Scrub-Shrub

## Flood Plains

- 100 Year
- 500 Year

## Slope Gradient (%)

- 0-10
- 11-20
- 21-30

- Franklin Boundary
- Surrounding Municipalities
- Hydrology

Base Map Data Source: Oakland County GIS, 1st Quarter 2006.  
Aerial Photo: Oakland County GIS, 2002.  
Environmental Data: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Oakland County USDA Soil Survey, National Wetland Inventory, and FEMA Flood Plains.

0 1,000 2,000  
Feet

**McKenna**  
ASSOCIATES  
INCORPORATED



03/07/2007



## Hydrology

The major surface hydrologic feature of Franklin Village is the Franklin River branch of the River Rouge. Most of the drainage basin of the stream is in Bloomfield and West Bloomfield Townships, and its headwaters are near the community of Orchard Lake. The stream enters the River Rouge about two miles south of the Village limits.

Although most of the Franklin River watershed is urban or urbanizing, the River and its floodplain retain a highly natural character. Three factors - the absence of sewage treatment plants, the close relationship of wetland and lakes to the River, and the basically undisturbed nature of the floodplain - are largely responsible for this condition. Within the Village itself, the River and its floodplain constitute a locally unsurpassed natural system.

The Franklin River floodplain is shown on Map 6, Environmental Features. The floods used to delimit the floodplain boundary have approximate recurrence intervals of 100 and 500 years, or about 1 and 0.2 percent chances, respectively, of occurring in any given year.

The Franklin River floodplain through the Village is generally topographically confined by steep valley walls. Floods of a much larger magnitude than that of the mapped flood would be contained within these valley walls. Development has encroached on the floodplain in only one area within the Village.

Field evidence suggests that minor-to-moderate flooding with a rise in the River of about five feet occurs frequently, and that such flooding is more common now than in the past. With further urbanization and structuring of county drains, such as the Edwards Drain, these flood peaks will continue to increase. These large flows will accelerate the erosion of the valley walls and as sediment loads are reduced following development, the stream will entrench its channel.

Several stream systems also drain Franklin Village. Most are small and several have been impounded to create ponds. Others flow through Village wetlands. All of the streams have the capacity to flood, but floodplains on such small streams are difficult to determine. Additional development

will increase the flows of these streams and the importance of their floodplains. Their environmental quality also depends on the maintenance of natural channels and floodplains.



One method to evaluate and rank the importance of stream and creek systems is to rank them by the number of tributaries or the drainage area for each stream segment. Streams are ranked according to the following measures:

- ❑ Flow Characteristics - Steady or not - perennial.
- ❑ Status of Water Quality based on a visual evaluation.
- ❑ Quality of Vegetation along channel banks and floodplain.
- ❑ Overall Natural Character or quality of the stream channel.

The hydrology indicates a rough dimension on either side of the thread (or center) of the stream to approximate a rough floodplain.

The various wetlands of Franklin Village are also delineated on the Environmental Features Map. In addition to the impoundments on the small creeks, some of the kettle depressions contain sloughs. Other areas in the lake plain zone have groundwater tables at or near the surface through most of the year and could be classified as swamps.

In many parts of the lake plain section of the Village, poor drainage results from impermeable clay lenses. The high groundwater situation can be

serious because it leads to failing septic tanks, contamination of groundwater, basement problems, and excessive frost cracking. Soil conditions or percolation tests which seem suitable for septic installation in some years or seasons are very unsuitable in other years or seasons as the groundwater table varies to reflect antecedent precipitation. Thus, very careful site and near-site investigations need to be undertaken before any development is permitted in these high groundwater areas.

Private individual wells provide the domestic water supply in the Village. Most of the wells in the northwest sector of the Village tap the till deposits of the Inner Defiance moraine at a median depth of 120 feet. Production from these wells averages 30 gallons per minute, which is adequate for domestic purposes. However, the yields are variable given the highly diverse sand-clay-gravel character of glacial till.

In the lake plain section of the Village, wells are generally less than 100 feet deep and yield an average 20 gallons per minute, although the yield may vary considerably. The lower yields of this section are largely attributable to the silt and clay deposits of the lake plain. These deposits have very low permeability and, as such, are incapable of providing large quantities of water.

The mineral content of the groundwater tends to be high. High iron and chloride levels make the water hard to very hard. This condition does not vary significantly with depth or geologic material. The high chloride levels are due to natural conditions rather than groundwater pollution.

## **Vegetation**

Most of the natural vegetation of Franklin Village has been severely disturbed by residential development. Clearing in the mid-1900s removed large stands of mature trees. Scattered areas of significant natural vegetation remain. They have been mapped according to major structural units and community vegetation types as of 1976.

The structural units of natural vegetation include mature woods, plantations, brush, and wetland groups. The mature, secondary growth woods are concentrated in three zones, all of which reflect

severe development constraints. The first zone consists of the floodplain areas of the Franklin River and several major drainages. The very steep slopes of the morainic western part of the Village make up the second zone, while the high groundwater table areas of the southeast lake plain constitute the third zone. Brush and wetland groups are scattered throughout the Village.

Community-type delineations have been based on species composition where sufficient information was available. Typically, two types dominate: oak-hickory communities in the upland morainic areas, and floodplain communities alternately dominated by basswood, elm, red maple and green ash in stream valleys and lowland areas.

Since soil moisture variations largely determine species dominance, some wooded zones vary markedly in their composition over very short distances. A community type determination in these areas is difficult to make, thus we have mapped these areas as mixed communities.

The brush cover types typically consist of invasions of old fields by seedlings from nearby woodlots or legacies from previous agricultural use. Depending on drainage characteristics, their species dominance ranges from hawthorn and cherry on drier sites to willow and cottonwood on wetter sites. Variations within the wetland vegetation types reflect the depth and duration of standing water. The cattail and reed marshes have the greatest depth and duration of standing water. Swampy areas covered by dogwood, willow, cottonwood, and alder are typically covered by water in the spring but have a relatively high groundwater table throughout the year.

Much of the natural vegetation in the Village was in areas that should have been reserved from development for floodplain or wetland preservation and to protect Franklin's rural character. Efforts should be made to protect remaining existing vegetation.

While much of the vegetation that plays an important role in Franklin's rural character is natural, much is also ornamental, planted in yards following home construction. This urban forest stand is reaching maturity and needs to be inter-planted with new trees.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### Population

At the time of its incorporation in 1954, the Village had an estimated population of 959 persons. Growth during the remainder of the 1950's was steady as the Village attracted substantial numbers of new residents. By 1960, more than 2,200 people resided in Franklin

Village. An additional forty-six percent increase in population occurred between 1960 and 1970.

After 1970, the rapid population growth experienced during the previous two decades ceased. Lower birth rates and an increasing scarcity of developable land in the Village helped account for the decline in the area's rate of population growth (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Franklin Village Population Growth**

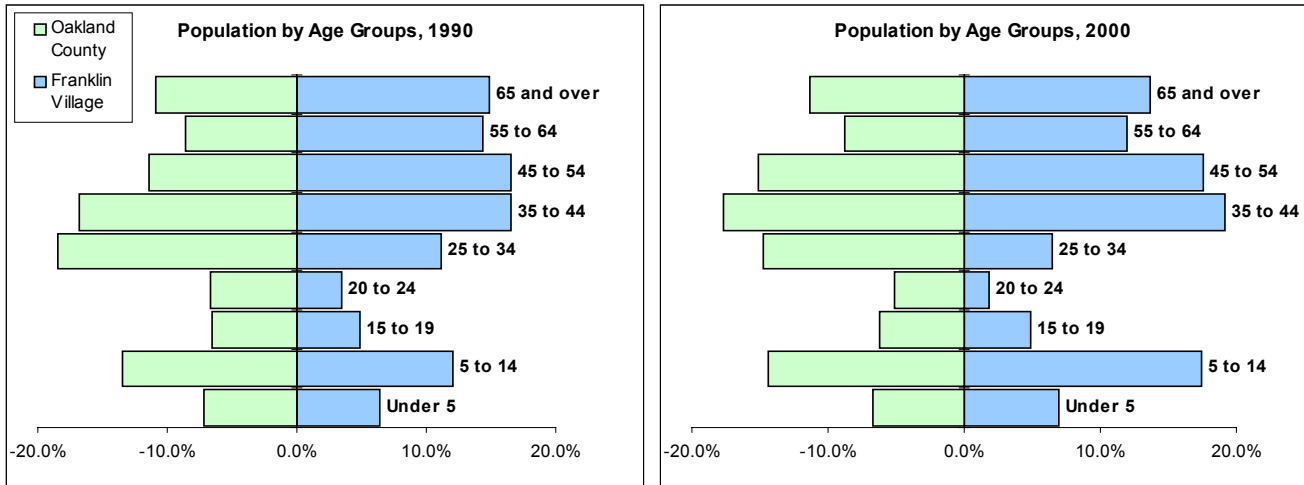
Year	Population	Percent Change
1954	959	
1960	2,262	136%
1970	3,311	46%
1980	2,864	-14%
1990	2,626	-8%
2000	2,937	12%
2005 (estimate)	3,010	2%
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau; SEMCOG</i>		

Franklin's population declined to 2,626 by 1990, and increased to 2,937 in 2000. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) estimated the 2005 population of Franklin at 3,010, a slight increase over 2000, but projects it to decline to about 2,793 by the year 2030. This decline will likely be due to an anticipated continuation of a decline in the size of households. The number of households increased slightly between 1990 and 2000, from 975 to 1,073 and is projected by SEMCOG to increase ever so slightly to 1,103 by 2030. There were 1,118 housing units in 2000, according to the U.S. Census. According to the Oakland County Assessing Department, there are 115 vacant residential lots and 11 vacant condominium units/lots in the Village in 2005. These vacant lots may or may not be buildable.

The number of persons per household was 2.94 in 1980, 2.69 in 1990, and 2.73 in 2000. SEMCOG

estimated the number of persons per households at 2.71 in 2005 and projects the number to continue to decline to 2.52 by 2030. The result of a limited amount of developable land, a small increase in the number of new homes and a declining household size will likely result in a very small increase in the number of people living in Franklin in the future.

Franklin's population is older than many communities. When compared with Oakland County, Franklin Village's population composition is older (see Figure 1). The County's composition comes close to representing the population composition of the nation. The Village has proportionately more middle-aged (35-54 years) people than Oakland County. As a result, the median age in Franklin Village (41.7 years) is higher than for the County (36.7 years). These comparisons indicate that families in the Village tend to be older than average.

**Figure 1: Population by Age Groups in 1990 and 2000**

Additional stability and maturity in the Village is evident when length of residence statistics is reviewed. For example, approximately 63% percent of Franklin residents moved into their home before 1994.<sup>1</sup> Historically, those families who have elected to reside in the area came mainly from Detroit or the northern suburbs.

While providing public services for an influx of new people is not going to be an issue for Franklin, maintaining the character and quality of life of the Village will be a challenge. High demand for new, upper end housing in Oakland County has resulted in several new subdivisions in Franklin. Some of these developments were made possible by the construction of sanitary sewers in Franklin, while others became available when families that held the land for many years sold. In addition, many existing homes have been enlarged and others razed with new, larger homes built in their place.

These changes threaten to erode the rural character of Franklin. With development comes loss of tree cover, increased traffic, and fewer homes on large, spacious lots.

Other indicators that are important in describing Franklin Village's social composition are education, occupational status, and income.

<sup>1</sup> Census 2000

## Education

The Village surpassed the County in percent of persons over 25 years of age who are high school graduates or higher, percent with bachelor's degree and percent with a graduate or professional degree in 2000 (See Table 2)

## Employment

The educational achievements of Franklin's residents have allowed them to assume an unusually high number of professional and managerial positions. In 1980, for example, more people in Franklin Village were employed in managerial, professional, and specialty occupations than any other category. By 1990, some significant shifts in occupational employment had occurred. Slightly less people were employed as professionals and managers by this time. More people were employed in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations.

A change in statistical methods used by the Census Bureau in the 1990s means that employment data cannot be directly compared between 1990 and 2000. The 2000 data show, however, that Franklin Village still had a high percentage of professional and management workers (see Table 3).

**Table 2: Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years or Older in Franklin Village, 2000**

	Percent High School Degree or Higher	Percent Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Percent Graduate or Professional Degree
Franklin Village	96.3	71.1	37.8
Oakland County	89.3	38.2	15.0
State of Michigan	83.4	21.8	8.1

*Source: US Census, 2000, SEMCOG*

**Table 3: Labor Force Characteristics for Franklin Village, 2000**

Occupation	Total	% of Total
Management, professional, and related occupations	951	69.1%
Service occupations	51	3.7%
Sales and office occupations	306	22.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0	0%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	25	1.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	44	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Census 2000, SEMCOG*

The educational and occupational status held by many individuals in the Village is reflected in the median family income for Franklin. By way of comparison, Franklin's median family income in 2000 was \$139,339; roughly two times greater than Oakland County's \$75,540. Per capita income statistics show roughly comparable results with Franklin at \$71,033 and Oakland County at \$32,534.<sup>2</sup>

## Economy

### Commercial Development

Franklin Village's commercial sector is quite limited. In terms of retail trade, only about 20 establishments exist in the Village Center. Most of the establishments are sole proprietorships.<sup>3</sup> There are currently 60 businesses that hold business licenses in the Village.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Census 2000

<sup>3</sup> Oakland County Planning Commission, Economic Development Division, November 1974

<sup>4</sup> Franklin Village Records

Due to the availability of abundant commercial facilities surrounding the Village, residents of Franklin do most of their shopping and entertaining-beyond the limits of the Village. Most businesses in Franklin's Center do not own the buildings in which they are located and many buildings are owned by outsiders. These businesses rely on outsiders as well as Village residents for their clientele.

### Tax Base

Cities and municipalities in Michigan rely primarily on taxes levied on real and personal property for revenue. Moneys that are collected as a result of taxing policies are then used to provide public services that are in demand by the communities' residents. Usually the bulk of an area's tax dollars come from industrial and commercial enterprises. Residential taxes, by comparison, are generally substantial but tend to supplement the larger tax dollar received from business.

In the case of Franklin Village, these relationships do not hold. There is no industry in the Village;

and commercial and office development is limited. Due largely to the lack of extensive suitable building sites, these land use conditions are not likely to change. The Village has relied and will continue to rely on a tax base founded on residential properties.

In order to maintain pace with increasing costs and greater demand for facilities in the Village, the rise in state equalized valuation on real and personal property has been substantial over the years. Of course, homeowners have been called upon to absorb a high percentage of the increased valuations. Since 1969, state equalized valuation (SEV) of real and personal property has increased for Franklin as follows in Table 4:

<b>Table 4: Franklin Village State Equalized Value of Real and Personal Property</b>	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>S. E. V.</b>
1969	\$18,007,215
1977	\$35,049,146 <sup>5</sup>
1984	\$73,682,400
1996	\$155,596,270
2005	\$389,310,400

Reportedly, the state equalized valuation of real and personal property was just short of \$11,000,000 in 1960.

It is not likely Franklin Village will undergo a major land use transition for many years, if at all. The stability of the households, the general maturity of the families that are attracted to the Village, and correspondingly high incomes all suggest that a major change is unlikely. Presumably, then, current residential structures will continue to be reassessed at higher rates as the cost of living and demand for services increases.

Although Franklin Village can expect to rely on residential land uses for the bulk of its tax dollars, the Village's tax rates compare favorably with neighboring municipalities (See Table 5). Funding for improvements discussed in this plan will be sought from outside sources. However it is expected that Franklin residents will bear most of the financial responsibility.

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<sup>5</sup> Information obtained from Assessment Records, June 1977.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE PROFILE**

### **Community Facilities**

Since the original settlement of the Village in 1825, community facilities have been an important element in Franklin. A post office was the first facility to serve the Village and surrounding four townships at that time and has since been joined by schools, recreation areas, a library and police and fire facilities.

Table 6 lists community facilities and quasi-public facilities owned by the village.

### Schools

Franklin Village is included within the Birmingham School District, which serves communities in the surrounding area. Public schools that are primarily used by children of Franklin residents include the West Maple Elementary School located at Maple Road and Inkster Road, Berkshire Middle School located at Fourteen Mile Road and Lahser, and Wylie E. Groves Senior High School located on Thirteen Mile Road. The adequacy of these facilities can best be evaluated when compared to the following general guidelines:

#### Elementary School

- ❑ 1 mile maximum walking distance
- ❑ 400-700 student capacity
- ❑ One acre/100 pupils; 5-acre minimum

#### Junior High School

- ❑ 1.5 mile maximum walking distance
- ❑ 800-1,200 student capacity
- ❑ One acre/100 pupils; 15-acre minimum

#### Senior High School

- ❑ 1.5 mile maximum walking distance
- ❑ 2,000-2,100 optimum student capacity – maximum capacity 2,400
- ❑ One acre/100 pupils; 25-acre minimum

<b>Table 5: 2004 Tax Rates, In Mills</b>			
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>LOCAL Taxes per \$1,000 of Assessed Value</b>	<b>TOTAL Homestead Taxes per \$1,000 of Assessed Value**</b>	<b>TOTAL Non-Homestead Taxes per \$1,000 of Assessed Value**</b>
Southfield Township	0.5500	28.5779 to 38.0599	37.1354 to 38.0599
Village of Bingham Farms	7.3962*	35.9741 to 45.4561	44.5316 to 45.4561
City of Bloomfield Hills	8.3000	34.4864 to 36.3279	44.0854 to 44.8854
West Bloomfield Township	9.3694	28.6548 to 37.3973	43.6848 to 49.3248
Village of Franklin	9.5020*	38.0799	46.6374
City of Farmington Hills	11.4038	31.8033 to 38.5658	46.9580 to 49.8092
Bloomfield Township	11.5495	27.8649 to 39.5774	45.8649 to 52.7649
Village of Beverly Hills	13.0221*	41.6000	50.1575
City of Birmingham	16.0231	32.3385 to 44.0510	50.3385 to 52.6085
Average	9.8629	33.2644 to 39.9017	45.4882 to 47.7449

\* Landowners of villages also pay Southfield Township taxes.

\*\* Rates listed as a range are reflective of multiple school districts being present.

<b>Table 6: Franklin Community Facilities and Open Spaces in 2000</b>		
<i>Please Note: All Sizes Are Rough Estimates</i>		
<b>Publicly Owned Facilities</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size</b>
Broughton House	32325 Franklin Road	First Floor 1700 sq. ft.
Franklin Library	32455 Franklin Road	1600 sq. ft.
Franklin Police Station	32311 Franklin Road	
<b>Publicly Owned and Quasi-Public Facilities*</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size</b>
Derwich Property	26165 13 Mile Road	5 acres
Village Green	32455 Franklin Road	240' by 225' (54,000 sq. ft.)
Broughton House Land	32455 Franklin Road	Irregular Shape 130' by 285'
Lot	On Bowden	81-Foot River Frontage
Park	Wellington	Irregular Shape 250' by 210'
Park	Irving	Irregular Shape 600' by 160'
Park	Circle On Service Dr. Between Crestwood & Woodside	140-Foot Diameter
Traffic Island	By Baffin	Triangle Shape 172' by 207' by 200'
Traffic Island	On Captain's Lane	Triangle Shape 150' by 125' by 125'
Traffic Island	On Irving	Triangle Shape 106' by 86' by 112'
Traffic Island	On Rosemond	Teardrop Shape 100' by 25'
Cemetery	Franklin At Scenic	442' by 366' Plus Land Purchased
Fire House	32707 Franklin Rd.	50' by 125' Lot



**Table 6, continued**

**Properties Identified by the Facilities and Open Space Committee as Possibly Being Owned by the Village**

*Please Note: The Committee Has Not Confirmed Ownership*

**PROPERTIES IDENTIFIED IN TAX RECORDS AS BEING OWNED BY THE VILLAGE**

Traffic Island On Captain's Lane	Sidwell # 24-06-128-001
Shown On Plat Maps As Traffic Island At The Northeast Corner Of Wellington And Irving, But One Part Of Road Never Developed.	Sidwell # 24-06-179-001
Village Green	Sidwell # 24-06-253-024
Land On South Side Of Irving Between Ball Fields And Wellington	Sidwell # 24-06-255-001
Land With Broughton House And Part Of What Has Been Considered FCA Property	Sidwell # 24-06-257-020
Land Between Broughton House And The Cemetery And Part Of What Has Been Considered FCA Property	Sidwell # 24-06-257-021
Land On Bowden Donated By Madon Green	Sidwell # 24-06-279-002

**PROPERTY WITH OWNER LISTED AS "UNKNOWN"**

Identified On Plat Maps As "Park". Located On East Side Of Wellington North Of 13 Mile	Sidwell # 24-06-352-006
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**PROPERTIES NOT LISTED IN THE TAX ROLLS, POSSIBLY OWNED BY VILLAGE**

Identified On Plat Maps As 'Park'	Sidwell # 24-06-376-006
Identified On Plat Maps As 'Park'	Sidwell # 24-06-377-001

Based upon these guidelines and the standards of the Birmingham School District, the public schools serving Village residents have sufficient capacity to serve the Village needs and to meet the standards of the National Education Association, the American Public Health Association, and the National Council on Schoolhouse Construction. However, young children do not have the opportunity to walk to school from any location within the Village.

### Recreation

Both local and regional recreation facilities are available for use by the residents of Franklin Village. Local recreation facilities include playfields, and the Village Green. Regional facilities that are convenient to the Village include Pontiac Lake Recreation Area, Highland Recreation Area, Marshbank Park, and Kensington Metropolitan Park. In addition to

these public facilities, various private opportunities like the Franklin Racquet Club are available for use.

The regional facilities within a 15-mile service radius of Franklin provide for the major recreation needs of the Village. According to National Recreation and Parks Association Standards, approximately five acres of local recreation area, including playgrounds, neighborhood parks and playfields, should be provided for a population of 1,000 people. Based upon these standards, approximately 15 acres of local recreation area should be provided within the Village. Approximately 6 acres are currently provided by Franklin Community Association land and the Village Green.

During the past decade, Village residents have expressed that they cherish the little open space and recreational area that the Village enjoys. While

residents seem to understand that there are no large open spaces available within the Village to develop as recreational space, many residents have expressed that they want to have paths for biking and walking.

### Library

The Franklin Library is owned by the public, supported by taxes, and administered by an elected Board of Trustees. It has approximately 14,400 volumes. The Library expanded into space formerly occupied by the Village offices, and has reference and study area for students, children, and adults.

### **Utilities (Water Supply and Waste Water Disposal)**

Franklin Village historically has relied on its natural resources to provide potable water supplies and disposal of its wastes. Private individual wells and public sanitary sewers serve village residents. Many homes are still on individual septic systems. As the Village experiences land use changes, two planning factors that affect natural resources have become important.

First, the ability of geologic aquifers to provide potable water supplies to the community is dependent upon the limitations of the aquifer and the existence of any land uses or activities that may affect the quality and quantity of groundwater. If groundwater supplies were depleted or rendered non-potable because of pollution, the introduction of a public system that treats and distributes potable water to local residents may become a necessity.

Presently, most Village residents rely on private individual wells to provide domestic water supplies. These groundwater supplies are adequate. However, the quality and quantity of groundwater supplies will vary with the location of the well and the source of groundwater. Sources of groundwater in Franklin include the geologic overburden, as well as the bedrock formations. The capabilities of these water supply sources are identified in the groundwater hydrology section.

Public supplies of domestic water are also readily available through the Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority. The Authority currently provides water to a service area that includes Southfield Township. It is, therefore, obligated to provide water supplies to both Franklin Village and Bingham Farms.

Presently, the Detroit Metropolitan Water Authority has constructed a 60 inch main in Inkster Road between Eight Mile Road and Fourteen Mile Road, and the Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority has extended a 30 inch main along Twelve Mile Road from Inkster Road to Telegraph Road and a main along 14 Mile Road through Franklin.

According to the authority, Franklin Village could easily be served by the proposed network facilities. On November 17, 2003, the decision whether to install a public water system was put before voters, and the proposal was defeated by an almost 2 to 1 margin.

Second, the ability of soil layers to treat and filter domestic wastes is dependent upon the septic suitability of a given area and soil type. Whenever the soil characteristics of an area are incapable of accommodating septic wastes or whenever the proposed land use will exceed the septic capabilities of the land area, sewer systems are traditionally constructed to collect the wastes. They are then transported to a treatment plant. Because of failing septic systems in a few areas of the Village, Franklin connected to the Oakland County sewer system beginning in 1993.

### **Circulation**

Franklin is served by a well-maintained network of regional and local roads, which represent both an asset and a liability to the Village and its historic character. For an analysis of the Village's circulation network and traffic issues, please refer to Chapter Nine, Traffic and Circulation.

### **Wireless Communication**

There is a need to improve wireless voice and data transmission and communication service for residents, businesses, and government operations in the Village. At the same time, there is a

recognition that convention technology – antennas mounted on a tall pole – would be out of character and aesthetically unacceptable in the Village.

In December 2003, Village Council President James Pikulus appointed a Cell Tower Advisory Committee to review and advise the Village Council on the “pros and cons of the ... proposed [cell] tower location and alternative sites within the framework of the Village’s existing ordinances and legal commitments, the needs of the cell tower companies and available technology.”

The Committee met 11 times, compiling a substantial record of information, and producing a Draft Interim Report, dated June 11, 2004. The Committee found that technology was changing providing a broader range of wireless options suiting the Village’s demonstrated preference for minimal visual impact and the desire for efficient wireless communications. As noted in the conclusion to the Draft Interim Report, “Carriers and the Village have largely moved beyond the “cell tower” and are focusing on appropriate communications for Village residents within the existing legal structure.” One such carrier is Clear Linx, which has successfully installed a distributed antenna cellular system in the village without installing and poles.

As technology changes, the Village must be flexible enough to accommodate the change when it consistent with the aesthetic and environmental goals of the Village. To position the Village with this flexibility, it may be necessary to create a Wireless Communications Master Plan and amend the Wireless Communications Ordinance.

### **LAND USE PROFILE**

The built environment in Franklin Village consists of existing land uses and circulation infrastructure in combination with the community facilities that serve Village residents. These features establish support for many functions within the Village. They are summarized on Map 7, the Existing Land Use Map.

Seven classifications of land use are found to exist in Franklin Village. Residential development is the predominant land use and comprises over 1,000 acres of land. Non-residential land uses primarily exist in the Village Center and include commercial and office uses, public and quasi-public uses, and developed recreation uses. The remaining classifications include woodland and water areas, which comprised over 125 acres of land in 1977, but which has been reduced due to development over the past decades; open space, which comprised over 225 acres of land in 1977, but which has also been reduced due to development over the past decades; and transportation corridors, which still comprise over 265 acres of land. (see Table 7)

**Table 7: Franklin Village Land Use**

Land Use	1977		2004	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Residential	1,046	62.4%	1,248	73.1%
Commercial and Office	6	0.4%	13	0.8%
Public and quasi-public recreation	10	0.6%	18*	1.0%
Woodland and water	125	7.4%	57*	3.3%
Vacant	225	13.4%	95	5.6%
Transportation	265	15.8%	277	16.2%
Total	1,677	100.0%	1,708**	100.0%

*Source: 1977: Johnson, Johnson & Roy; 2004: Oakland County*

*\*The data for 2004 is divided into Public/Institutional = 17.9 acres; Recreation/Conservation = 40.5 acres; Water = 16.1 acres land use categories.*

*\*\*The 2004 data show a different total acreage than the 1977 data. The Village has not expanded its borders; the discrepancy is due to different collection methods.*

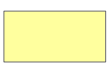








The various characteristics of these land uses can be described as follows:

- A. Residential development is scattered throughout the Village Center and the various neighborhoods of the Village. Single family housing on spacious lots is the predominant form of development, although multi-family residential condominiums were built in the Village Center in the early 1970s.
- B. Non-residential land uses are located primarily in the Village Center. Commercial and office uses are clustered in older adapted residential buildings or in newer buildings. Specialty shops constitute the principal commercial uses in the Village Center. Public and quasi-public land uses account for a major portion of the Village Center area. These include the Village Office, Franklin Library, Post Office, and the Franklin Cemetery. Developed recreational land uses located in the Village Center include the Village Green and the adjacent sports fields and tennis courts owned by the Franklin Community Association.
- C. Transportation corridors consist of dedicated rights-of-way within which roadways and utilities are constructed. These corridors are the second largest uses of land in the Village.
- D. Vacant land includes those parcels that are platted or assembled but not used for any specific purpose. Vacant lands are scattered throughout the Village, but the largest parcels exist along Telegraph Road and the southern boundary of the Village.
- E. Woodlands and surface water areas are the remaining land use categories in Franklin and include those areas that have significant environmental features but are not publicly owned. Presently, the major woodlands and surface water areas exist along the Franklin Branch of the Rouge River. Other woodlands are scattered throughout the residential areas, as are wetlands.



# Map 7 Existing Land Use

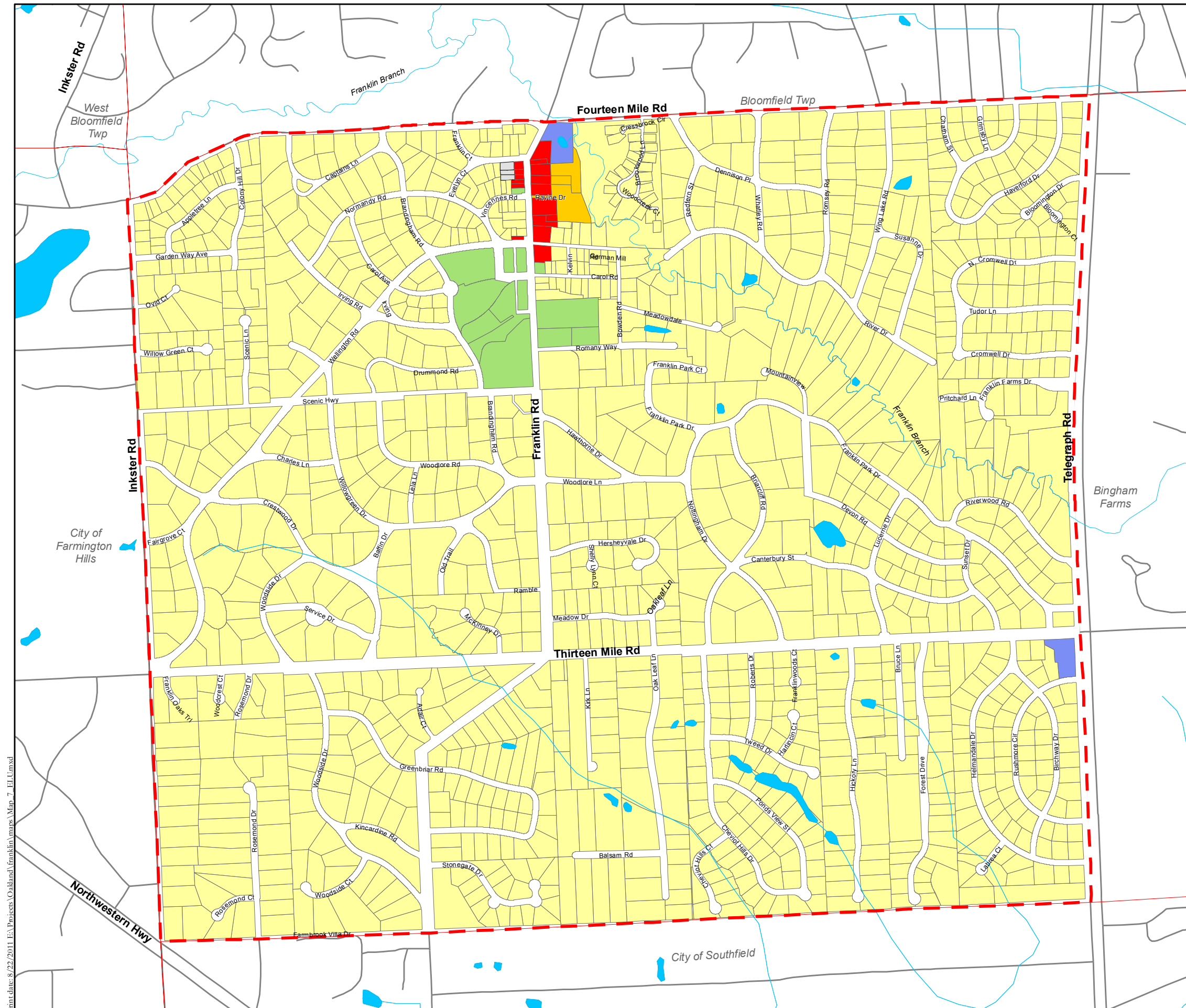
## Village of Franklin, Oakland County, Michigan

-  Single-Family and Vacant Single-Family Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Commercial
-  Office
-  Public & Quasi-Public
-  Parking
-  Franklin Boundary
-  Surrounding Municipalities
-  Hydrology

Base Map Data Source: Oakland County GIS, 1st Quarter 2006.

ELU Data Source: McKenna Associates, 2006.

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## CHAPTER THREE

# Village Character & Neighborhoods

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### VISION

*Franklin's visual character makes it one of the most unique communities in Southeast Michigan. Its distinct appearance is obvious when entering the Village, and positive observations about its character are frequently made by residents and visitors. The Village of Franklin's mature tree cover, large lots with well-kept houses, narrow, tree-covered streets, and carefully maintained historic and natural resources contribute to a general feel that has remained more rural than any surrounding community.*

### COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Franklin presents a stark contrast to the built form of surrounding communities, with even through travelers on Thirteen Mile or drivers passing on Telegraph Road noticing distinct transitions as they enter and leave the Village. While Franklin does not retain active agriculture, its larger residential lots, numerous woodlots, and historic Village Center provide it with a more rural feel than other suburbs in the area.

This character is made up of a number of traits that residents wish to maintain and enhance. The Village's historic resources are one important aspect, grounding Franklin's character in history. These resources are discussed in detail in Chapter Four, Historic Areas, which discusses both the Village Center Historic District and some of the features throughout Franklin. The issues and recommendations presented in that chapter are important to any discussion of Franklin's character.

In addition to the historic resources themselves, the Village Center is the most easily definable portion of Franklin's character. With the Village Green, cemetery, homes, small businesses, and civic buildings arranged along the half-mile stretch of Franklin Road from Scenic Highway to the cider mill, just north of Fourteen Mile, the Village Center has a homey, familiar feel completely unlike the parking lot dominated commercial areas that can be found throughout the region.

Finally, the natural landscape throughout Franklin, and the relation of homes to the land, helps define the Village's character. Homes sit on lots of up to 3 acres, most on narrow, winding streets with little sign clutter. Lawns tend to be well-landscaped, and many unbuilt parcels remain wooded, providing habitat for birds and animals. The Franklin Branch of the Rouge River runs through the northeast portion of the Village, and several small ponds and wetlands can be found in the Village.

All of these characteristics are vulnerable to changing times and economic pressures, and require active maintenance. Some mechanisms for preserving them are already in place, such as the Historic District, deed restrictions, and the restriction against sidewalks outside of the Village Center. These measures also provide examples of the tradeoffs involved in preserving a desired character: while limiting sidewalks helps create a more rural feel, the major streets are often hostile to pedestrians and bicyclists; deed restrictions and historic districts maintain certain levels of appearance, but create some limits on owners' ability to use their properties.

Additionally, some specific observations of character will change over time – while horses and historic horse paddocks featured prominently in the 1997 Master Plan Update's discussion of character, very few horses are kept within the Village, making this less important as an aspect of character to focus on.



## **Accomplishments since 1997**

A number of the recommendations made in the 1997 Master Plan Update have been acted upon since then. Some of these include the *Historic District Design Guidelines* publication created by the Historic District Commission to assist homeowners in maintaining their homes in a fitting fashion, and a community-wide seminar held in 2005 to help residents understand the use of deed restrictions.

Efforts have been taken to bring the Zoning Ordinance into line with the Master Plan, including a revision to height and setback requirements. To address the concern that oversized homes were being constructed on small lots, the zoning was revised to limit the height of a home based on how close it came to the property line, limiting its visual bulk, and setback requirements were increased. The lot split regulations have additionally been amended to provide better control over the creation of new, potentially buildable lots.

Prior to the installation of the sanitary sewer system, malfunctioning septic systems in Franklin posed a risk to groundwater and river water quality. Pressure sanitary sewers have been installed in much of the Village to address this concern. Pressure sewers were used to minimize disruption to the rural-like environment along roadsides.

Finally, efforts have been made to protect and enhance Franklin's tree cover. The Tree Protection Ordinance was enacted to provide better control over tree removal and replacement during new construction, and the Village received a grant from the state Department of Natural Resources for a tree replacement program. This grant is being used, along with Village funds, to plant several hundred hardwoods along Village rights-of-way and provide for the on-going maintenance of the tree cover. In 2005, Franklin was recognized as a Tree City, a designation by the National Arbor Day Foundation and federal Forest Service that endorses the Village's commitment to maintaining a healthy canopy tree cover.

## **CHALLENGES TO CHARACTER**

Despite existing efforts to maintain Franklin's character, a number of challenges remain. Balancing individuals' ability to enjoy their own properties with the maintenance of the overall character that residents enjoy is a careful process, and regional economic pressures continue to threaten the distinct edge of the community.

### **Teardowns and Out-of-Scale Building**

Residential construction across the country has been trending towards larger and larger homes, and Franklin has not been immune to this trend. While a few of Franklin's neighborhoods have large enough lots to support the largest contemporary homes, out-of-scale construction can dwarf older and smaller neighboring homes in many neighborhoods. This is a concern both on currently unbuilt lots and in cases where older homes are torn down and replaced with much larger homes.



Additionally, the Village's ability to prevent lot splits is limited by State legislation. Within the minimum lot size requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, lot splits may be possible that would allow new construction to crowd existing homes. While the Zoning Ordinance was recently revised to tie building height to setbacks, limiting the height that could be built close to lot lines, further changes could be considered to limit this phenomenon.



## **Non-Residential Encroachment on Village Borders**

Those platted lots that have not been built upon and that are on the edges of Franklin present tempting opportunities to commercial developers. This is particularly the case along Telegraph Road and near Northwestern Highway, which are heavily developed outside of the Village. While Franklin's location on these major roads makes the Village particularly desirable to developers, allowing commercial or other non-residential development on Franklin's edges would erode and blur the distinct boundaries of the community. Entering the Village would no longer be such a notable transition.

## **Light and Noise Pollution**

Some threats to Franklin's character are generally outside of the Village's control. While Franklin's internal streets are mostly low speed, and the Village's Outdoor Light Ordinance forbids illumination, glare, or shadowing on adjacent properties, light and noise from adjacent development spills over into Franklin. Proximity to Telegraph Road, Northwestern Highway, and I-696 provides Franklin residents with excellent access throughout the metropolitan area, but this proximity brings traffic noise and nighttime light pollution from street and parking lot lights. While these impacts detract from the desired feel of living in Franklin, little if anything can be done to mitigate the sources.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAINTAINING CHARACTER**

Since the maintenance and enhancement of Franklin's character is not separable from other issues in the Village, many recommendations from other chapters in this Plan are applicable, such as creating walking paths alongside major roads, preparing a Landscape Master Plan, and preserving the community of small independent businesses that make up the Village Center. Impacts on Franklin's overall character – positive or negative – should be considered during the implementation of any recommendations from this Plan.

As character is additionally a somewhat subjective measure, efforts to enhance it should involve affected stakeholders as much as is possible. Maintaining a certain character will often mean limiting what may be done on certain property, and should be done with sensitivity to the concerns both of neighborhoods as groups and of individual residents and business owners.

### ***Maintain residential uses along boundaries***

One of the goals of the 1997 Master Plan Update is to, "Maintain the integrity of the periphery of the Village so as to prevent intrusion or encroachment of intense development," and this continues to be an important recommendation. Franklin's municipal borders are the clearest and most sensible point at which to draw a clear distinction and notable transition into the Village. From a developer's standpoint, the Telegraph Road frontage in particular is a good place to put commercial or other non-residential development, but allowing more intense uses will blur the edges of the Village.

Single-family homes already exist along all of the major roads within and around the periphery of Franklin, demonstrating that the unbuilt lots are suited to the low-intensity development currently zoned for. Additionally, maintaining the perimeters of Franklin as single-family homes and occasional vacant woodlots will provide a better buffer for sound and light than more intense development will.

### ***Encourage permanent preservation of open lots***

In order to maintain a mature tree cover, provide buffers for noise and light pollution, preserve habitat for wildlife, and natural stormwater filtration for the river, among other benefits, the Village should pursue the preservation of natural open space. In a few locations, this has been done in the process of multi-home development by setting aside some land to maintain as natural space, but developments of this type are infrequent. Much more common are individual vacant lots, or single homes on double lots.

The Village could work with property owners to acquire or seek conservation easements on individual lots where preservation would provide important benefits. Owners probably cannot be expected to offer conservation easements without any compensation, but a combination of funding sources could include partial donation of development rights by the owner, combined with Village funds, neighborhood association contributions, and outside funding sources. In the Townships near Ann Arbor, for example, the “greenbelt” purchase of development rights program has received dedicated funding through millages in the City of Ann Arbor and the Townships, used in conjunction with federal farmland preservation grants and donations of up to 10% of the value by the landowners.

The Village of Franklin’s fiscal capacity to purchase land and development rights alone is limited, but could be used to leverage conservation easements on strategic parcels. These parcels might include lots along the river; lots that could be used to provide short, safe pedestrian and bicycle paths from neighborhoods to the Village Center; and parcels that have significant visibility near the entrances to the Village. The Oakland Land Conservancy, Friends of the Rouge, and similar organizations might be able to assist in arranging funding sources for land preservation.

### ***Housing style variety***

Hundreds of homes have been built or undergone major renovation in the past two decades. The outcome is a broad variety of styles of architecture, from traditional to avant garde. Modern-day examples of building design coexist with older homes from every decade back to the late 1800s. This mixture of housing styles, sizes, materials, and designs is a part of the Village character. Such variety ought to be encouraged because it adds interest to the community, in contrast to the dull sameness of housing in so many suburbs. Notwithstanding the great variety of housing, the rural characteristics of the Village are the threads of commonality that hold the neighborhoods together.



### ***Design pathways to blend in the rural landscape***

A goal of this plan is to develop pathways throughout the Village. The purpose of pathways is to create a network of safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to move around the Village. Pathways should be designed to blend into the scenic rural landscape. Accordingly, they should generally be curvilinear and constructed of asphalt or another aggregate material, like crushed limestone. Straight, uniform slabs of concrete sidewalk are not appropriate, except in the Village Center.

### ***Continue deed restriction updates***

As deed restrictions can be used to define and protect valued contributions to character at a finer-grained level than the Zoning Code, they may be used to protect character with greater sensitivity to the concerns and property interests of neighborhood residents. The Village should continue to support neighborhoods in renewing and updating deed restriction, and in pursuing enforcement of these regulations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Historic Areas: Appearance & Identity

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### VISION

*The Village of Franklin offers a peaceful, historic atmosphere to its residents and visitors. The Village Center, in particular, has an attractive, unified look and feel that pays respect to the Village's history, with architecture and landscaping maintaining the 19<sup>th</sup> century, human-scaled quality of the Village. Efforts to preserve Franklin's historic flavor, without being contrived, have contributed to the Village's unique character.*

### FRANKLIN'S BUILT HERITAGE

The Village of Franklin has retained a number of buildings used as homes and businesses by the early settlers of the area. Many of the buildings in the Village Center date back to Franklin's early period of growth, as discussed in Chapter Two, Inventory & Analysis. A number of outlying historic home sites are scattered throughout the Village, though perhaps the most well-known of Franklin's historic buildings, the Cider Mill, is located outside of the Village proper, on the north side of Fourteen Mile Road.

As the Village has grown through the twentieth century, this historic built landscape has faced continued incremental change. Not only have historic buildings been demolished for contemporary construction or lost to neglect, but modern, incongruous renovations chip away at historic value. Historic landscapes have also been lost to road construction, parking, modern landscaping tastes, and utility work.

Recognizing the losses taking place, Village residents acted to preserve some of Franklin's remaining historic landscape several decades ago. In 1969, the Village Center and several other significant buildings, including the Cider Mill to the north, were placed on the newly created National Register of Historic Places, providing access to tax benefits and federal grant money to owners of historic buildings.

In 1971, the Village Center area additionally became the first local Historic Districts registered

in the State of Michigan. This designation allowed for the local Historic District Commission to review any modifications to buildings that would change the external appearance, allowing a method of preventing the demolition or out-of-character alteration of important historic structures.

By taking advantage of these tools as they became available, the Village of Franklin has managed to preserve a number of its early buildings. These protected buildings include both commercial and residential properties, as well as sites such as the Village Green and Cemetery.

### Historic District Design Guidelines

One of the most significant recommendations of the 1997 Master Plan Update with regards to Franklin's character was to "prepare detailed, illustrated design guidelines for business and residential properties within the Village Center," in order to provide owners with clear and specific information on historic preservation and renovations within the Village. In early 2006, the

Village Historic District Commission (HDC) created a 40-page manual, *Village of Franklin Historic District Design Guidelines*, which seeks to fulfill this purpose.

That document details the history of the Historic District and the role of the Commission, and provides concrete guidelines for various types of repairs, allowing property owners to be more prepared for the process of work within the

Historic District. Other recommendations from the 1997 Plan have yet to be implemented, such as putting utility lines underground in the Village Center and revising the sign ordinance to establish historic guidelines for public and private signage in the District.

### Franklin's Historic Character

Effective preservation of Franklin's character requires a definition of the elements that combine to create it and an identification of the modern influences and changes that have affected it. These elements include the architecture of individual buildings, the size and position of buildings on their lots and their relationships to other buildings, the landscaping around structures, the character of the streets, and the signs, outbuildings, and other visual elements of the



Village. These elements also include the types of facilities, both public and private, located within the Historic District. Modern influences on Franklin's character have typically manifested themselves as changes in the appearance of these elements, such as the use of more modern architectural styles, building materials, and signage. Some of these changes are the result of voluntary action by the Village and land owners, in other cases, they are the result of governmental regulation of roadways and buildings.

The architecture of individual buildings is the best defined of these elements and is protected in the Village Center area, by the Historic District Commission's review process. Franklin's historic buildings belong to various architectural styles

popular between the initial settlement in the 1820s and the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The *Design Guidelines* document presents characteristic features of these styles, listing Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Vernacular, American Foursquare, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman as dominant styles at various times.



Of significance to the historic character of Franklin is the existence of a village center area that includes a complete set of municipal and community facilities intermingled with a variety of businesses and residences. Collectively, these governmental, community, commercial, and residential components help maintain Franklin's identity as an independent and autonomous 19<sup>th</sup> century village. Existing community facilities include village administrative offices, a police station, fire department, post office, library, park, community church, cemetery, and a now private school. Businesses include a small grocery store, bank, dry cleaner, tailor, dentist, photographer, restaurant, as well as others directed to supplying residents with certain specific goods and services. Franklin's downtown also includes some businesses that cater to more modern needs and desires such as an automobile gas and service station, real estate agency, health spa, interior designer, and architect and lawyer offices.

In addition to the use and architecture of the buildings themselves, there is a historic aspect to site design. Within the Village Center, businesses are characterized by being mostly stand-alone structures, set back varying distances from the road, but are close together, permitting residents



and visitors to walk from one to the next. Parking, a necessary part of today's lifestyle, has been mostly located behind or to the side of buildings, maintaining the more human-scaled and human-focused historic street function.

Within the Franklin's Historic District residential neighborhoods, there exist 19th century residences of various styles as noted above. Outside of the downtown area, there are scattered 19<sup>th</sup> century farm buildings that provide a reminder of the rural character that Village residents have repeatedly identified as a valued trait in past Master Plan updates. While these historic farms have since been platted and largely developed, a number of landscape features maintain the historic feel throughout the whole of the Village:

- Natural features, such as wetlands, woodlands, ravines, streams, and wildlife.
- Mature trees and shrubs lining streets and found throughout lots.
- The presence of horses, and of small horse barns and paddocks.



- Large, extensively landscaped lots around homes.
- Abundant natural open spaces.
- "Soft" boundaries between lawns and natural spaces, created by un-manicured shrubs and other vegetation.

Some of these neighborhood lot features have been preserved by deed restrictions that regulate accessory buildings, tree removal, fences, building materials, and setbacks beyond the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The Village Character

Master Plan Update report prepared in 1997 undertook a review of existing deed restrictions, some of which date to the 1930s, and presented an extensive summary of existing restrictions and issues in that report.

Among the concerns was that the deed restrictions typically did not include maximum standards. Minimum home sizes are mandated in several neighborhoods, for example, but Franklin now more commonly faces home construction or renovations that are too large for the lot rather than too small. The report also suggested that updated or new deed restrictions be discussed with neighborhoods to set aside natural open space on lots, restrict lot splits, or prevent new homes from being constructed on existing double lots. This discussion took place at a community-wide Deed Restrictions Seminar held on November 29, 2005.

Included in the rural feel of the neighborhoods is the absence of sidewalks, which the Village Charter forbids in residential areas. As discussed in Chapter Nine, Traffic & Circulation, internal neighborhood streets have low enough traffic levels to allow pedestrians and bicyclists to safely share the road with automobiles, but are interested in side paths that would allow pedestrians to walk or bicycle safely next to major streets and that would have a more naturalized, rural design than standard concrete sidewalks.

## **THREATS TO HISTORIC CHARACTER**

The balance of current tastes and trends with the preservation of valuable heritage is an ongoing effort, and the creation of historic districts was only one piece of that balancing. A number of issues and concerns currently affect the Village's historic character.

## **Architectural Style**

Within the Historic District, review of changes to building exteriors provides for the preservation of this architectural heritage, protecting many of the most significant historic structures. The review process for buildings outside of the District is not as thorough, relying primarily on a single design compatibility requirement that allows the Building

Official to compare the design and position of exterior features of dwellings within 1,000 feet of a proposed home, so as to promote compatibility and harmony. This compatibility requirement involves a good measure of subjectivity and has been infrequently enforced. In reality, new construction in many of the Village's neighborhoods does not have to respect an established Village architectural character, and there is little incentive for renovations to existing structures to be made in a compatible style.

The *Design Guidelines* and Historic District Commission members may serve as a useful resource for property owners outside of the District who wish to build or renovate structures in a historic character, but this is a voluntary and informal process. Of particular concern is the replacement of older homes with new structures that are out of scale with the lot and with other homes in the neighborhood. Minimum home sizes, in square feet of floor area, width of front face, and cubic feet of volume, are required in the Zoning Ordinance; considering revisions to these limits, or adding maximum limits, may be ways to address this concern.

Adding more form-based elements to the zoning code might be another. This style of zoning concerns itself primarily with the physical characteristics of a building – its shape, orientation, and relation to its neighbors – rather than with the use of the building, and has gained popularity as a tool in traditional neighborhood development. Since physical form is the most important aspect of historic preservation, a form-based zoning for the Village Center could be appropriate.

### **Site Design Characteristics**

Some of the non-architectural aspects of historic character can be guided through zoning and the site plan review process for new development. While the Village does not expect much growth, developers have periodically expressed interest in new residential or commercial development, particularly around the edges of the Village. Franklin has repeatedly stressed the desire for a distinct edge separating the character of the Village from the more modern, suburban character of adjacent communities.



New development around the perimeter of the Village could blur this edge, and the Zoning Ordinance should be used to ensure that the appropriate character is maintained. As most of the perimeter is currently zoned for residential use, any commercial development would require both a rezoning and a site plan review, providing two opportunities to ensure that it contributes to the desired character.

Some of the site plan issues that can be addressed through Zoning are active concerns even in the Village Center, where building placement and parking locations are not as pressing as in new development.

Uncharacteristic signage is an active concern of some residents, with some businesses in the Village displaying neon or otherwise jarring signs. Signs are necessary for businesses to communicate with potential customers, but the design of a sign can be tailored to the environment. Considering the low speed of traffic through the Village Center, a business there would not need the same large, attention grabbing sign that a business set back from the road in a suburban strip mall would.

Screening and landscaping in the Village Center are also concerns. Parking, dumpsters, electrical transformers, and other exterior utilities are part of modern business functioning, but in some places, these modern site elements clash with and detract from the overall feel. Properly screening these features from the street and from nearby residential or recreational areas could improve commercial buildings' contribution to Franklin's historic appearance.

## **Landscaping**

Landscaping is a concern throughout Franklin. As mentioned above, both natural and landscaped features throughout Franklin are an essential part of the Village's character. Without maintenance, however, these features can be eroded.

In some neighborhoods, cutting of mature trees, fence styles, and other landscape characteristics are limited by deed restriction and by Village ordinances, but landscaping may still diverge from the desired feel. Utility and road maintenance often takes a toll on mature roadside trees, and invasive species can directly attack native plant life, as the emerald ash borer is currently decimating mature ash populations, or slowly out compete and replace native plants, as in the case of Common Buckthorn. These types of threats mean that maintaining a traditionally Michigan natural environment will require more active planning and management than is provided by standard controls on tree cutting and fencing.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

A number of potential ordinance changes, programs, and other actions could help protect and reinforce the Village of Franklin's historic character. Several of these options are detailed below.

### ***Review and revise zoning ordinance***

As the Zoning Ordinance is the most basic control on development in the Village of Franklin, it should be reviewed to ensure that it encourages the type of development that Franklin wants. Several pieces of the Ordinance should be examined for consistency with the Village's goals.

- Off-street parking and loading requirements should be reviewed for issues such as the location of parking on a site and the quantity of parking mandated – requiring too much parking can affect the character of the site; requiring too little allows overflow.
- Residential design standards should be reviewed to determine how they have taken form when applied, and what changes might address concerns about “out of scale” construction.

- Area, height, bulk, and setback requirements for commercial development should be reviewed against existing structures, to encourage compatible development.
- Screening requirements should be reviewed to minimize the visual impact of rubbish containers, external utility enclosures, and parking areas for commercial uses.
- Signage requirements should be reviewed to allow sufficient yet more historically accurate signage for businesses.

Since the Zoning Ordinance is the primary regulation affecting development, a review should be given priority.

### ***Create landscape master plan***

Since so much of Franklin's character is in its natural features and landscaping, a Landscape Master Plan could help in identifying related priorities within the Village. Such a plan could provide for maintenance of public areas, guide new development to be compatible with the Village's character, and serve as a resource for individual homeowners and business owners seeking to landscape their own properties. Areas of emphasis could include:

- Define a unifying landscaping character for the Village Center, including consideration of trees native to the area, canopy trees, seasonal flowers, and screening of parking areas.
- Use landscaping to define the entryways to Franklin along major roads, particularly for the entry points to the Village Center along Franklin Road.
- Rehabilitate the river valley with native plants.
- Provide information for residents seeking to maintain wood lots and open spaces in good condition.

While the clearest relation of a Landscape Master Plan to the historic character of Franklin would be in its recommendations for the Village Center, maintaining a distinctly Michigan character throughout the Village, in both natural open spaces and manicured landscaping, would contribute to Franklin's overall visual distinction from surrounding communities.



***Explore historic overlay zoning for village center***

In the process of reviewing the Zoning Ordinance, the Village may decide that heightened standards on signage, screening, etc., that are appropriate within the Historic District might not be appropriate throughout the Village. An overlay district could be added to the Zoning Ordinance in this case. An overlay district, which would be added to the existing zoning on Historic District properties, would provide these standards within the Village Center.

An overlay district is a mapped zoning district that imposes a set of requirements in addition to those of the underlying zoning district. In an area where an overlay zone is established, the property is placed simultaneously in two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. In this case, it is the intent that the overlay zone impose standards relating to the historic design, development, renovation and character of buildings on the property.

In addition to more rigorous standards, an overlay district could provide benefits to property owners within the district. As an example, some overlays oriented at historic preservation allow for the repair or rebuilding of a non-conforming structure, if that structure was historically significant and the reconstruction is done in a faithful historic character. Such provisions typically include additional Planning Commission review standards on this type of restoration, similar to the review standards placed on a Special Approval Use.

***Consider additional incentives and enforcement***

While some of the zoning revisions mentioned earlier could help ensure new construction, or significant expansions, fit into the character of Franklin, on-going care of existing properties is an additional concern. While the Village has the ability, within the Historic District, to mandate repairs in order to prevent deterioration of historic structures, some members of the Historic District Commission have expressed a concern that enforcement standards are unclear and not

uniformly applied, allowing buildings to deteriorate too far before intervention.

A stepped-up enforcement procedure might include periodic physical inspections and encouragement of more preventative maintenance. Considerations could be considered to prevent the entire burden of more stringent enforcement from falling on a few property owners, and in recognition that maintaining historic character is of value to all residents of Franklin. If periodic building inspections were included, the Village could consider waiving whatever fees typically accompany investigations; critical structural maintenance projects might be considered as targets for a matching grant program. Any increased enforcement should have a well-defined process, including a clear resolution process for disputes between the Historic District Commission and property owners. Defining fair standards and processes should be a process that involves HDC members, affected property owners, and the Village officials who would be involved in enforcement.

Incentives might also help encourage homeowners outside of the Historic District to build or perform renovations in a historically compatible style. The *Design Guidelines* provide a good first step, by clearly defining historic design details. Further steps might be to sponsor homeowner consultations with architects or other experts experienced in historic styles, and providing a database of contractors who work with traditional building styles and materials.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# The Village Center

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### VISION

*The Village Center is a vibrant locale with diverse activity. It is often thought of as a business center, but it is much more. Juxtaposed among and in proximity to the businesses are homes, governmental buildings, a church, and the Village Green. The design of the buildings and the landscape recall the craftsmanship, detailing, individuality, and human scale of nineteenth century architecture.*

*Parking is largely out of view and pedestrians are delighted by architectural and landscape beauty. There are spring flowers, brick walks and attractive buildings of scale, colors, and architectural detailing that remind people of the nineteenth century. Traffic is slow through the Village Center.*

*People are comfortable and secure while shopping or participating in community events such as Winter Fest and the Labor Day Round-Up. Parents enjoy watching their children play on the Village green and adjacent park. Residents of the Village and neighboring communities gather in the Village Center for concerts, ice cream socials, parades and other activities.*

*The Village Center is connected to all the residential areas by open spaces, pedestrian and bike paths and narrow, winding two-lane streets. Open spaces and paths follow natural features such as woods and the Franklin River. The Village Center is the location of the Village Administrative Offices, Police Station, Fire Station, Library and Community Church.*

*The Historic District lies within the Village Center and has many authentic period homes, public and commercial buildings with special lights, street pavement, signs and plantings that contribute to an attractive, unified appearance.*

The Village Center is the heart of the Village of Franklin. It is the place where its residents go to vote and conduct governmental business, to educate themselves at the library, to attend services and events at church, to visit the dentist, to see a lawyer, and to play a game of baseball. In a nutshell, it is the main gathering place for the residents of the Village. For a select few residents, the Village Center has even more personal significance, for they live there. It would be hard to overestimate how important this district is to the image and life in the Village of Franklin.

This chapter of the Master Plan deals with the Village Center in an overall sense, and the next chapter deals more specifically with the commercial element.

### VILLAGE CENTER HISTORY

The Village of Franklin was established on land that was originally purchased in 1824 by Dillucena Stoughton and Elijah Bullock, both from Niagara County, New York. The village grew with many settlers coming from the Detroit area. One of the first settlers, Dr. Ebenezer Raynale, gave Franklin its name in 1828. A business center was beginning to develop by 1830, adding many homes and businesses over the next few years, including blacksmith shops, buggy works, grist mills, taverns, hotels and a general store. Two mills were built, the first in 1837, to take advantage of the Franklin River's waterpower.

George Matthews became the first land developer in Franklin, buying part of Bullock's farm in 1833 and dividing it into lots. He also built what is now the Franklin Cider Mill on the north side of Village. By 1855 there were about 20 dwellings of

various patterns and proportions in the village. Franklin grew relatively slowly for the rest of the nineteenth century because the rail line bypassed it. The early history is important because it established the basic pattern of development that exists in the Village Center today.

The Franklin area, including Southfield and Bloomfield Townships, experienced influxes of residential development after WWI and more significantly, after WWII. Several new subdivisions were built in the areas surrounding the historic district. New homes, commercial and civic buildings and the Franklin Community Church were constructed within the Village Center area during this period.

The history tells us that the Village Center is a collage of period styles conjured by constantly changing tastes and advances in building technology. For example, the style and technology from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century is most evident in the buildings and tight plat patterns in the heart of the Village Center along Franklin Road. This pattern dissipates the farther east or west of the Village Center one moves.

This is not only an interesting phenomenon to observe for historical purposes. These patterns of development from the nineteenth century lay the groundwork for planning and zoning today. Accordingly, the Zoning Ordinance's most intense classifications – the C-1, Local Business and R-3, Medium Density Residential – correspond roughly to the boundaries of the oldest plats in the Village Center.

### APPEARANCE AND IDENTITY

The Village Center boundaries are considered for planning purposes to be coterminous with the boundaries of the National Historic District. Thus, Village Center extends from the Huda School on the south to the Franklin Cider Mill at Fourteen Mile Road north. Within the Village Center are several additional landmarks, including the Broughton House, Police Station, Village Green, Library, and Fire Station.

This small district contains structures that display a variety of styles of architecture, reminiscent of

the various periods of development. Century-old buildings are still in active use, providing links to the people and events of earlier times. Styles of architecture prevalent in the district include: Greek Revival (1830-1860), vernacular (1830-1890), Queen Anne (1880-1910), Colonial Revival (1880-1960), American Foursquare (1900-1930), and Craftsman (1905-1930). The mix of architectural styles is unified by a landscape of trees and shrubs.



It is significant that the buildings are laid out in a relatively dense development pattern in the Village Center. The closeness of the buildings has much to do with the character and walkability of the district, and the fact that the pattern that was established prior to the advent of the automobile. The boundaries of the National Historic District are generally the limits of dense development, taking in German Mill, Carol Street, and Bowden on the east side of Franklin.

In the residential areas, Franklin is faced with pressure for more intensive land use – larger homes on smaller lots. Many of the Village Center's attributes – front lawns, mature trees and shrubs, roads with a "soft" informal edge – are in danger of disappearing or being altered. With each passing year, irreplaceable historic buildings become more valuable, and their protection from inappropriate alteration becomes more challenging.

## VILLAGE CENTER CHARACTER

A workshop was held in 1993 on the Village Center. The following statements from that workshop summarize the character of the Village Center, then and now:

- The Village Center is human-sized in scale.
- It has a small village feeling.
- It has an inherent rural quality
- There is a strong sense of historic continuum in the Village Center.
- It has vernacular rawness – what we see looks to have resolved out of basic human needs over a long period of time without the self-consciousness evident in most environments.

Effective preservation of the character of the Village Center requires the identification of elements that combine to make up the physical environment, together with an understanding of the evolutionary change affecting their existence.

In the Village Center, a number of what were originally historic residential structures have been adapted to commercial and office uses. “Newer” buildings have introduced the “Colonial Revival” style of architecture to the Village. Most recently, contemporary structures not related to the nineteenth or early twentieth century village character have been constructed adjacent to the Village Center in the form of residential condominiums and an office building.

The more recent contemporary styles, particularly the residential condominiums constructed east of the Village Center, fail to harmonize with the predominant nineteenth and early twentieth century character of the Village. While the mix of building styles contributes to the eclectic nature of the Village, continued disregard for the historic architecture of Franklin poses a serious threat to the character of the Historic District.

Changes in landscape features and decorative elements have followed changes in land use and architectural styles. Signs, lamp posts, walkways, fences, and landscape materials have been added to sites in the Village Center with seemingly little

regard for the overall character of the district. While some of these elements support the original Village character, many others detract from it.



The 1997 Master Plan analyzed and summarized Village Center character as being either essential, simulated, or changed. This classification has validity today and is presented below.

The **essential character** consists primarily of the historic architectural and landscape features that are still evident in the Village and are largely responsible for its distinction and appeal, both past and present. Features of this character include:

- An architectural heritage unique to Michigan and worthy of all efforts to ensure preservation and maintenance.
- Buildings set back from the road at varying distances in a pattern characteristic of early settlement.
- Commercial uses generally facing non-commercial uses across Franklin Road, contributing diversity to the environment and reducing the necessity for shoppers to frequently cross the roadway.
- Front lawns, mature shrubs, and trees that enhance the environment of the Village Center.
- The softness of definition between roadway, paths, and yards due to the general absence of street curbs and paved sidewalks. This pattern lends an

informality and comfortableness to the Village, but may lead to insecurity or confusion as boundaries between private and public, automobile and pedestrian are blurred.

- The substantial depth of the original lots that has allowed activities generated at rear doors of commercial and other uses to be kept at some distance from abutting residential properties.

The conversion of structures to new uses (typically commercial uses in old houses) can lead to the creation of a ***simulated character*** in the Village. Construction of new buildings designed in an historic architectural idiom also leads to the creation of new “old” character; new “Colonial Revival” architectural style structures are included in this category. Taken to the extreme, simulated character would produce a theme-park type environment of contemporary structures designed to present an image of historic character. Examples of this category of development include:



- Architectural guidelines for new construction designed to give the appearance of historic buildings, including materials, shapes, and colors.
- Site design controls requiring individual parcels to characterize early Village settlement while permitting landscapes that display buildings to the street.
- Single-site, off-street parking areas.

- Landscape buffers between residential and commercial uses.
- Coordinated lighting, signs, and graphics.

Contemporary late-twentieth century development reflects a ***changed character*** that is not incompatible with the Village Center as long as individual sites are widely-dispersed and located in out-of-the-way areas. The shape, scale, details, colors, materials, and landscape elements reflect little or nothing of the historic nature of the Village and are readily apparent as foreign even to a simulated turn-of-the-century environment. If the historic character of the Village is to be maintained, contemporary changed character development should be discouraged. Characteristics of this category of development include:

- Removal of existing historic architectural and landscape elements.
- Introduction of metal and glass as primary building materials.
- Vehicular, rather than pedestrian, focus to land uses.
- Widening of Franklin Road and introduction of curbs and other urban features.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There have been several accomplishments in the Village Center since 1997, not the least of which is the reconstruction of Franklin Road, between Thirteen and Fourteen Mile Roads, a project that was accomplished with great sensitivity to the historic environment. Coincidental with the street paving was the installation of traffic calming devices and crosswalks with signs at critical crossing points. Tree planting along the road and in the Village Green has occurred, supported in part by grants secured by the Village Administrator. Monitoring the health of the trees continues, and additional tree planting is expected in the future. Other major achievements involved public safety buildings, including the construction of the Police Station, immediately south of the Village Hall, and the expansion of the Fire Station.



## RELEVANT ISSUES

According to observations made at the 1996 town meeting, residents wanted the size and physical appearance of the Village Center to remain about the same, with the possible addition of a restaurant or coffeehouse, which has transpired since then. Eighty-one percent of Village residents agreed that the community should have an identifiable center. Seventy-nine percent believed that the design (size, color, style) of commercial signs should be controlled.

At the October 6, 2005, Master Plan Meeting, the Village Center was identified as one of the Ten Main Issues. Participants cited the need for more businesses, more foot traffic, more community activities, more enforcement of ordinances for absentee landlords, and the possibility of a special character zone for frontage parcels along Franklin Road.

## Guided Growth

Development pressures and changing demands threaten to alter the appearance of houses and cultural facilities in the Village Center. While it is important to preserve the unique historic character of the Village, careful changes must be embraced to prevent stagnation and decline.

New or expanded civic and cultural facilities must complement the essential character of the Village, as is evident in the recent addition to the Franklin-Bingham Farms Fire Department station. Buildings can also be sited and or landscaped so as to minimize their visual impact on the overall character of the Village Center; a good example of this is the new police station tucked into a hillside behind the Broughton House.

Changes may be needed in the future for the Franklin Library and the Village government offices. By learning from previous development and staying mindful of the effects of new construction on a historic area, the needs of today's residents can be fulfilled while respecting the heritage of centuries that is inherent to the Village Center.

## Destination: Franklin

Driving north on Franklin Road offers an opportunity to panoramically present the Village Center to visitors. Driving over the crest of the hill by the cemetery should feel like a century's worth of pressure is lifted off your shoulders as you descend into "the town that time forgot."

Despite the historic architecture and slow traffic speeds, drivers can all too easily continue through the Village without pause and without a chance to appreciate the unique character of Franklin. There is little to catch a driver's eye and compel him or her to park.

Attracting visitors to the Village Center as a destination could help to strengthen the economic base of Franklin, providing the means to fund historic preservation initiatives or Village-initiated infrastructure projects. Carefully-designed wayfinding signage and clear non-motorized connections through the Village Center from the cemetery to the cider mill could encourage visitors and residents alike to leave their cars behind and experience the Village as the early settlers did: by human power.

## Village Center Residential

A crucial element in the nineteenth-century character of the Village Center is the inclusion of residences among commercial and civic uses. Although a few residences remain, several nineteenth-century residences along Franklin Road have been converted over the years to commercial use.



Among the remaining residences along Franklin Road a dichotomy exists. Some of the homes are stately in their appearance, with tasteful landscaping and towering trees. Other houses are heavily landscaped to buffer the private space within from the public world of the Village Center. These screens of trees and tall shrubs disrupt the character of the Village Center, creating voids in the fabric that is presented to passersby.



Within the Village Center but not fronting on Franklin Road there are several other nineteenth and early twentieth century homes, many of which have been tastefully restored and maintained. The juxtaposition of the homes, the fascinating architecture and landscaping, and the scale of development contribute to this being a very appealing, walkable neighborhood.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### ***Strengthen the Village Center as a destination by promoting its historic and cultural attributes.***

- Consider initiating a series of educational events held on the Village Green and in public facilities that commemorate life in the 19<sup>th</sup> century village. Work with local school districts to organize field trips or adult education programs.
- Explore expansion of the library at its present location.
- Maintain a portion of the historical society museum, or a portion of its holdings, in a building in the Village Center to better interpret the rich history of Franklin Village.
- Continue to support activities, such as the walking tour of the Village Center and Historic District, which was developed by the Historical Society.

### ***Protect and maintain the diverse architecture of residential structures in the Village Center.***

- In conjunction with the Historic District Commission, develop illustrated design guidelines or a pattern book for homeowners who wish to renovate or expand their residential property within the Village Center. Encourage the preservation of ‘vernacular rawness’ without devolving into organized cuteness.
- Encourage landscaping that echoes historic treatments and creates a sense of unity throughout the Village Center.
- Install properly scaled, historic-style street lights to provide a safe pedestrian and residential environment.

***Enforce the Historic District Design Guidelines, which are hereby incorporated into the Master Plan by reference.*** In concert with the Historic District Commission, develop a set of complementary urban design and landscape design guidelines to provide businesses and



residents with specific illustrated ideas from which to draw when undertaking renovations, redevelopment, or new development.

***Encourage visitors and residents alike to use non-motorized forms of transportation in the Village Center.***

- Create clear connections (sidewalks, bike paths, alleys) among activity centers throughout the Village Center and to the Franklin Cider Mill.
- Install appropriately-designed wayfinding signage to orient visitors to primary destinations in the Village.

***Preserve the essential character of the Village Center.***

- Maintain existing zoning and use of essential character sites unless (a) there is sufficient Village demand for change, and (b) the change conforms to adopted Village plans and is compatible with adjacent land uses.
- Protect existing setbacks along Franklin Road from encroachment by building additions or automobiles, including parking areas.
- Investigate placement of utility wires underground through the Village Center, where economically feasible, with minimum disturbance to vegetation.
- Review proposed building changes for compatibility with historic development in terms of scale, materials, and location.
- Appoint a sign review committee to develop and enforce sign regulations for the Village Center. Work with public safety personnel to clarify the degree of flexibility afforded by the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices with respect to street and traffic control signs.
- Erect distinctively different signs for both street identification and traffic control. Uniform traffic control devices can be produced in signs with a more historic

character. Standard highway signs are out of character in the Village Center.

***Strengthen and preserve the essential historic and rural character of the Village Center as the focus of the community.*** As described in the 1997 Master Plan, the essential character consists primarily of the historic architectural and landscape features that are still evident in the Village and are largely responsible for its past and present distinction and appeal. Features of this character can include:

- An architectural heritage unique to Michigan and worthy of all efforts to ensure its preservation and maintenance.
- Commercial activities generally facing non-commercial uses across Franklin Road, contributing diversity to the environment and reducing the frequency necessary for shoppers to cross the road.
- Buildings set back from the road at varying distances in a pattern characteristic of the early settlement.
- Front lawns, mature shrubs and trees that enhance the environment of the Village Center.
- The substantial depth of the original lots, which has allowed activities generated at rear doors of commercial and other uses to be held at some distance from abutting residential properties.
- The softness of definition between roadway, paths and yards due to the general absence of street curbs and paved sidewalks, all lends an informality and level of comfort to the Village.

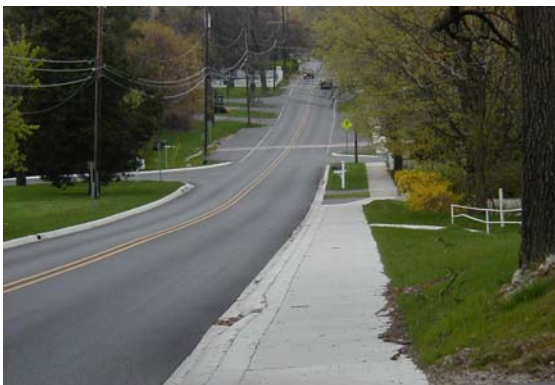
***Define desirable design treatments for front setbacks including small picket or wrought iron fences, and light standards and street signs that are compatible with the existing character.***

***Preserve the Village Center context when contemplating changes in land use or additions to structures.*** The scale, materials, and arrangement of structures and landscape

should relate to those of the older buildings in the Village. Proposed changes should be reviewed and approved by the Historic District Commission.

***Do not permit Village Center expansion onto the steeper slopes of the valley of the Franklin Branch of the Rouge River.*** The woodlots and vegetation masses in this area should be protected.

***Consider special zoning techniques, such as overlay zoning, to implement design recommendations in the Village Center.*** The goal of such zoning is to preserve the historic character of the Village Center by establishing certain elements of the urban design and landscape guidelines, such as specifications for signs, lighting, landscaping, etc.



***Construct a continuous pathway from Thirteen Mile to Fourteen Mile Road on the east side of Franklin Road.***

***Develop a plan to guide right-of-way improvements, including walkways, bench selection and placement, street tree locations, other landscaping, and lighting.*** Extend this plan to become a master landscape plan for public and private areas, covering general site landscaping, parking lot screening, etc.

***Form a committee to formulate public and private lighting standards for the Village Center.*** Effective lighting can provide pedestrian safety, dramatically accentuate and beautify

buildings and landscapes, and bring life to a commercial district. For these reasons, historic design street lights should be seriously considered.

***Construct restrooms for public use in the Village Center.***

## CHAPTER SIX

# The Village Center - Commercial

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### VISION

*The Village has a small, thriving, historic commercial area of various types of retail, office, and service businesses. Residents of the Village can shop, bank, put gas in their cars, stop for coffee or to go to a restaurant in the Village Center.*

### CONTEXT

In Rural by Design, Randall Arendt notes that “...in order to be successful, town centers possess both a strong *civus* (town hall, commons, post office, churches, etc.) and a healthy retail base.” The Village Center has survived for so many years and thrived in part because of its combination of public, retail, as well as other uses.

There is no question that the Franklin Village Center possesses a strong *civus*, with the presence of the Broughton House, Village Green, Library, Post Office, and Police and Fire Stations within the Village Center. Whether there is a healthy retail base is the primary concern of this plan. An inventory revealed there are 27 non-residential uses in the Village Center. Only seven (25.9%) are currently occupied by retail businesses. One retail space is currently vacant. Only one retail business, the Market Basket, supplies essential goods and services. The others supply specialty goods, gifts, and boutique items.

On the other hand, nine (33%) of the buildings or leased spaces are occupied by professional office-service type businesses (attorneys, architect, dentists, interior design, real estate, etc.). Another five (18.5%) of the buildings or leased spaces are occupied by service type businesses (electric contractor, spa, cleaners, etc.). Together, these non-retail businesses account for over 50% of the businesses in the district.

The inventory reveals that the Village Center does not have a strong retail sector. Rather, professional office and service-type businesses are predominant. This information provides a partial understanding why there is not the level of foot traffic people desire. Professional office and

service-type businesses do not generate much foot traffic, unlike retail, which encourages foot traffic from business to business, within a reasonable distance. Thus, through time the district has changed considerably from one that provided essential retail goods and services to a predominantly office-service type district.

The business mix reveals one aspect of Village Center context. There are three other dimensions of context that are important:

- At the local level, the Village Center is an integration of mixed characteristics – residential, commercial, recreational, cultural, historic, and rural. It is not only a place to shop, it is a *residential neighborhood*. Not unlike other residents of the Village, residents of the Village Center are looking for privacy, security and a sense of well being. Planning and zoning efforts must respect the neighborhood context within which the Village Center operates.
- At the Village-wide level, the Village Center is the true center of the Village, as a result of being the governmental center, the main gathering place, the center of religious life in the Village, the place for recreation, and the center of commerce. The Village Center creates an identity for the entire Village. For example, the logo on the Village’s letterhead conjures up an image from the Village Center. When many people think of Franklin, it is the Village Center that comes to mind. It is a very powerful image, which is the reason maintaining the health of the Village Center is so important.

- At the regional level, the Village Center, particularly the retail uses, are in competition with all of the other retail development in surrounding and nearby communities, particularly Southfield, Bloomfield Township, and Farmington Hills. Village Center businesses must offer some combination of convenience, acceptable price, exceptional service, unique products or other amenities if they are to attract patrons away from regional retailers. Some retailers in the Village Center have said that up to 80% of their customers come from outside the Village. This gives a good perspective on the regional context within which the Village Center operates.

## **RELEVANT ISSUES**

A comprehensive listing of relevant issues facing the Village Center evolved out of a February 27, 2006 meeting, at which Village Center business and property owners participated in a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). About 14 business and property owners participated in the session. The SWOT analysis revealed the following (please see table):

### **Strengths**

Not surprisingly, the Village Center's unique historic character topped the list of strengths. People recognize that, if not for the historical buildings and character, the Village Center might be just another downtown or strip commercial area. People also recognize that the Village Center is more than just a business center – it is a gathering place for the Village for a multitude of purposes, it is the center of local government, and it is also the recreation and cultural center of the Village.

Traffic levels are cited as a strength, providing high visibility for businesses. Vehicles passing by are considered essential for the success of retail trade, so high levels of traffic – within reason – along Franklin Road would be considered good for business. However, high traffic volumes are also cited as a weakness, because they make walking risky and disrupt the Village's historic charm.

### **Weaknesses**

Many of the weaknesses cited by business and property owners relate to the compact character of historic buildings and plats of the Village Center, which produce small buildings on small lots that have little room for landscaping. In addition, the commercial district itself is relatively small. The size constraints affect the competitiveness of businesses in the district, which must compete with larger businesses on more spacious sites in larger commercial districts in surrounding communities.

As important as it is as strength, the historic character of the Village Center is also viewed as a weakness. In particular, business owners consider the historic district regulations too restrictive. It is a delicate balance: maintaining the character of the historic district while providing enough flexibility to the businesses to compete in the modern marketplace. It is a balance that has not been achieved of late, in the view of some, who consider the downtown as “tacky” and in need of being refreshed.

The discussion of weaknesses would be incomplete if it did not direct attention on Village Center improvement efforts of recent years. There has been dissatisfaction with these efforts, based on the comments from the February 27, 2006 SWOT meeting and other meetings. At the heart of this dissatisfaction is the lack of a comprehensive, sustained, long-term effort to revitalize the district. Also, based on comments at the February 27 meeting, Village revitalization will need support from both the Village government

**Table 8: Franklin Village Center SWOT Analysis, February 27, 2006**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique historic character</li> <li>• Wealthy local population</li> <li>• Traffic levels provide high visibility</li> <li>• The gathering place for the Village</li> <li>• Neat, but not overly trim; quaint</li> <li>• High canopied trees visually unite the varied uses and styles along Franklin Road</li> <li>• Seat of local government</li> <li>• The Village Green</li> <li>• Presence of the Post Office and Library</li> <li>• Plenty of parking</li> <li>• Visually interesting buildings</li> <li>• Mixed use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small size of buildings</li> <li>• Small size of commercial district</li> <li>• Old buildings require a lot of maintenance</li> <li>• Traffic levels make walking risky</li> <li>• Overhead utility lines are unsightly</li> <li>• Historic district regulations restrict changes</li> <li>• Lack of room for landscaping in front</li> <li>• Parking is not coordinated</li> <li>• Mix of uses may not be ideal</li> <li>• Downtown is tacky, needs to be refreshed</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage or develop uses that enhance existing attractions, such as a farmers' market</li> <li>• Create a Chamber of Commerce or similar organization for collaborative promotion</li> <li>• Develop architectural design guidelines</li> <li>• Link parking in the rear, particularly on the east side of Franklin Road</li> <li>• Develop landscape design guidelines</li> <li>• Enhance existing trees with new plantings</li> <li>• Create/schedule events that bring people to the Village Center</li> <li>• Set up Special Assessment District to collectively fund improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing traffic and speeds that detract from historic charm and hinder pedestrian enjoyment</li> <li>• Competition from commercial development in the region</li> <li>• Tree disease, pests, and age</li> <li>• Lack of critical mass to keep commercial district going</li> <li>• New development and renovation not in keeping with existing character</li> </ul>

and commercial establishments. Local businesses must have the will and desire to mobilize local resources and talent. To the extent that such self-determination is absent, it will impede progress in improving the Village Center.

## Opportunities

The SWOT analysis identified several opportunities, some of which were linked to weaknesses. Design, in the form of urban design guidelines and landscape design guidelines, was seen as a key opportunity. Design guidelines empower communities to direct changes rather than become unwitting victims of blind market forces and thoughtless expansion. By taking care that new additions or alterations to the landscape do not diminish existing historic properties, design guidelines encourage the dynamic interaction of old and new traditions. By encouraging the creation of new buildings that contribute equally enduring examples of contemporary design to the historic streetscape, design guidelines invigorate and enrich community character. Design guidelines protect and encourage the authentic and unique qualities of a neighborhood and by doing so they would help Village Center merchants achieve their number one goal: to distinguish themselves from the competition.



Another important opportunity identified was the creation of an organization for collaborative promotion, such as a Chamber of Commerce. This could be facilitated using the Main Street Four-Point Approach program for commercial district revitalization, discussed in detail later in

this Chapter. The first point in this program is Organization, which “involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a revitalization program.”

The second point in the program is “promotion.” Promotion sells a positive image of the district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, plan and invest in the district. Currently, the Village does some promotion, mostly through special events. However, a comprehensive promotional effort is needed, focusing on advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns. Recently, a number of merchants have joined together to market and promote their offerings in local publications.

## Threats

Competition from commercial developments in the region is perceived as a threat to the commercial sector in the Village Center. A related threat is the possible lack of critical mass to maintain a competitive position in the marketplace. Recently, a business relocated from Franklin to downtown Royal Oak where there is a greater critical mass, illustrating the impact of this factor on growth and development of the Village Center’s commercial district.

There is a threat, particularly if design guidelines are not adopted, that new developments and renovation will not be keeping with existing character.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

- ***Implement the “Main Street Four-Point Approach,” promulgated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.*** The four points that are part and parcel to this approach are Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Restructuring.
  - As described previously, Organization involves getting the stakeholders working toward the same goals and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement the Main Street program. Key goals of the organizational step are building consensus and cooperation, and a sustained effort.
  - Promotion involves selling a positive image of the commercial district and encouraging consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district.
  - Design is a multifaceted element that broadly means getting Main Street into top physical shape, but involves more: attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping.
  - Economic Restructuring focuses on strengthening existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying the economic base.
- ***Develop and follow an overriding “theme for commerce” in the Village Center.*** This theme should communicate the essence of what commercial activity is to be like. It is intended that this theme for commerce will be the standard against which new uses, renovations, and new developments will be measured to determine their appropriateness.
  - ***Encourage coordinated parking behind buildings.***
    - Vehicles should not be allowed to park in front of commercial buildings, except as required, such as for the Franklin Post Office.
    - Parking is limited in the Village Center, but there are a sufficient total number of spaces. Ideally, parking should remain hidden from Franklin Road by placing all parking behind buildings, where feasible.
    - On the east side of Franklin Road, more efficient use of existing land set aside for parking could be achieved by joining or combining parking lots. By joining or combining parking lots, it may be possible to reduce the number of entries onto Franklin Road, a measure that would improve traffic safety and upgrade the pedestrian environment.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Community Facilities & Open Space

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### VISION

*Community facilities in the Village of Franklin have evolved consistent with the needs and expectations of this small-town, prudent, close-knit community. Accordingly, community services are professional and friendly, not bureaucratic; community facilities meet essential needs and are not extravagant; and services and facilities are community oriented while respecting individual privacy and independence. Quality is the most important characteristic that defines all community facilities in the Village of Franklin.*

### VILLAGE SERVICES

A primary purpose of municipal government is the delivery of services designed for the health, safety, and welfare of the local population. The Village of Franklin coordinates with local organizations and neighboring municipalities to provide residents with high quality community facilities and services. Administrative services, police and fire protection, open space, social and cultural opportunities, and other services and public infrastructure are provided and/or managed by the Village, Oakland County, the Birmingham Public School District, Franklin Community Church, Franklin Community Association, and other public and private groups.

### Broughton House (Village Hall)

Village offices are housed in the historic Daniel Broughton House, built in the mid-1800s. The Village Hall includes the offices of the Village Administrator and Village Clerk, the Building Department, and a meeting space for the Village Council, Planning Commission, and other community groups. Work space in the Village Hall is at a premium, as the structure was not originally designed for municipal offices. Even though the existing space is efficiently used, eventually it may be necessary to seek additional office space for the Village government.

A continuing problem in the Village is the lack of public meeting space. Only two small publicly-owned spaces are available: a meeting room in the Broughton House and a smaller room in the

library. The room at the Broughton House can seat between 20 and 30 comfortably; stored items would need to be relocated to permit the maximum capacity of 40 persons. The room in the library can hold a meeting of about one dozen persons, but it cannot be closed off from other library functions, limiting its usefulness. Although having to work around scheduling conflicts is common, the Franklin Community Church



accommodates large public meetings. Community meeting facilities are lacking at times. Nevertheless, the Village has always managed to accommodate needs by adjusting schedules and moving groups to the properly-sized facility. Due to budget constraints, Historical Society restrictions, political considerations and other reasons, it is likely that the Broughton House, Library, and Franklin Community Church will continue to be the Village's main meeting

facilities. The Derwich Property, which is owned by the Historical Society, is also a potential meeting place.

### **Franklin-Bingham Volunteer Fire Department**

The Franklin-Bingham Volunteer Fire Department is a private, non-profit corporation, founded in the 1930s. It has achieved distinction among surrounding communities because of its unique organization (a form of privatization) and quality of service. The department has achieved a very respectable average response time of 5.41 minutes.



The department serves Franklin and Bingham Farms plus seven houses in Southfield Township. Within this area last year the department made 385 runs, 10 of which were fires and 204 of which were for emergency medical services. The department also has a primary mutual aid agreement to serve seventeen communities in the area, and a secondary aid agreement to help serve all of Oakland County.

The mutual aid agreement benefited surrounding communities several years ago during a regional U.S. black out. The Franklin – Bingham Fire Department was on stand-by to deliver water using its tankers to communities on public water, since water pressure dropped to zero in those communities. Franklin does not have a public water system, so the Fire Department maintains a

fleet of 2 tankers. Other vehicles in the fleet include a ladder truck, an engine, a rescue vehicle and a command vehicle.

The fire hall, built in 1959, has limited space and parking. An addition built in 2005 added a second, larger truck bay at ground level and two rooms on the second floor. The department has a full-time Chief, a full-time firefighter, a part time clerk, and 33 volunteers. Nearly all of the volunteers live outside of Franklin Village.

The Department has been able to adequately handle any fire-related problems that the Village has experienced to date. Because future development is not expected on a larger scale than currently exists, it is expected that current Fire Department capabilities will be adequate to provide high-quality service now and in the future.

### **Franklin Police Department**

The Police Department is employed by the Village Council to provide protection and assistance to the Village residents. Staffing of the Department includes the Chief, ten full-time officers, and twelve reserve officers. As is the case for the Fire Department, the police provide service to both the Villages of Franklin and Bingham Farms.

The Police Department typically responds to more emergency calls than the Fire Department. The predominant complaints handled by the Village police include home alarms and other minor incidents. According to the detective sergeant, Franklin experienced very few Class I felonies in 2005, with only one armed robbery, one home invasion, two stolen vehicles, and six residential larcenies. Incidents in all categories decreased from 2004 to 2005, with no violent crimes (e.g. murder, sexual assault) reported in the Village. For many years, the Police Department occupied the basement of Broughton House (the Village Hall), leading to severe space constraints for all occupants of the building. A new, 4,500 square foot police station was constructed in 2000. This new facility provides much needed dedicated space for the police department to fulfill its functions and duties.



## **Water**

The Village currently has adequate potable water provided by individual private wells. A recent (2003) referendum of Village residents showed that a 2-1 majority favored staying on private wells.<sup>1</sup>

Future changes in the water supply method should consider such issues as cost, growth potential, reliability of a public system, water quality, and environmental considerations.

## **Wastewater**

Residential neighborhoods in Franklin Village are served by sanitary pressure sewers or individual septic tank systems. About fifty percent of the residences are hooked up to the sanitary sewer system. Septic field failures prompted the installation of sanitary sewers in the Village in 1995.

The primary motivation for providing sanitary sewer service in the Village is the protection of public and environmental health. Failing septic systems create the potential for untreated wastewater to enter the local streams and rivers, exposing Village residents to unhealthful conditions and creating negative effects on natural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> There was 65% voter turnout, and 935 voted against and 509 voted in favor of a public water system. 934 voted against an increased millage to fund a public water system, and 497 voted in favor.

## **Storm Water**

In addition to wastewater disposal, storm water management is also an essential part of pollution control within the Village. Few of the streams located in the Village are designated as County drains, and there are no guidelines available for permissible activities within non-designated drain areas. Map 6 shows the locations of streams and floodplains in the Village. Storm water management operations will be enhanced by following these recommendations:

- The floodway area, which bounds the Franklin Branch of the Rouge River, should be preserved and protected. No development or filling should be allowed in this area, nor should any vegetative alterations be permitted.
- To protect the natural ability of the drains and drainage swales to absorb and convey storm water flows, no development, filling, or change in the character of the vegetative cover should be permitted in such drainage courses.

By granting special consideration for these drainage areas, environmental integrity of these zones will be preserved, and the storm water management objectives of the Village may be achieved.

Runoff from streets and parking lots is a major source of pollutants to the Franklin Branch of the Rouge River. Wherever possible, on-site detention should be sought to encourage stormwater infiltration into the ground.

## **Utility Wires**

Overhead utility wires and poles are among the most visually disruptive elements in the rural landscape in Franklin. The aesthetic quality of the streetscape is diminished by the presence of wires lining and crossing the streets. A phased program to eliminate overhead wires and poles is required. Such a program should begin in the Village Center and Historic District.

## **COORDINATED SERVICES**

### **Library**

The Franklin Library began its life in the Franklin School, moving in 1938 to an office building



located on what would become the Village Green. The Franklin Community Library Association was formed in 1940, accepting responsibility for the library's collection from the Franklin School Parent-Teacher Association.

From 1961 to 1976, the library shared building space with the Village offices and police department, until those entities moved to the Broughton House. In 1973, the library changed from a paid subscription organization to a public library to become eligible for State funding.

The late 1980s brought significant change when the Franklin Public Library joined what would later become The Library Network (TLN), a consortium of over 65 local libraries throughout Southeast Michigan. Membership in TLN allows Franklin Public Library patrons reciprocal access to materials in the collections of any TLN member library.



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## **Schools**

The Village of Franklin is part of the Birmingham Public Schools (BPS), which serves 7,900 students in thirteen schools from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. There are no district facilities within the Village; elementary students attend the West Maple Elementary School, located two miles away in Bloomfield Township. Middle school students attend Berkshire Middle School at Fourteen Mile and Lasher, and high school students attend Groves High Schools at Thirteen Mile and Evergreen Road. Students in grades 3 – 8 also have the option of attending Covington School, a magnet school.

The historic Franklin School, founded in 1828 (current building built in 1922), is located in the Village, but it is no longer owned by the school district. It is now called Huda School, a private school.

Recent bond issues are providing for ongoing improvements at all BPS schools, including those that Franklin students attend. The schools have been updated with new technology, and all elementary schools in the district are being completely renovated. Given the plans of the BPS for renovation and improvements, the lack of space for new development, and the projections of school-age children in the Village, no new school facilities should be necessary within the Village of Franklin.

## **RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE**

Due to the existing recreational opportunities in the Village (provided by the Franklin Community Association) and neighboring communities, Franklin has little need to construct additional active recreation facilities within the Village limits. However, consideration should be given toward the acquisition of new, publicly-owned open space areas within the Village.

### **Village Green and Franklin Community Association Grounds**

The Village Green, the block on which the library sits north of Broughton House, is owned by the Village. There are no active recreational facilities on this land, but it is accessible to the public. It is a particularly useful gathering place for Village events, such as Concerts on the Green.

The Village would benefit from preparing and adopting a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Such a plan would include an analysis of existing facilities and programs, identification of deficiencies and needs, and projections of future improvements, short-term (within 5 years) and long-term. A Parks and Recreation Master Plan could incorporate an open space element, as described below.

On land owned by the Franklin Community Association (a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the people of Franklin Village) and located west of the Broughton House, there are three ball diamonds, two tennis courts, and a gazebo. A sledding hill, located on Village property between the cemetery and the Green, also provides a recreational opportunity.

## Open Space

Village residents take pride in Franklin's undeveloped places and natural areas. Wetlands, wooded thickets, ball fields, Charlotte's Garden (adjacent to Broughton House), and the Village Green are essential to the image of Franklin.

Most of the undeveloped areas are privately owned, however, and are not protected from future development. With the exception of scattered small parcels, the only publicly-owned open space is the Village Green and the adjacent land owned by the Franklin Community Association.



The loss of open spaces will significantly change the character of the Village if residential development occurs on the few remaining open parcels. Development may be sudden or gradual – the incremental expansion of cleared area for lawn can, over time, have as detrimental an effect as wholesale land clearing for construction of new houses. The deed restrictions in place for some neighborhoods provide only a minimal level of protection for open spaces; the restrictions may

not cover all potential losses of open space or they may not remain in force over the long term.

An open space plan for the Village would inventory the remaining undeveloped parcels and publicly-owned natural areas and establish guidelines for their use and preservation. A plan would provide land developers, whether of multiple parcels or a single lot, with the opportunity to shape development around open space areas and incorporate the natural features of the Village into their construction plans. An open space plan could identify potential connections between open space areas that would serve to better enhance the rural character of the Village.

The following recommendations regarding open space within the Village should be considered for implementation by the Village Council.

- Preserve undeveloped areas throughout the Village to protect rural character and the functioning of natural ecosystems. An inventory of undeveloped parcels, natural areas, and publicly-owned land should be the basis for a preservation program. Acquisition of development rights, obtaining conservation easements, or outright land purchases are tools that can be used to implement the program. Priority areas include:
  - Connections to publicly owned parcels or other protected natural areas.
  - Highly visible locations that define the character of the Village, such as intersections.
  - Opportunities for a public pathway system linking neighborhoods to the Village Center.
  - Parcels offered by private landowners for conservation easements or permanent deed restrictions.
- Develop landscape guidelines for the protection of the character of Franklin Village through appropriate plantings and the retention of existing vegetation. These guidelines should be applicable to both individual residential landowners and parcels in the Village Center.





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### **Franklin Cemetery**

Franklin Cemetery, established in 1827 by Elijah Bullock, is currently owned and managed by the Franklin Cemetery Association, a non-profit corporation of cemetery plot owners. The cemetery comprises approximately six acres of land in the southwest corner of the historic district. A variety of mature trees are planted within the cemetery, particularly on the north side of the property.

The cemetery holds over 3,500 graves, with 532 dated from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A war memorial to Franklin's veterans holds a place of honor in the cemetery. Additional spaces in the cemetery are available for sale to residents; purchases are conducted through the Cemetery Association.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# Trees and Vegetation Management

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### VISION

*More than any other natural resource, trees and natural vegetation mark the rural character of Franklin Village. The preservation of healthy trees and the regular replacement of dead or dying vegetation assure the Village of the continued visual and ecological benefits provided by a mature, diverse tree canopy.*

Wooded areas and tree-lined streets contribute an invaluable benefit to the character of the Village. Trees and vegetation provide an experience for all the senses and mark Franklin as a unique community within the region. Pressures of growth and development, coupled with age and disease, compel foresight and sound management plans to maintain this fragile, critical resource.

### HISTORY

The 1977 Master Plan included a map of the major stands of vegetation in the Village. During the 1996 Plan update, it was determined that these stands had changed little over the past twenty years. Four major patterns of vegetation were apparent in the Village:

- Over-mature deciduous canopy and evergreen trees, with an understory of ornamental trees and shrubs on maintained turfgrass lawns.
- Mature deciduous canopy trees with mixed evergreens and a naturally-occurring understory of shrubs and small trees.
- Mixed-age and mixed-species stands of vegetation, primarily on undeveloped portions of residential lots.
- Semi-mature deciduous and evergreen trees on smaller lots with turfgrass lawns.

The recent availability of the pressure sanitary sewer to owners of undeveloped property in Franklin meant that areas that were previously unbuildable could now be developed. This put major tree stands in the Village at increased risk.

Because of the great importance of trees and vegetation to residents, a Vegetation Management Report was completed in 1997, based on field surveys performed in the spring of the previous year. The report outlined the status of vegetation in Franklin, noting the age, relative health, and potential threats to trees and vegetated areas throughout the Village. The field data collected gave a general picture of the Village as a whole and was not intended to be exhaustive.



However, the data were not encouraging. It suggested that the tree canopy and other vegetation so important to Villagers was at great risk of disappearing in the next few decades and would result in drastic change in the microclimate and visual character of the Village.

### RELEVANT ISSUES

Four major issues were identified. First, much of the existing vegetation was decades-old and mature or over-mature. The effects of developed

areas (higher temperatures, compacted soils, increased pollution) can significantly shorten a plant's life expectancy. Trees can be in a state of decline for many years and still appear healthy, but they will eventually succumb to the pressures of age, development, disease, and weather.

Second, the low diversity of vegetation species and ages in the Village is a concern. Many canopy trees are one of only a few species (silver maple, Colorado spruce, Norway spruce). In the chance that a pest or disease appears that affects a particular species (e.g., Dutch Elm Disease or the Emerald Ash Borer), a significant portion of the Village's tree cover and vegetation may be quickly lost. Additionally, same-aged stands of trees become susceptible to the effects of age (weak branches or roots leading to vulnerability to wind or ice) at the same time, creating a potential for one severe event to wipe out numerous trees.

Third, there was no replacement plan to provide young trees that will grow and provide a canopy when the existing trees are gone, or to replace trees removed because of development and redevelopment. Trees are slow growing, and decades of time will be required to replace the current canopy and undisturbed areas with newly planted vegetation.

The fourth issue of concern to Franklin's vegetation was its location in road and utility rights-of-way. As companies and agencies outside the Village make decisions on road improvements or utility maintenance, the existing trees and vegetation that are "in the way" can suffer removal or irreparable damage. Adverse effects of location near roadways (high salt concentrations, automotive pollutants, physical damage from vehicles) also contribute to the decline of vegetation in rights-of-way.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 1997**

### **Tree Protection Ordinance**

In 2001, the Village Council adopted an ordinance to promote the health, safety and general welfare of Village residents through a regulatory program of tree protection. This program was designed to protect, preserve and conserve mature trees, to manage and provide oversight of the removal of problem trees, and to provide for the subsequent replacement of trees removed in the Village.

The ordinance requires a permit for removal of any protected tree, mandates physical barriers to prevent damage to trees during construction activities, and regulates the replacement of removed trees on a one-for-one basis. Penalties for violation of the ordinance include stop-work orders, liability for a civil suit brought by the Village, and such penalties as accompany a municipal civil infraction.



### **Heritage Tree List**

The heritage tree list, adopted in 1970 and revised in 2001, lists trees that by virtue of their size (and therefore, age) are regarded by the Village to be of unique importance and worthy of special protection. Consideration was given to removing from the list trees that are undesirable as street-side plantings or that do not contribute to the rural character of the Village, such as crabapple or honey locust.

## **Tree City USA**

The Village of Franklin received Tree City USA designation in 2004 from the National Arbor Day Foundation. As a Tree City, the Village promotes trees as an important element of local character and is eligible for grant funding and educational materials related to planting and maintaining trees. To maintain its status as a Tree City USA, the Village must satisfy the following requirements:

- Issue an annual Arbor Day proclamation by the Village Council and organize an Arbor Day celebration. National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April.
- Appoint a citizen tree committee or park board that has responsibility for the care of trees within public right-of-ways and other public spaces.
- Adopt guidelines specifying appropriate species for planting within the Village and typical planting details.
- Spend at least \$2 per capita on trees, whether on purchase or maintenance. A cycle of pruning street trees and trees on public property on a three to five year basis is often satisfactory. Inspection of street trees and trees on public property should occur several times a year.

## **Contextual Zoning**

Prior to 2005, residential zoning regulations were quite generous, allowing up to 35% lot coverage and substantial grading. Grading was permitted to allow construction of a lower level walkout, even when not warranted by the natural topography. Overbuilding, out of scale construction, and widespread loss of tree cover were often the result.

A measure of control over these impacts was achieved in 2005 with the adoption of contextual zoning regulations. These regulations disallow significant altering of grade. Equally significantly, the regulations establish increased side setback requirements, requiring minimum total side setbacks to be not less than one third of the lot width. The significance of the contextual zoning regulations with respect to trees and vegetation management is that less of the total lot will now be impacted by construction activity.

## **Tree Survey and Tree Planting Program**

The Village has taken proactive steps to study and document the health characteristics of trees in the Village. A study was completed in 2004 in which twenty percent (20%) of the trees in the right-of-way or on public spaces were surveyed to determine species, health, age, and other pertinent characteristics.

A tree planting program was initiated in 2005, using a grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, resulting in the planting of trees in road rights-of-way and on public lands, such as the Village Green. The Village followed up with a second tree planting in the summer of 2006, resulting in a total of 250 trees being planted. The MDNR grants paid for \$20,000 of cost and the Village paid \$60,000 of the cost of the tree planting.

## **Energy Considerations**

The landscape which knits Franklin together not only contributes to the Village's unique visual character, but also provides health and energy benefits. The rich vegetative cover cleans polluted air via the process of photosynthesis, taking in carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen. Dust and other airborne particles adhere to leaf surfaces, leaving the air clearer and cleaner.

Transpiration through leaves provides moisture in the air which, in combination with summer breezes, provides natural air conditioning. The summer comfort level in the wooded Village is noticeably different than the hot, dry "heat island effect" of more developed cities nearby. Trees, both large and small, provide a cooling shade canopy and respite from the summer sun. During the winter, evergreen vegetative cover blocks harsh winter winds, protecting buildings from heat loss and providing wind breaks for drifting snow. Deciduous trees which provide cooling shade in the summer allow radiant heat to passively warm south-facing buildings during the winter months.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

***Maintain and enhance the Village's vegetative cover through the tree planting and replacement program, which is already underway.***

- Implement a shrub and tree replacement program so that the natural, vegetative look of Franklin is maintained as existing plantings must be removed.
- Promote the extensive planting of trees now to ensure sufficient canopy replacement as existing trees decline or die over the next ten to twenty years.
- Replace dead, dying, or nuisance vegetation in utility rights-of-way with shrubs, grasses, and shorter trees that provide habitat and groundcover without interfering with overhead utility lines.
- Select trees and vegetation to be planted in the Village from the adopted Rural Landscape Character Plant List.

***In selected areas, plant mixed stands of native vegetation (not exotic or ornamental species). These would be thickets of various species of shrubs and trees related to oak-hickory forests, such as exist elsewhere in the Village.***

- Use such thickets (considering such species as ninebark, chokeberry, New Jersey tea, witch hazel, potentilla, fragrant sumac, Michigan rose, steeple bush, and spicebush) to enhance Franklin's rural character.
- Other benefits include privacy screening and provision of wildlife habitat.

***Take practical action to minimize damage to vegetation from pests, disease, and human activity.***

- Ensure that trees planted along Village streets are located outside the right-of-way to prevent damage from road repairs and utilities maintenance.
- Coordinate with utility companies regarding the location and long-term maintenance of new plantings near

underground and overhead utility rights-of-way. Encourage utility crews to use sound pruning techniques to maintain a proper form for trees in the Village.

- Prevent major pest or disease infestation through regular vegetation inspection and spot treatment of identified problems.
- Review the current Tree Protection Ordinance and update as necessary to achieve desired results.



- Revise the ordinance pertaining to Dutch elm disease, C.O. Section 1024.01, to eliminate the reference to DDT as a pretreatment to burning infected elm logs. Less-harmful insecticides, such as malathion, are sufficient to kill elm bark beetles to prevent their escape from cut logs and branches.
- Consider adding a new section to Chapter 1024 to address the proper management of ash trees (*Fraxinus* spp.) and ash wood products in light of the regional Emerald Ash Borer epidemic.

***Promote vigorous tree growth through the proper care and maintenance of vegetation.***

- Protect the root zone by limiting impervious surfaces (drives, parking areas) near mature and maturing trees.



- Place mulch 4” - 6” deep over the root zone of shrubs and trees, but not more than an inch thick next to tree trunks, to maintain soil temperature and moisture.
- Provide supplemental water and nutrients to trees growing in high heat areas, such as roadsides, parking lots, and large lawns. Water vegetation thoroughly during times of drought, employing smart water management techniques.
- Hire experienced specialists to perform routine pruning and inspections of trees.
- Ensure that fertilizers are used judiciously and correctly. Perform regular soil tests to determine the relative need for fertilizing nutrients.

***Promote a robust green infrastructure with a mix of species and ages of trees and vegetation.***

- Advocate the use of native trees and vegetation in mixed-species stands.
- Encourage a variety of tree species to avoid the potential catastrophic loss of monoculture plantings.

***Preserve the visual rural character of the Village through education and careful management.***

- Protect existing vegetation, trees, hedges, and mixed plantings to retain the rural look of Franklin.
- Develop educational materials for landowners regarding proper tree and vegetation management. Include the adopted Rural Character Plant List.
- Prepare design guidelines for property owners to illustrate how to keep the large lot scale, spacing, rural character and vegetation of existing neighborhoods.

***Encourage the preservation of the simple rural character of the Village by enhancing and preserving the rural scenic nature along main roads and boundaries, enhancing and protecting large open areas, and planting and maintaining vegetation along roads in public areas that contribute to rural character.***

## CHAPTER NINE

# Traffic and Circulation

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### VISION

*The circulation system in the Village of Franklin consists of roads and pathways that provide a safe, efficient and pleasant way to travel by vehicle or on foot. The road system consists of a network of interconnected roads that are designed for moderate speeds, so that drivers can enjoy the pleasures of the natural roadside environment. Equally important are the pathways for non-motorized transportation, which extend throughout the Village and are designed to curve in and around natural features so as to blend into the environment.*

### HISTORY AND PRESENT CONTEXT

Franklin residents, like residents throughout Oakland County, are primarily dependant on automobile travel and the region's arterial road network for access to employment, schools, shopping, and services. The low-density character of Franklin and its lack of employment centers requires travel to other communities to meet these needs, and, in turn, most of the patrons visiting the businesses in the Village Center come from outside of Franklin. Fortunately, Franklin is well-served by the regional road network, with Telegraph Road and Northwestern Highway providing vehicle access throughout the area.

In addition to providing good access to and from Franklin, the local arterial and collector roads carry heavy traffic both along the periphery of the Village and also on Franklin Road and Thirteen Mile Road, which carry a substantial amount of traffic through Franklin. These traffic levels, driven by the past few decades of development in western Oakland County, have concerned Franklin residents for some time.

As highlighted in Chapter Two, Inventory and Analysis, the older major roadways are connected to Franklin's neighborhoods by a local system of curvilinear residential streets in a pattern of development begun in the 1920s. These narrower winding streets and cul-de-sacs carry neighborhood traffic at lower speeds, and are shared by pedestrians and cyclists.

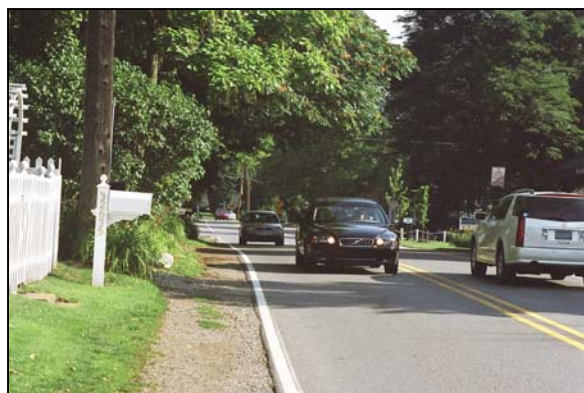
### Roadway Role in Defining Village Character

In addition to providing access to regional amenities, the arterial road system provides context and definition for the Village. Franklin is bounded on three sides by major streets—Telegraph Road, Inkster Road, and Fourteen Mile Road—which provide distinct and recognizable edges to the Village. These edges are reinforced by the existing zoning, which designates the lots along these borders as low-density residential, and by landscaping, such as the addition of earth mounds and tree plantings during past construction projects on Telegraph Road, in contrast to the office developments and parking lots that exist across the street at many points on Franklin's borders.

The major roads additionally remain important places from which citizens view a community, and the only way that many through travelers ever experience the community. Sections of Thirteen Mile Road, Fourteen Mile Road, and Franklin Road still remain country style roadways that are pleasant to drive when traffic volumes are low and are lined with visual elements that help to define the character and history of the Village—fences of pickets, iron, or split rails, older trees, wildflowers, and glimpses of manicured lawns and gardens.

While residents may rely on automobile travel to reach jobs and shopping, they have expressed significant and increasing interest in creating and maintaining paths or trails within the Village for

recreational use. These paths would provide for walking or cycling, without traveling on the major arterials, and could connect neighborhoods to significant natural areas within the Village and to the Village Center. Designed to be a part of the landscape, these paths could have a natural-looking surface and would curve around trees and natural contours.



## Regional Conditions

In order to classify the intended use and service of these routes, the Road Commission for the County has established a functional classification system that identifies roads as arterial, collector, or local access routes. According to this classification, Franklin Village is served by a transportation network composed of two statewide arterial corridors and a series of local arterial highways. The major roads that serve Franklin are classified as follows:

Telegraph Road	<i>Statewide Arterial</i>
Northwestern Highway	<i>Statewide Arterial</i>
Fourteen Mile Road	<i>Local Arterial</i>
Thirteen Mile Road	<i>Local Arterial</i>
Inkster Road	<i>Local Arterial</i>
Franklin Road	<i>Collector Road</i>

These three street types - statewide arterials, local arterials, and collectors - have characteristics that distinguish them from one another. These street types and definitions are consistent with the Road Commission's Master Right-of-Way Program.

## Northwestern Highway

This multi-lane divided highway slices along the southwestern boundary of the Village to Twelve Mile Road and then continues as the Lodge Freeway into Southfield and Detroit. The highway is important to Franklin residents because of the accessibility and entry to the Village provided at Franklin Road. However, the highway is also important to area residents as the link to Interstate 696 and the northern boundary of land proposed for intensive development.

Northwestern Highway currently exists as a limited access thoroughfare with a right-of-way of 204 feet and primary intersections at both Franklin Road and Inkster Road. According to SEMCOG, the highway accommodates regional traffic volumes destined toward Southfield and Detroit.

The narrowing of Northwestern Highway from six lanes to four adjacent to the Village of Franklin can create a bottleneck at peak traffic periods, causing traffic to divert through the Village. The Michigan Department of Transportation and the Road Commission for Oakland County have discussed widening Northwestern Highway to six lanes. However, these discussions have not led to widening in the past, because improved traffic flow for this segment would not lead to a comparable network at the end.

With the current Northwestern Connector project intended to streamline traffic flow at Northwestern Highway's terminus, re-examining traffic flow near Franklin may be an option in the future. At this point, however, there are no plans for increasing the number of lanes, and new plans would have to compete for very limited County and State road funding. Changes at the intersection with Franklin Road have been discussed and are included in the City of Southfield Master Plan.

## Thirteen Mile Road

This road is classified as a County primary road by the Road Commission. It has a proposed right-of-way of 120 feet on the Master Right-of-Way Plan.

Thirteen Mile Road will continue to accommodate local trips of moderate length. However, with the improvement of Twelve Mile and Fifteen Mile Roads as regional east-west arterial roads, Thirteen Mile Road should be retained as a local artery.

The character of the roadway and the function it serves by bisecting the Village should be carefully evaluated before any improvements to the roadway are recommended. Restoring the rural character along the roadside will be important.

## Fourteen Mile Road

This road is classified as a county local road by the Road Commission. It has a proposed right-of-way of 86 feet on the Master Right-of-Way Plan. The current right-of-way varies from 66 to 120 feet in width. The intersection at Telegraph Road is signalized in order to control traffic speeds and congestion. Fourteen Mile is not currently paved between Franklin Road and Inkster Road, and conditions on that segment of road limit speed significantly.

## Inkster Road

Inkster Road forms the western boundary of the Village and exists as a local arterial roadway. The road serves moderate traffic volumes that are generated by land uses along the road, plus through traffic making connections with Northwestern Highway.

## Franklin Road

Franklin Road is a collector road having two lanes that forms the spine of the Village Center. It is also an important element in defining the character of the Historic District. The road varies in both right-of-way and pavement widths along its route, and parking is provided along certain portions of the roadway within the Village Center. The roadway has become an important local route that is primarily used by residents of Franklin Village and Bloomfield Township and the major traffic generators in these communities.

## Traffic Volume, Speed, and Safety

One of the most frequently stated concerns about Franklin's transportation network is traffic—both quantity and speed have been of concern to Franklin residents for decades. This was an especially pressing concern in the 1996 Plan Update, as the rapid development of western Oakland County had caused traffic levels to double or more on most of Franklin's major roadways. Traffic levels have stabilized since the early 1990s, however, as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9: Franklin Village Traffic Counts, 1991-1995 and 2004**

Location	Average Daily Volume, 1991-1995	Average Daily Volume, 2004
Telegraph Road		
Intersection with Thirteen Mile	106,000	92,007
Fourteen Mile Road		
Intersection with Telegraph	87,000	82,466
Intersection with Franklin	12,000	11,163
Intersection with Inkster	9,000	14,773
Franklin Road		
Intersection with Thirteen Mile	27,000	22,464
Intersection with Scenic Highway	9,500	16,087
Inkster Road		
Intersection with Northwestern Highway	75,000*	35,445
Intersection with Thirteen Mile	21,000	19,392

\* Could not verify 1991-1995 count.

Average Daily Volume is in vehicles per day.  
Sources: 1997 Franklin Village Master Plan Update;  
Traffic Improvement Association of Oakland County

As was stated in 1997 Traffic Calming Master Plan Update, reducing the quantity of traffic traveling through and around Franklin is probably an unrealistic goal, considering the continued development of areas to the north and west, and the region's reliance on the road network for transportation. What Franklin can do is to continue minimizing the impact of this traffic on the Village. Several of the policies recommended in the 1996 Update are still relevant, such as

reducing congestion on major arterials, such as Telegraph Road and Northwestern Highway, to prevent diversion of traffic through the Village, and the prevention of capacity-increasing road projects within the Village.

Speeding remains a concern in Franklin, especially on the segments of Thirteen Mile, Fourteen Mile, and Franklin Roads where hills or curves limit sight distances. Where these speeds cannot be reduced through enforcement of existing limits or other measures, other tactics may be used to address the concerns caused by speeding. Creating alternate routes for pedestrians and cyclists and installing four-way stop signs at problematic intersections could reduce the problems of speeding.

**Table 10: Traffic Crashes at Franklin Village Intersections, 2000 - 2004**

Location	Average crashes annually	Crashes per million vehicles
Northwestern Highway at Inkster	23.2	1.74
Telegraph Road at Thirteen Mile	39.8	1.19
Franklin Road at Thirteen Mile	8.4	1.02
Telegraph Road at Fourteen Mile	30.2	1.00
Franklin Road at Scenic Highway	5	0.85
Franklin Road at Fourteen Mile	3.2	0.78
Inkster at Thirteen Mile	5.2	0.73
Inkster at Scenic Highway	1	0.32
Inkster at Fourteen Mile	1.6	0.30

Source: Traffic Improvement Association of Oakland County and SEMCOG

Not surprisingly, most traffic crashes in the Village of Franklin take place at the major intersections at the periphery of the Village, where traffic is heavy. When traffic volume is taken into account, however, the rate of crashes is more comparable. As shown in Table 10 and Map 8, the intersection of Franklin Road with Thirteen Mile Road has a crash rate comparable to the locations along Telegraph Road. This situation remains relatively unchanged from the previous

Village Master Plan, which identified that intersection as an issue due to the angle at which Franklin Road approaches from the south.

## Circulation System Accomplishments

To Franklin Village residents, both the character of Franklin Road and its ability to accommodate traffic and parking are important concerns. In 2001, Franklin Road, between Thirteen Mile and Fourteen Mile Roads was repaved at a cost of \$1.2 million. Crosswalks and new signage were included in the project.

Signalized traffic controls have been located at Thirteen Mile Road, Scenic Highway, and Fourteen Mile Road. Nevertheless, residents have complained about excessive traffic speeds along Franklin Road since the early 1970s. The speed limit through the Village Center has been reduced to 25 miles per hour, and, in 2005, the Village installed a speed indicator on northbound Franklin Road to help people be more aware of their speeds as they enter the historic district.

Additionally, the newly installed crosswalks in the Village Center provide visual and sound cues to drivers to slow down, and the on-street parking at the Post Office creates a visual narrowing of the roadway. Together, these measures should cause traffic to move more slowly and cautiously through the Village Center, though data does not exist to measure the change.

As Franklin's roads have been repaved within the past few years, road conditions are generally quite good, and the Village should have few major maintenance expenditures in the near future.

## CIRCULATION SYSTEM ISSUES

In addition to the ongoing concerns of traffic volume, speed, and safety mentioned, a number of other challenges and opportunities surround Franklin's circulatory system.

### Access Control on Major Roads

As traffic volumes are unlikely to decrease in the Franklin area, the most likely way to reduce congestion is to smooth traffic flow. Smoother



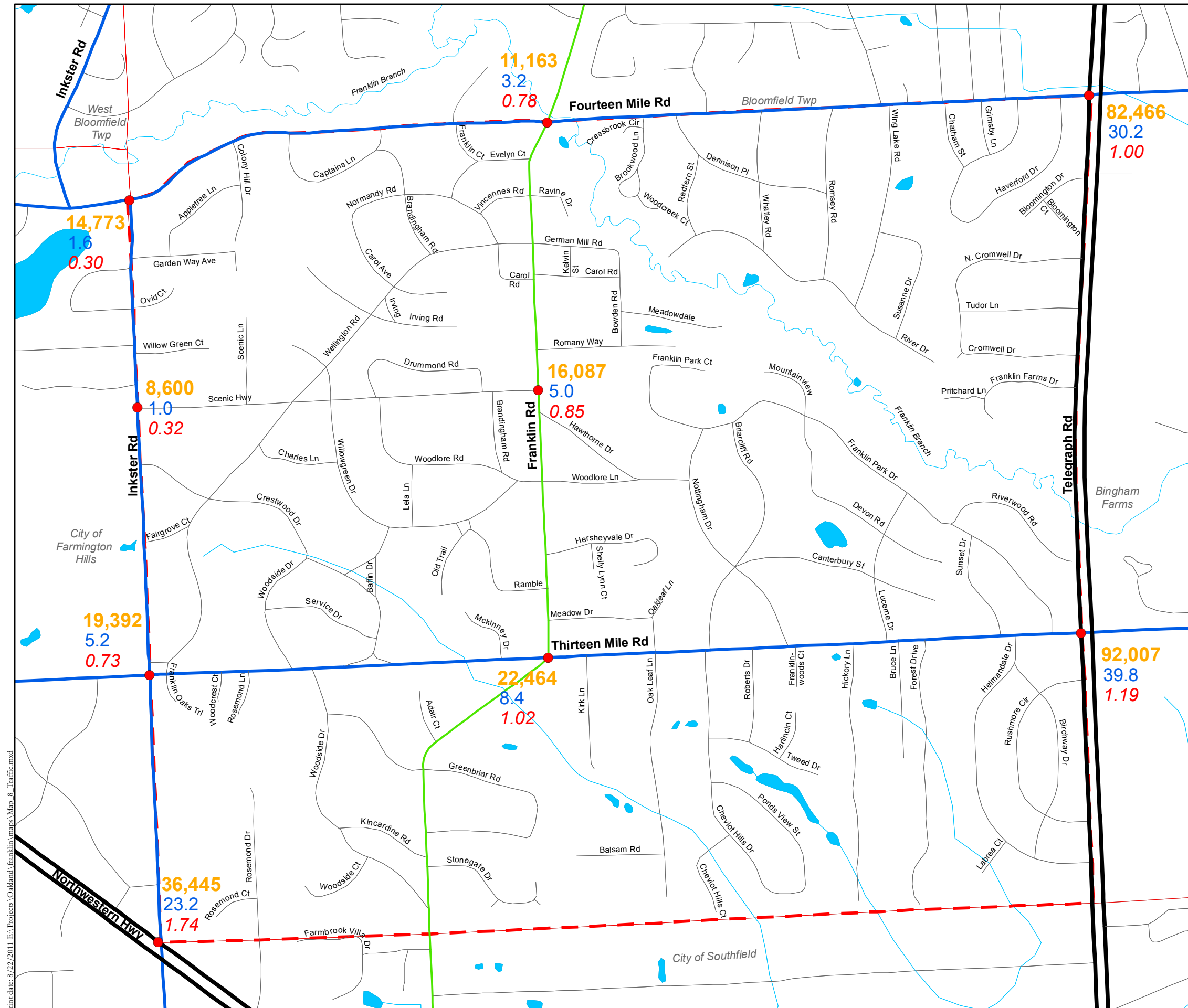
# Map 8 Traffic Analysis

Village of Franklin,  
Oakland County, Michigan

- Road Intersection with Traffic Data
- 11,163  
3.2  
0.78 2004 Average Daily Volume  
Average Crashes Annually  
Crashes per Million Vehicles
- 14,773  
1.6  
0.30
- 8,600  
1.0  
0.32
- 19,392  
5.2  
0.73
- 22,464  
8.4  
1.02
- 36,445  
23.2  
1.74
- 82,466  
30.2  
1.00
- 92,007  
39.8  
1.19
- Statewide Arterial Roads
- Local Arterial Roads
- Collector Roads
- Minor Roads
- Franklin Boundary
- Surrounding Municipalities
- Hydrology

Base Map Data Source: Oakland County GIS, 1st Quarter 2006.  
Traffic Data Source: Traffic Improvement Association of Oakland County and SEMCOG, 2000-2004.

0 1,000 2,000  
Feet



flow on the arterials surrounding Franklin can encourage through traffic to use those routes, rather than diverting through the Village.

The number of vehicle access points on Telegraph Road contributes to congestion in that area. Frequent parking lot entrances, and parking lots that exit only onto Telegraph, can disrupt the flow of traffic and contribute to congestion. Reducing the number of driveways onto Telegraph, by creating shared drives between sites or an access road running alongside Telegraph, would reduce conflicts and reduce congestion on Telegraph. Since most of the entrances affecting traffic flow on Telegraph Road are outside of Franklin, this would require collaboration with the surrounding communities to implement.

The cul-de-sac streets found in some portions of Franklin Village exacerbate these problems. By providing residents with only one way to reach their homes, these streets force residents to suffer from congestion on a particular arterial, regardless of their destination. Residential street layouts that provide a choice between arterial roads allow residents to choose routes that avoid the worst congestion, which also reduces their contribution to local congestion.

The intersection of Wellington Road with Thirteen Mile illustrates the problem of limited access – traffic levels on Thirteen Mile can prevent turns, and the intersection is close enough to Inkster Road that a very small number of westbound vehicles stopped for a red light can block Wellington entirely. While Wellington is not a cul-de-sac, and does allow for alternate routes, those alternates are indirect enough to be inconvenient.

## **Village Center Parking**

Off-street parking in Franklin primarily serves the Village Center businesses and civic facilities. The 1996 Master Plan Update recognized that the businesses had enough parking overall, but that the parking was fragmented and required use of Franklin Road to travel between parking areas. That Plan recommended that parking areas be better connected to one another in order to allow more efficient use and reduce the effect of parking entrances and exits on congestion. While the

effect of creating congestion may be desirable in the Village Center to keep traffic slow, the large number of access points could pose a safety problem, particularly where driveways are adjacent to one another. The frequent vehicle access points create potential conflicts not only with vehicles on Franklin Road, but with pedestrians walking between businesses.

This recommendation has not yet been widely implemented – most of the parking lots behind Village Center businesses are still physically separated, though joining them in some cases would require only removal of a chain or other barrier between them. The new sidewalk on the east side of Franklin provides easier pedestrian access throughout the Village Center from any parking area, but connecting parking areas would still serve to decrease entrances and exits onto Franklin Road.

## **Parking for Civic Uses**

The 1996 Update stated that not enough parking existed for civic uses in the Village Center. The police department was found at the time to have insufficient parking along with insufficient overall facilities. A new facility was constructed next to the Broughton House, addressing these problems.

The Franklin Bingham Farms Fire Department has limited space and inadequate parking. The fire hall was built in 1959 and was added onto in 2005. Currently, the department has a full-time chief, part-time clerk, and 49 volunteers, nearly all of whom live outside of Franklin. A dozen may be at the fire hall at any time, with up to 30 present on occasion for meetings. There is little delineation between the department's lot and the adjoining service station, so vehicles accessing or waiting for service next door occasionally intrude onto the fire hall lot. These conditions are tolerated, however, as no space exists to provide for the department's peak parking needs. When needed, firefighters park their vehicles along the street.

Finally, the 1996 Update expressed a need for a new public meeting space that could hold 100 people. Under the Franklin Zoning Ordinance, such a meeting hall would require 37 parking

spaces; improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the Village Center might allow this number to be reduced, and, if a new meeting space were near the Franklin Community Church, where some meetings are currently held, shared use of the Church's parking could eliminate the need to add parking to the Village Center.

### **Roadway Rural Character**

The role of the roadways in presenting Franklin's rural character to residents and visitors means that preserving roadside character is essential in maintaining Franklin's sense of place. The 1997 Master Plan Update called for scenic corridor protection plans to be created for this purpose, though this project has not progressed. The roadside image of Franklin could be harmed in the processes of development, future road expansion or repairs, or utility work, without policies in place to mitigate damage and reinforce the existing character. Some action has been taken to prevent damage, such as maintenance tree trimming by the Village in order to prevent utility companies from seeing a need to make more drastic cuts.



### **Roadway Maintenance Needs**

Franklin's roadways are generally in very good condition, and most major roads have been recently repaved. No major maintenance needs are outstanding, which puts the Village in a favorable position, as the Road Commission for Oakland County has predicted a major shortfall of funding due to needs elsewhere in the County.

While Franklin does have a small amount of unpaved roadway, notably Fourteen Mile Road

west of Franklin Road, paving would not provide a clear improvement, and the Road Commission currently has no intention of paving this segment. While the gravel road is prone to potholes and produces dust, which are nuisances to neighboring residents, road conditions here force low traffic speeds, and limit the total amount of traffic using this road. Paving would likely encourage an increase in traffic, by making Fourteen Mile a reasonable alternative route to Thirteen Mile or Maple Road, which would also have a negative effect on neighboring residents. Some residents on and near Fourteen Mile Road are strongly opposed to paving of the road..

### **Non-motorized Transportation**

The high-traffic roads running through and around Franklin limit the enjoyment of pedestrians and cyclists. As most of the Village lacks off-street pedestrian facilities of any kind, the traffic speeds or volumes on main roads can make pedestrians feel unsafe. This is particularly an issue for the neighborhoods to the south of Thirteen Mile Road, which serves as a barrier to visiting the Village Center and civic facilities. Within the Village Center, a sidewalk and pedestrian crosswalks were constructed during recent road work, easing pedestrian circulation within the Village Center.

While sidewalks are prohibited in most of Franklin by the Village Charter, as part of the effort to maintain a rural character, residents have indicated support for non-motorized facilities that have a "trail" or "path" feel. These non-motorized trails could run in the rights-of-way of major roads, pulling away from the street and buffered by landscaping where space allowed. Although the 1996 Traffic Calming Update to the Master Plan suggested that crossings of Thirteen Mile Road might be facilitated by pedestrian tunnels under the road, where topography allowed, this option is now viewed as impractical. Marked pedestrian crossings with push-button activated flashing red lights would be another option for safe passage. So far, these trails have not been created, though strong interest still exists.

The cul-de-sac layout of some of Franklin's residential streets presents another pedestrian concern; while these neighborhood streets are

themselves safe and peaceful, many of them have outlets only onto major streets, providing residents no good walking or cycling routes to other neighborhoods or the Village Center. As mentioned previously, some of these cul-de-sacs might be connected to one another to provide better access within the Village for all types of local users; connecting cul-de-sacs to each other or to major roads with non-motorized trails could be effective even in those locations where new vehicle connections are not appropriate. These trails could provide new, shorter and safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists to move within the Village limits.

Because of the area's land use patterns, little is within walking distance outside of the Village limits, with the regional arterials of Telegraph Road and Northwestern Highway creating special challenges for pedestrians. While no mass transit lines run through the Village, the Telegraph Road route run by SMART does have stops along the edge of Franklin.

### **Accommodations for Horses**

In the past, Franklin residents have expressed an interest in providing paths or trails through the village for equestrian use. Horses are limited in their movement by major roadways just as pedestrians and cyclists are. At the present time, however, residents state this as a lower priority than many of their other transportation issues; fewer residents own horses than at the time of past plans, and many residents who do own horses keep them at locations outside of Franklin.



### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are some concrete actions that the Village could take in order to address some of the issues mentioned and take advantage of opportunities to improve the Village's circulatory network.

#### ***Plan to preserve scenic corridors.***

In order to preserve the contribution that roadside views make to the image and character of Franklin, corridor plans should be prepared for the major roadways that outline and pass through Franklin. Where adjacent land use in neighboring municipalities is compatible, such as along Fourteen Mile in Bloomfield Township, stakeholders in those communities should be involved to maximize the impact. This corridor planning would involve community members to define the visual elements that enhance or detract from the desired character, and identify opportunities and constraints along each of the major roads in the Village.

This statement of the desired character would be used to examine the Zoning Ordinance and ensure that setbacks, landscaping, and other requirements contribute positively. The defined character would also serve as a reference when considering walking and biking paths along the roadway corridors. While the roads within Franklin do not qualify for the State's Natural Beauty Roads or Michigan Heritage Routes programs, the corridor plans would help to ensure that any future road work done in the Village adds to the stated character, rather than detracting, providing guidance for the "context sensitive solutions" process that is gaining importance in roadway agencies.

#### ***Improve amenities for pedestrians and other non-motorized users.***

A number of potential projects could improve residents' access to the Village Center and throughout Franklin. Creating paths for pedestrians and cyclists along major road right-of-ways would allow these users to travel more safely. Paths connecting neighborhood streets to one another could provide for easier access to the Village Center's amenities, and foster more of a



sense of connection between neighborhoods. Safe pedestrian crossings of Thirteen Mile Road and Fourteen Mile Road, particularly at Franklin Road, would increase activity in that area, encouraging enjoyment of the historic district and support for the local businesses located there.

Creating paths alongside major roads in Franklin would allow for pedestrians and cyclists and other users to move around Franklin more safely and pleasantly. Since the look and feel of roadside areas is a significant part of Franklin's character, these paths will need to be designed to complement the atmosphere of the Village. Standard concrete sidewalks would not provide the correct feel, and the Village Charter forbids sidewalks outside of the Village Center for this reason. To provide a more trail-like character, paths should be curved to follow land contours and to integrate with landscaping, as the road right-of-way allows. A variety of trail materials area are available, such as granular stone, that can provide a more "natural" look than concrete sidewalk while also providing an even and stable enough surface for users including pedestrians, bicyclists, and wheelchair users, and design of these paths should be considered in any corridor plan for the roads within Franklin.

Thirteen Mile Road is of special concern to non-motorized users. Since the highest traffic levels internally within the Village occur at the intersection of Thirteen Mile and Franklin Road, and Thirteen Mile generally cuts off the southern neighborhoods of Franklin from the Village Center, a safe crossing of Thirteen Mile is needed



for pedestrians and other users. The 1997 Traffic Calming Report rejects the option of pedestrian bridges as both unsightly and only providing for some non-motorized users. The report suggests tunneling under Thirteen Mile, where terrain permits, to provide a more accessible and less visually obtrusive crossing. This option has been deemed impractical, because of engineering and funding concerns. A less costly option that should be investigated involves the designation of crossing areas with pavement striping and possibly pedestrian-activated flashing red traffic signals.

Pedestrian crossings at the Fourteen Mile and Franklin Road intersection would provide an immediate benefit, by encouraging visitors to the Franklin Cider Mill to also visit the Village Center. The Cider Mill is possibly one of Franklin's most significant attractions, despite not being within the Village proper. Creating a visible connection between the Cider Mill and the Village Center area would encourage foot traffic, allowing visitors to park once and visit both historic areas. This would be especially important if a Farmers' Market were established, as recommended in the Commercial Center chapter, drawing visitors through the Village Center from one to the other.

Since these non-motorized amenities are a priority for Village residents, a dedicated committee or task force should be created immediately to ensure that specific pathway plans are produced.

### ***Encourage improved traffic flow on arterials.***

As most of the through traffic passing through Franklin could use nearby arterials, improving traffic flow on those arterials could prevent some traffic from passing through the Village. Especially with the recent reduction of the speed limit on Franklin Road, smoothing traffic on Telegraph will make Franklin a less appealing choice for cut-through traffic, and the Village should support improvements to Telegraph Road that will have this effect.

The 1996 Master Plan Update stated that advocating for improvements on Northwestern Highway, such as creating a consistent number of lanes to reduce bottlenecks at Inkster Road, would not be effective. At the time, MDOT had rejected any such expansion, as it would simply move the



bottlenecking problem further north. With MDOT and the Road Commission for Oakland County moving forward on the Northwestern Connector project to improve flow at the end of Northwestern Highway, creating a consistent number of lanes on that road to improve traffic flow around Franklin may now be possible.

***Design for speed control on village streets.***

The physical features in the Village Center that limit speeding, such as textured crosswalks, on-street parking at the post office, and the electronic sign displaying drivers' speeds, would not be appropriate for other areas in Franklin. The fact that design features do affect speed, however, can be applied throughout. The Village should continue to reject any suggestions of expansions or turn lanes on the interior major roads, as these features would encourage speeding. Design options for reducing speeds from current levels are limited on the major roads, but include using trees and other landscape features within the right-of-way to provide a visual narrowing effect, encouraging drivers to slow down.



## CHAPTER TEN

# Implementation Plan

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A continual planning process involving close cooperation among the Village Council, Planning Commission, and other Village organizations, such as the Historic District Commission, is required to carry out this Master Plan. The Planning Commission has a major responsibility to communicate the Plan to Village residents, to encourage compliance with the standards and policies contained herein, and to actively pursue the implementation of the Plan's recommendations.

To achieve the goals of the Village residents, additional responsibilities should be assigned to the Planning Commission. The responsibilities contained in Michigan Public Act 285 of 1931, as amended, are appropriate. The Commission should seek to continue a planning process founded upon clear communication and a sharing of decision-making among the Village Council, appointed commissions, and Village residents.

### METHODS

Local planning efforts should consider the needs, trends, and changing conditions that affect the Village, including new research in the area of community planning. To accomplish this, the Planning Commission should work to improve the tools (ordinances and regulations) available to the Village in order to achieve the goals established in this plan. The following recommendations suggest methods the Planning Commission can use to advance the planning process:

- A. The preparation of special studies focusing on specific planning issues should be considered to address:
  - 1. Major road corridors;
  - 2. Sign and building design and maintenance in the Village Center;
  - 3. Parking and vegetation placement in the Village Center; and
  - 4. Other issues as they arise.
- B. The use of special workshops, such as those used in the preparation of this master plan, should be continued.
- C. The Commission should coordinate its planning with neighboring governmental units, both on a formal and informal basis.
- D. The Commission should continue to refine the land use and environmental regulations and controls recommended in this Plan. The following guidelines, ordinances, and regulations are recommended for amendment or adoption:
  - 1. Zoning Ordinance amendments address open space, setbacks and building height in relation to distance from lot lines. The Planning Commission can organize drafts of these ordinances for recommendation to the Village Council with assistance from the Village attorney, and the Village planner.
  - 2. Design guidelines should be prepared to address the Village Center, historic structures, and Village character. These guidelines would provide a range of detailed, illustrated ideas and deal with the variety of architectural and landscape issues that influence community character.
- E. Based upon the goals, policies, and standards contained in this Plan, an annual coordinated program for the development of public structures, land acquisition, tree and vegetation management, and public capital improvements should be prepared for a period of six or more years. The program should recommend the priorities for public improvements that the Planning Commission judges to be needed or desirable. This program should be annually updated and adopted by the Village Council as part of the

Village budget. This program must be worked out with the assistance of the Village Administrator.



- F. The Planning Commission should undertake its responsibilities to review, hold public hearings, and prepare recommendations for the following public actions when they are proposed:
1. The opening, closing, widening, or extension of roads.
  2. Acquisition or enlargement of any park, playground, or other public open space.
  3. The construction, acquisition, or authorization of public buildings or structures.
  4. Utilization of its powers to agree with an applicant upon the use, height, area, or bulk requirements or restrictions governing buildings and premises within a subdivision (plat) and to require that they be stated upon the plat.
- G. The Planning Commission should hold an annual workshop to consider the past year's progress towards the Plan's implementation, set priorities for the coming year's "planning process" activities, and outline the nature of changes or additions to be considered in the Plan. These activities should be embodied in an annual report and work program submitted

to the Village Council along with the Planning Commission's proposed budget for the next year.

## **ORGANIZATION**

The Planning Commission should continue to maintain rules of procedure for transaction of business and establish committees with responsibilities for particular planning activities, such as the Capital Improvement Program, ordinances and regulations, zoning, and Master Plan studies. Residents of the Village can be encouraged to serve on special committees, with a member of the Planning Commission, to assist in the preparation of special planning efforts.

The complexities in dealing with planning issues, both within the Village and in conjunction with surrounding communities, and in providing services to Village residents are too great for volunteers of the community. The recommendations of the 2006 plan update will require both volunteer efforts, such as the Planning Commission and other ad hoc committees, and the guidance of the professional Village Administrator. There are thousands of hours of work to be done in order for these recommendations to be implemented. If the recommendations are not acted upon, Franklin Village will cease to retain the visual and environmental qualities that residents enjoy.

The Village Council should continue to maintain a close working relationship with the Planning Commission, and continue to have a Council member serve as liaison to the Planning Commission.

## **IMPLEMENTATION TASKS**

The table on the following pages lists several tasks that were identified in the planning process for their importance in implementing the Master Plan. This is not intended to be a complete list of all implementation tasks, nor is it inclusive of all Village initiatives underway.

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**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**


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<b><u>Implementation Task</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Timeframe</u></b>
<b><i>Village Center Tasks</i></b>		
Working through the Main Street program, establish an organization of businesspeople to spearhead the revitalization of the Village Center.	Planning Commission, Administration, Businesspeople	0-3 years
Define a vision for the Village Center, as well as a program for revitalization.	Planning Commission, Business and Property Owners, Village Council, Historic District Commission	0-3 years
Develop a coordinated parking plan for the Village Center.	Planning Commission, Planning and Engineering Consultants	4-10 years
Develop public and private lighting standards for the Village Center.	Planning Commission, Business and Property Owners, Village Council, Historic District Commission	0-3 years
Relocate utility lines underground through the Village Center.	Administration, Village Attorney, Village Council	4-10 years
<b><i>Historic Preservation Tasks</i></b>		
Establish historic character guidelines for public and private signage in the Historic District.	Planning Commission, Historic District Commission	0-3 years
Proactively enforce the architectural and maintenance standards of the Historic District.	Building Official, Historic District Commission	Ongoing
Provide residents with information on restoring historic properties.	Planning Commission, Historic District Commission	0-3 years
Educate Franklin officials in preservation techniques and zoning.	Planning Commission, Historic District Commission	Ongoing

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

<b>Implementation Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Establish site and landscape design guidelines for the Historic District.	Planning Commission, Historic District Commission, Planning Consultant	0-3 years
<b><i>Natural Resource Preservation Tasks</i></b>		
Develop design guidelines for private property owners in managing their properties to protect natural resources	Planning Commission, Planning Consultant	0-3 years
Perform regular maintenance and inspection of trees and vegetation.	Consultant Arborist	Ongoing
Develop educational materials for landowners regarding proper tree and vegetation management.	Administration, Arborist	0-3 years
Continue, and if feasible, expand the coordinated planting and replacement program for Village vegetation.	Administration	Ongoing
Develop corridor plans to preserve scenic rural character along major roadways.	Planning Commission, Planning Consultant	0-3 years
<b><i>Open Space and Neighborhood Tasks</i></b>		
Pursue land conservancies and donation of land to augment open space.	Planning Commission, Administration, Village Attorney	Ongoing
Continue to work with neighborhood associations to update and enforce deed restrictions.	Planning Commission	Ongoing
Review the Zoning Ordinance for compatibility with the updated Master Plan, including completing contextual zoning regulations, and zoning to protect Village character.	Planning Commission, Planning Consultant	0-3 years
Create master landscape and recreation plans with guidelines for maintaining rural character throughout the Village.	Planning Commission, Planning Consultant	0-3 years
Ensure that Planning Commissioners have training in land use planning and zoning.	Planning Commission	Ongoing
<b><i>Infrastructure Tasks</i></b>		
Develop a unified street and public facility sign system, particularly for the Village Center.	Planning Commission, Historic District Commission	0-3 years



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**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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<b><u>Implementation Task</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Timeframe</u></b>
Construct pathways throughout the Village and safe pedestrian crossings along major roads in the Village.	Planning Commission, Administration, Road Commission for Oakland County	Ongoing
Implement methods to limit speeds on Village roadways.	Administration, Police Department, Road Commission for Oakland County	0-3 years
<b><i>Miscellaneous Tasks</i></b>		
Upgrade the Village web site.	Administration	0-3 years

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