

REINVENT FRANKLIN 2040

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



REINVENT FRANKLIN PLAN ADOPTION RESOLUTION

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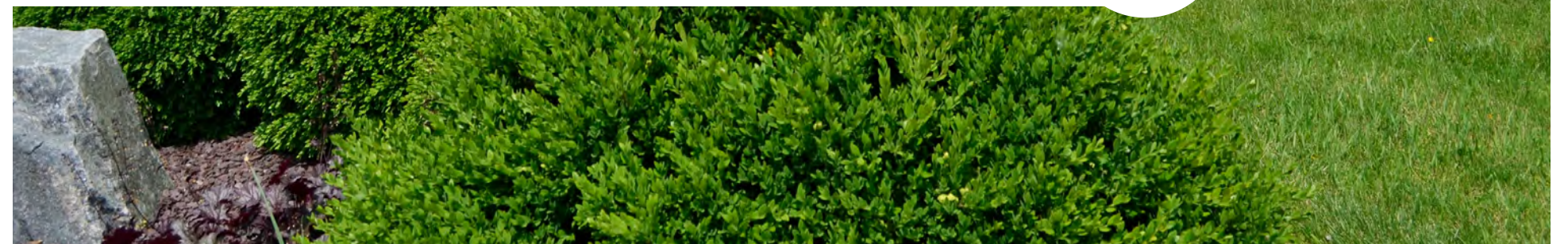
City of Franklin, Warren County, Ohio

The 6th largest City by population in Warren County, located in the Dayton and Cincinnati Metropolitan areas along the Great Miami River. Franklin offers urban amenities within a small-town setting, including diverse neighborhoods, unique entertainment, cultural institutions, a distinctive riverscape and downtown, prosperous industrial parks, and quality schools. Recognizing that the City has changed considerably since the previous comprehensive plan was completed over a decade ago, the City chose to develop a new Comprehensive Plan to identify a 20-year vision and help guide future growth.



INTRODUCTION

1



Franklin Mural, located along the intersection of S Main St and E 4th St

Introduction

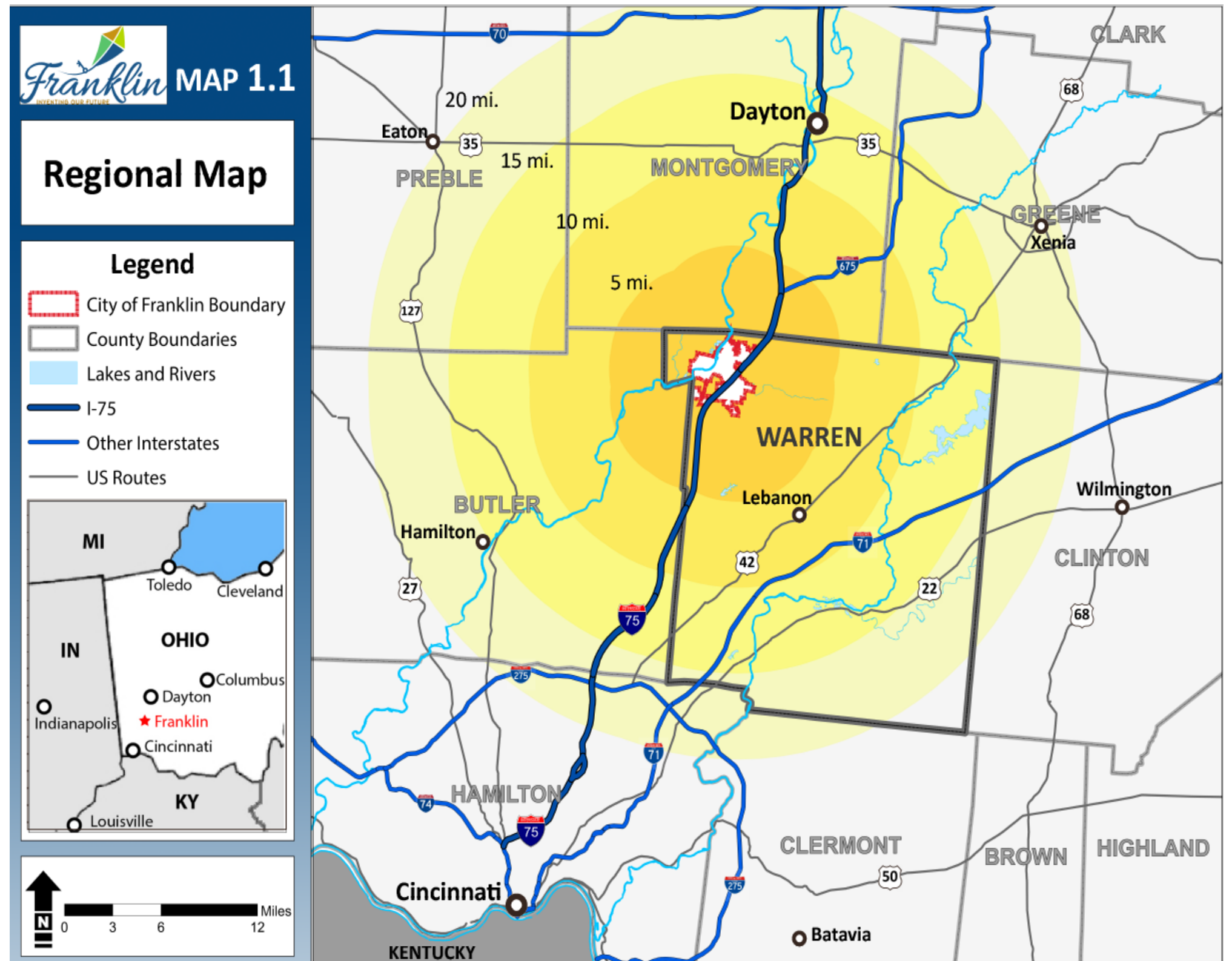
Location:

The City of Franklin is located in southwestern Ohio in Warren County along the Great Miami River. Franklin neighbors the cities of Carlisle to the west, and Springboro to the east. To the north lies Montgomery County, and to the south is Franklin Township. Regionally, the City is positioned between The City of Dayton, 19 miles to the north, and the City of Cincinnati, 40 miles to the south, connected to both by Interstate 75 (I-75). Franklin is a part of the Greater Dayton area, and is among a growing belt of communities that is gradually linking together the Cincinnati and Dayton metropolitan regions. Encompassing roughly 9.17 square miles, the City is the 6th largest municipality by area and the 6th largest population in Warren County. The City is located primarily in Warren County, as well as partially in Montgomery County.

Franklin has two interchanges on I-75, including State Routes 123 and 73. Additionally, both the Dayton International Airport and Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport are located within an hour drive. Access and proximity to two metropolitan areas make Franklin a strategic location for residents as well as businesses.



Citizens Advisory Committee (December 2021)



Founded in 1796 by General William C. Schenck, Franklin began as a small collection of cabins along the Great Miami River in what was then the Northwest Territory. General Schenck named his new settlement after Benjamin Franklin. The settlement of Franklin incorporated as the Village of Franklin in 1814. Slowly, Franklin grew and with the completion of the Miami & Erie Canal (which ran from Toledo to Cincinnati) through the Village in 1829, the first industries were established. They included a pork slaughterhouse, a sawmill, a flour mill, a barrel manufacturer, and a whiskey distillery. Then, with the arrival of the railroad in neighboring Carlisle in 1851, both manufacturing and farming within the Village prospered. By 1872, the railroad had expanded into Franklin. While the railroad's expansion into Franklin was the death knell for the Miami-Erie Canal (which was officially abandoned in 1909), it did facilitate shipping for Franklin's industries, and manufacturing grew. The downtown quickly filled with fine brick and stone homes, businesses, churches, and public buildings.

In 1805, Franklin became home to one of the first four post offices in Warren County.



Aerial Photo of Franklin

By the early 1890s, paper making was the dominant manufacturing business, with no fewer than five different factories operating in the Village. The population of the Village grew exponentially during this time, as workers needed in the factories migrated to Franklin.

By 1895, the national recession had also hit Franklin, causing several local factories to close. The community recovered, and in the period of the 1900s - 1920s several new industries were established, including the Brown, Carson, and Scheible Legging Factory, the Uhlenbrock Cigar Factory, the Van Horne Electric Tube Company, the Logan Long Roofing Company, and the Eldridge Entertainment House (Eldridge Publishing Company).

Meanwhile, downtown Franklin continued to thrive. Opened in 1832, Thirkield Department Store moved in 1850 to the corner of Main and Fourth Streets. It served as Franklin's general store and department store. There were also three grocery stores downtown that served Franklin over the years - the G.R. Rossman & Company Grocery, Berger's Grocery on S. Main Street, and Kroger's which occupied various locations downtown between 1910 and the 1970s.

Franklin History and Impact on Its Character

- Founded before Statehood and Growing from Territory to City – **“Daring”**
- Early Canal Town Sparking Early Industry – **“Ingenuity”**
- Dedication to Early Military and Political Services – **“Selfless”**
- From Canal Town to Bustling Industry w/ Railroad – **“Transition Leader”**
- Great Flood Survival – **“Perseverance”** & **“Power of Community”**



Franklin Community Park

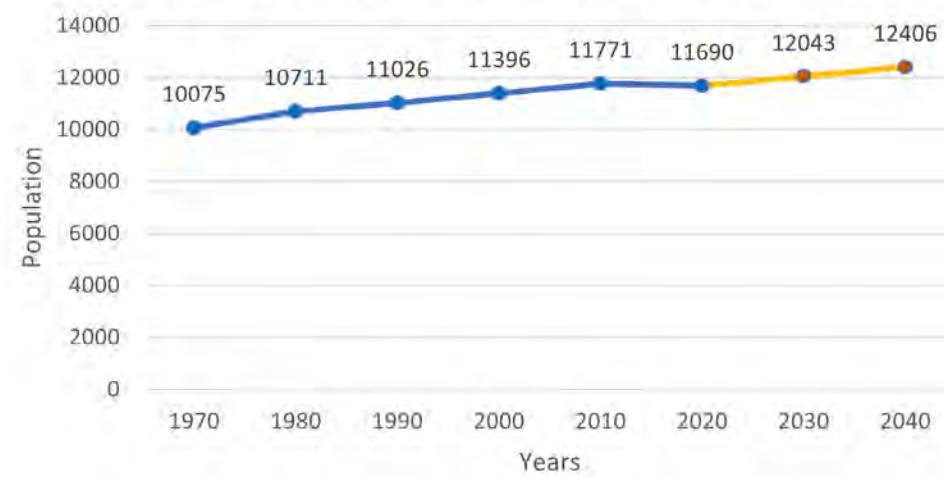
In 1929, the downtown also saw a change when the Miami-Erie Canal was drained. In 1934, work began on narrowing the channel of the canal, and the canal bed began to be filled in. During the 1940s - 1960s industry and business continued to grow in Franklin, and in 1947 the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce was formed.

After the 1950 census, Franklin's population also grew, and Franklin officially became a city in 1951. Franklin continued to move forward and in 1983, the residents of the City voted in their first Charter. Franklin became a charter municipality on January 1, 1984. Since the 1980s, Franklin's business and industrial base has continued to expand with the addition of several business parks along the I-75 corridor. In 2008, Franklin established Franklin Yard Logistics Park a multi-modal, multi-user rail hub that allows businesses and industries in southern Ohio to take advantage of freight rail - either shipping or receiving. Franklin Yards is one of only a handful of such facilities in the State.

Demographics:

The City of Franklin has maintained a steady population growth from 1970. Until 2020, there has been an incline in population, as the City development has increased. The 2020 census was the first time to see a slight decline in population. Based on population Figure 1.1, the City is expected to gain an additional 700 residents by the year 2040. To achieve this population projection, the City would need to add additional single family and mixed-use developments.

Figure 1.1 | Recorded and Projected Population



The 2020 Census shows a very even proportion of residents, particularly between the age cohort of 18-65 years old. While the highest age range is between 60-64 years old, there is an exception for age 65 and older, as the baby boomer generation ages over the next decade. The second highest age range is youth (5-17 years old). Combined with all children under 5 years in age at 5%, all individuals under 18 years of age equate to a quarter of all residents in Franklin.



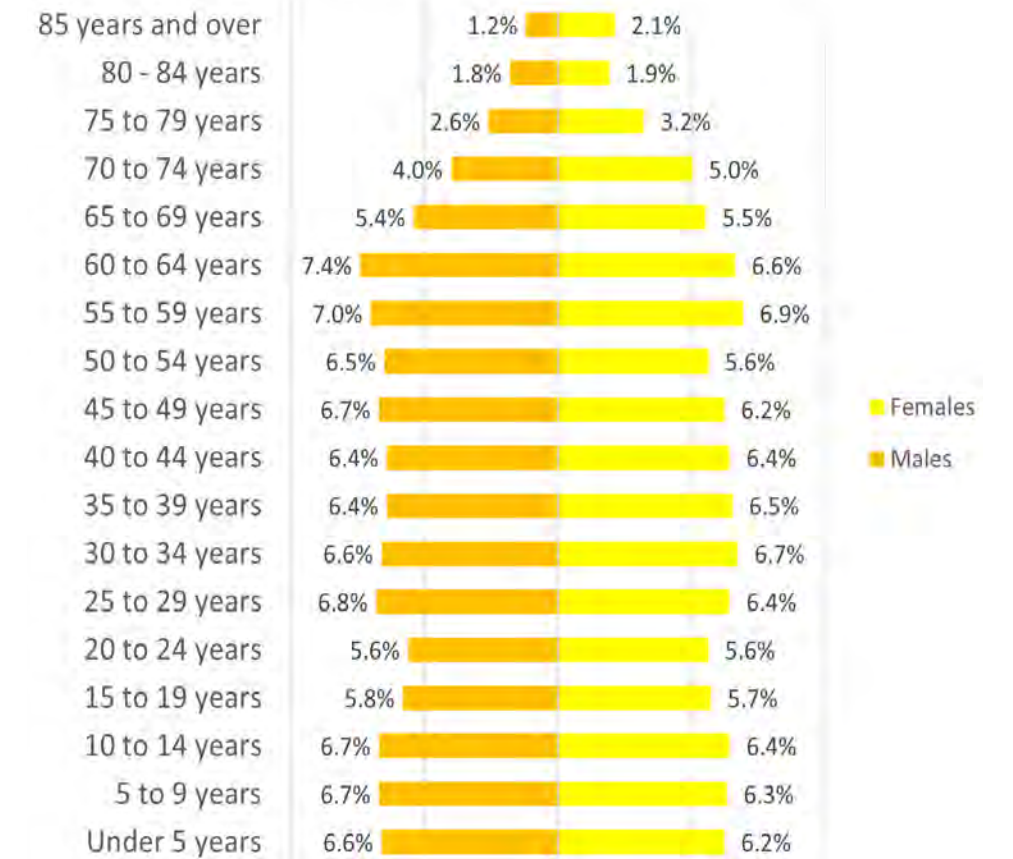
Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting #1



Meeting #1 of the Citizens Advisory Committee (November 13, 2021)

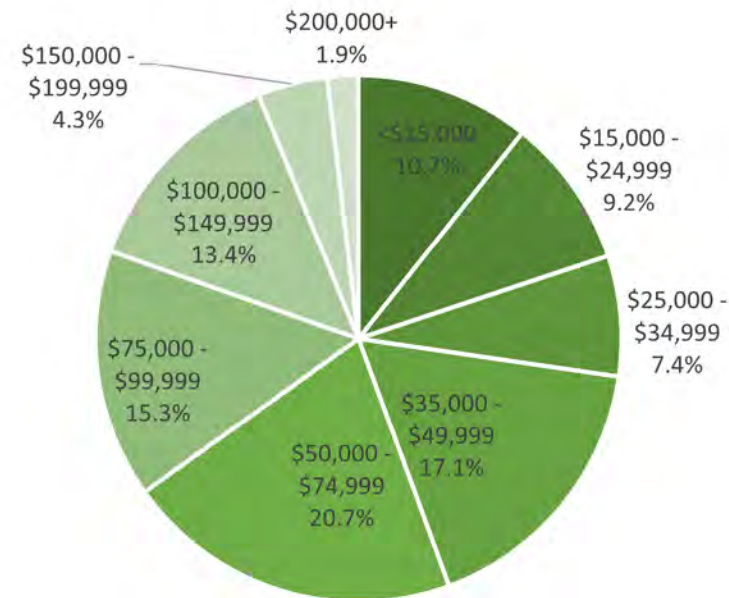
Overall, age demographics indicate a major distinct character for the City of Franklin as a strong working class. Figure 1.2 shows that the City retains its young generation and workforce. As Franklin develops, this will have an effect on business and industrial development preferences in the coming future.

Figure 1.2 | Population Pyramid: 2020



Source: US Census, 2020

Figure 1.3 | Households by Income



Source: ESRI Community Analyst, 2021

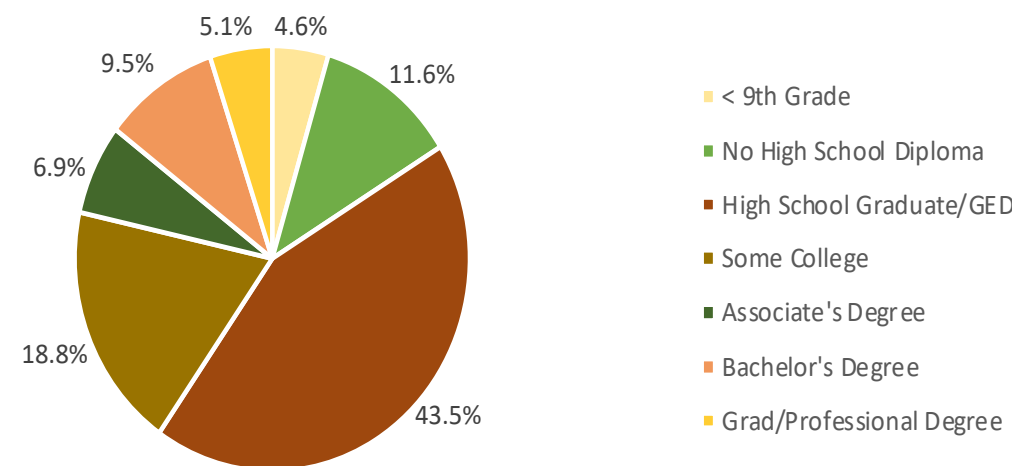
The figure above shows the distribution of household incomes in the City of Franklin. Approximately a fifth of City households make less than \$25,000 per year, while nearly a third of all households make \$75,000 or more per year. The remaining households of 38% make between \$25,000 and \$75,000 per year. With nearly two thirds of all households in Franklin making less than \$75,000, these numbers show that a large percentage of the population live below the poverty line. The 2020 Census indicates that 14.3% of Franklin households are below the poverty line, as opposed to 5.2% of households in Warren County.

Franklin’s population has a varying range of educational attainment throughout the City. Figure 1.4 below shows this educational completion for residents 25 and older. Approximately 15% of adults do not have a high school diploma or GED, while nearly 44% have obtained one. The remaining roughly 40% have obtained a grad/bachelor’s degree or participated in college in some form, with a little over half of those that have enrolled in college obtaining an associate degree, bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, or a various degree, such as a professional school degree.

The City’s population consists of 92.4% Caucasian, while 0.6% of Franklin’s population are black or African American. Nearly 3.2% of Franklin’s residents are Hispanic or Latino, and the remaining 1.5% are Asian.

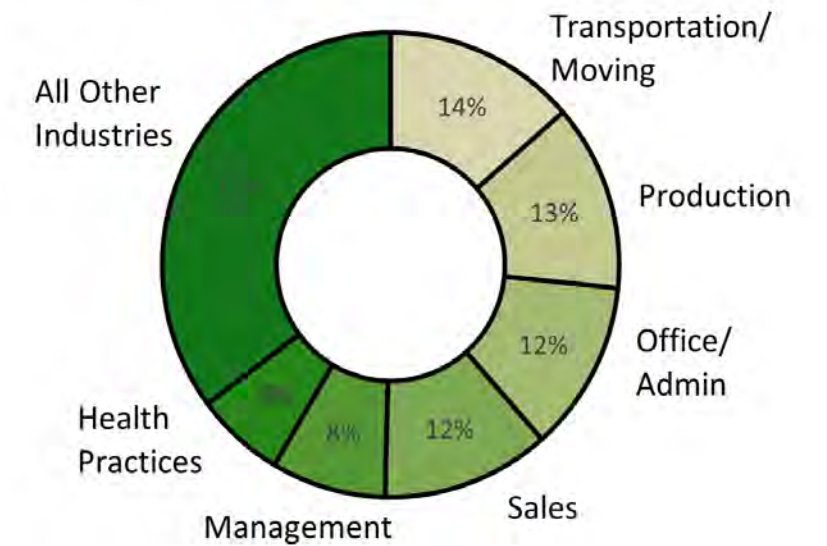
Figure 1.4 | Educational Attainment

Persons Age 25 and Older



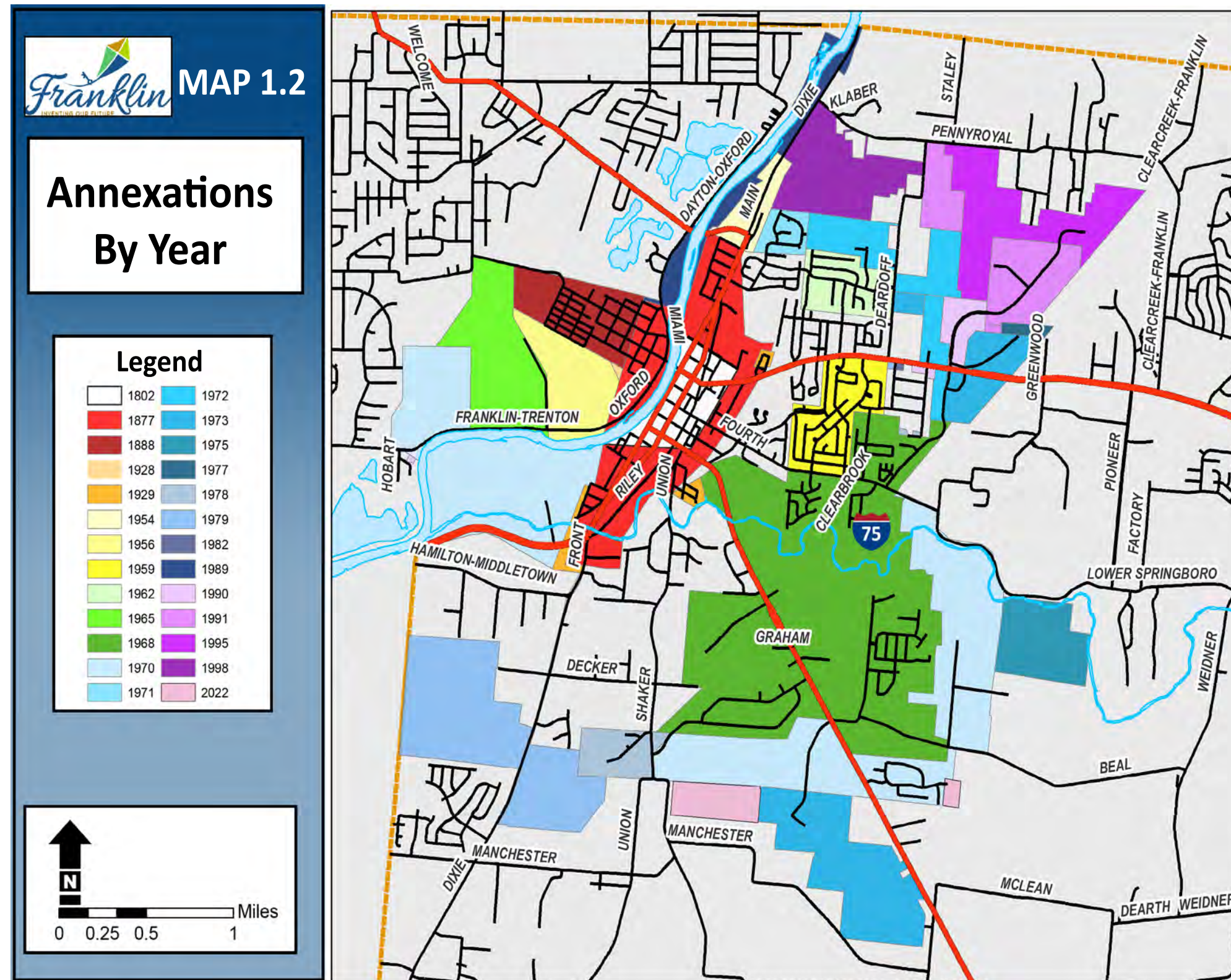
Source: US Census, 2020

Figure 1.5 | Employed Population by Industry



Source: ESRI Community Analyst, 2021

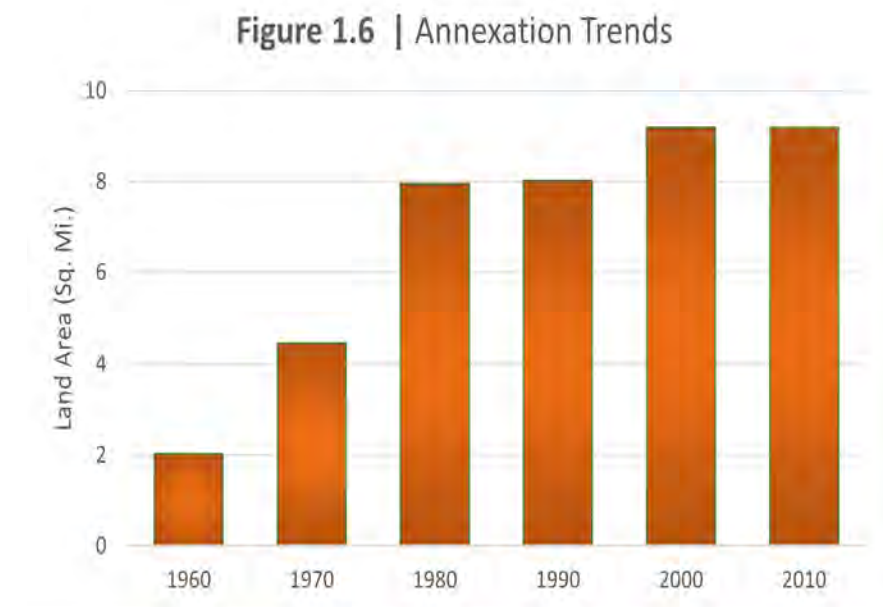
In Figure 1.5 above, over a quarter of all workers who live in the City of Franklin are employed in transportation or production industries. This is followed by office and administration (12%) and sales (12%) which equate to nearly another quarter of the workforce population in Franklin. Other mentionable industries are management (8%) and health practices (6%). The remaining segment (35%) of employees work in a variety of industries, with each of these additional industries equating to less than 6% of total employees that work in the City.



Map 1.2 shows Franklin's annexations over the past 200 years. The City now has access to Interstate 75 and State Route 73, and the majority of the City is east of the Great Miami River. Around 1968 and onward, the City began to expand East, annexing more area along Interstate 75.

As shown, there is a collection of all annexations the City of Franklin has experienced. Annexation involves the dissolution of township land for the purpose of being acquired by a nearby city or village. These annexations in the City started in 1877.

Figure 1.6, below, presents the annexation trends of the City of Franklin. It describes the overall development of annexations into the City. In 1960, the City only had 2 square miles of land incorporated. As of 2020, the City is now 9.34 square miles.



The Plan - Reinvent Franklin

What is Reinvent Franklin?

The Comprehensive Plan is the City's long-range plan for land use and development. It is a set of goals, maps, illustrations, and implementation strategies that state how the City of Franklin should address development: physically, socially, and economically. The planning process was initiated to rewrite the City of Franklin Comprehensive Plan, starting in June 2021 and the City Council adopted a final draft at their May 6, 2024 meeting. Reinvent Franklin serves as a guide and a tool for decision makers regarding land use, development, capital investments, and place making. The Plan sets the general direction for future growth and redevelopment across the City of Franklin for the next 15-20 years. While the Reinvent Franklin Comprehensive Plan has a horizon of 2040, it should be reviewed periodically and updated regularly in response to land use trends, changes in population, or any significant events that may affect Franklin's future. These updates will ensure that the Plan and its individual elements remain relevant.

The Plan provides an integrated approach to all aspects of Franklin's physical development and related economic and social issues, with an emphasis on economic development, active parks, enhanced land uses, coordinated traffic circulation, and developing prosperous neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Plan consists of elements such as land use, transportation, housing, parks and recreation, economic development, and community character. This document is key to help achieve a workable, livable, and prosperous Franklin, it provides the vision guiding principles; goals and strategies for Franklin to prosper and grow as a modern 21st century city.

The Comprehensive Plan seeks to:

- Inspire with bold ideas to help shape development today and tomorrow.
- Provide the basis for orderly, consistent, and predictable land use decision-making.
- Facilitate quality development.
- Provide for revitalization.
- Encourage sustainable growth.
- Build on the ideas and guidance from the many participants in the Reinvent Franklin process.

Reinvent Franklin capitalizes on trends that are changing the way we live, work, entertain, and do business. The Plan is a detailed policy document that guides future growth, development and redevelopment, improvements to existing neighborhoods, and capital improvements to enhance overall quality of life within the City of Franklin. The Plan includes detailed analysis and recommendations to address growth and development, housing, parks and recreation, transportation, community facilities, and other important issues within the community. To provide the greatest benefit to the City, it also contains recommendations and strategies to guide public investments.



Purpose - Why Plan?

The City of Franklin is an evolving City located in the third fastest-growing county of the state, home to more than 11,690 people as of 2020, the City is expected to grow to over 12,400 by the year 2040. Since the last Comprehensive Plan was written in 2006, Franklin's population has increased by 3%. Growth of this scale is not incidental. Franklin's expected growth and relative prosperity make planning for the City's future critically important. In fact, the need for good city planning has never been greater as Franklin addresses its growth and development challenges.

How do we grow while maintaining Franklin's quality of life and retaining the assets that make Franklin special? How do we balance growth and improve our traffic circulation? How do we stabilize our neighborhoods while addressing the needs of existing residents? How do we provide decent and affordable housing options? How do we position Franklin to remain competitive with a strong economy?



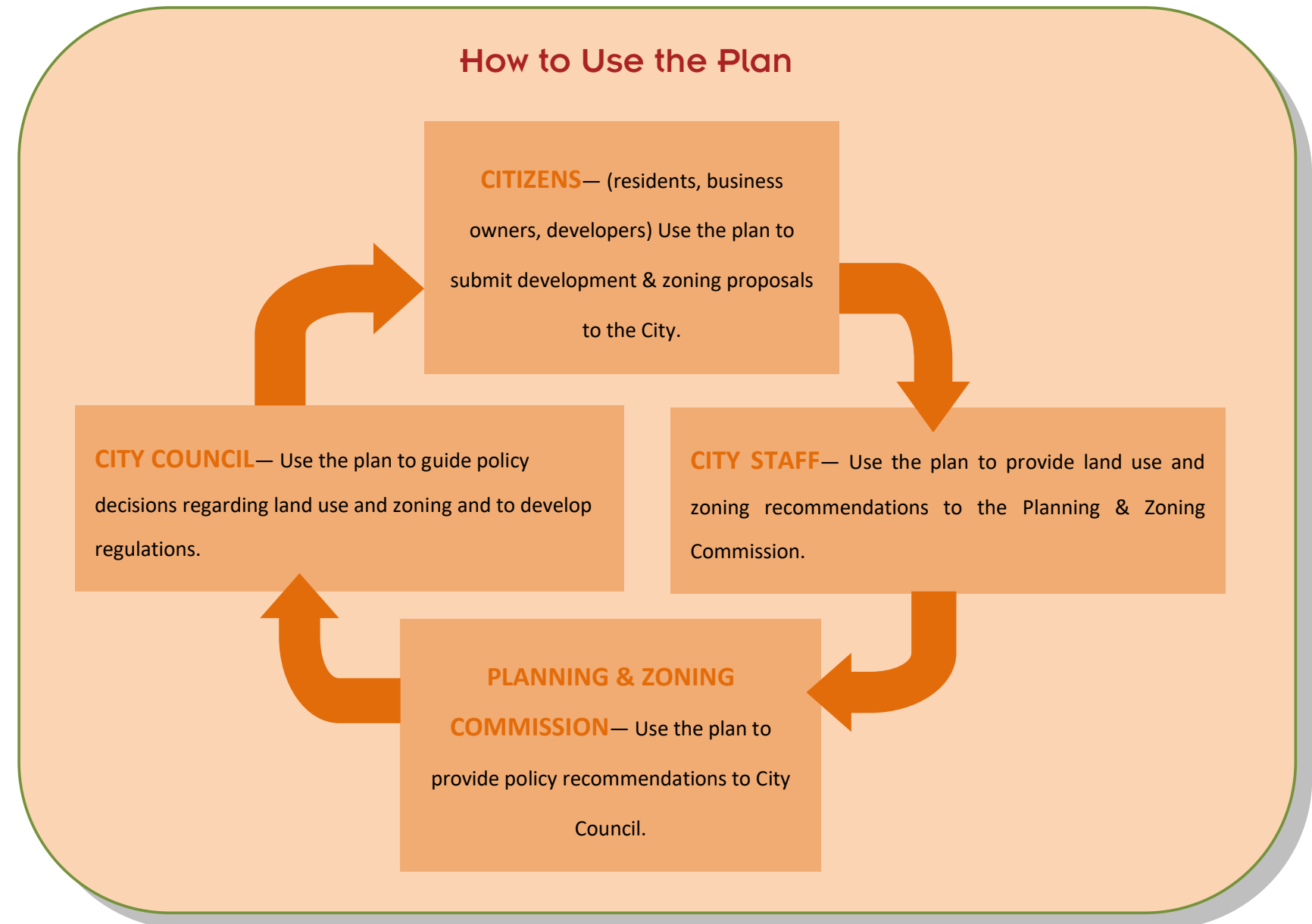
Franklin Area Community Services, 2022

How to Use the Plan:

The Plan establishes the framework and provides direction for City elected and appointed officials and staff to make decisions regarding the desired location and intensity of growth, development and redevelopment opportunities, transportation facilities, parks, and other public services.

Methods to help foster a healthy local economy, actions to protect and enhance the natural environment, and providing equitable access to housing and delivery of public services are also integral parts of the Plan. The Plan has been written to be free of internal conflicts, meaning that as a rule, implementing one policy should not preclude the implementation of another. However, situations that are site and/or project-specific may arise where specific policies present competing objectives. Judgment will be required to balance the relative benefits and detriments of emphasizing one policy over another. When weighing competing objectives, greater weight should be given to achieving overall policy objectives on an area and city-wide scale rather than a site-specific scale, and decision-makers should consider the cumulative impacts of making a number of similar decisions over time.

The Plan establishes the framework and provides direction for City elected and appointed officials and staff to make decisions regarding the desired location and intensity of growth, development and redevelopment opportunities, transportation facilities, parks, and other public services.



Organization of The Plan:

Reinvent Franklin Comprehensive Plan is organized into sections that follow this introductory chapter and contain city-wide guidance. The Plan begins with the framework, which sets the stage for the Plan by summarizing the key city-wide issues driving the need for the Plan. It provides an overview of growth forecasts, defines the vision and guiding principles that serve as the overarching goals for this Plan, and describes the role of the redevelopment/revitalization framework and the Future Land Use Map (the policy map that provides the basis for many of the Comprehensive Plan's narrative recommendations). The subsequent sections each contain a summary overview to provide context and key issues, followed by city-wide policies and actions to address these issues. Tables, images, text boxes, and maps supplement the narrative content. The main elements of the Plan are:

1. **Land Use.** Provides a framework for all development related decisions. It is the critical foundation upon which all other sections are based and includes the Future Land Use Map and related policies and actions to guide growth and revitalization in an efficient pattern over the next 20 years.
2. **Transportation.** Guides future development of the City's roads and highways, and bike and pedestrian networks to support the City's desired land uses and urban form. The aim is to achieve a balanced and efficient transportation system for Franklin's expanding population and their corresponding needs.

3. **Economic Development.** Includes recommendations to enhance Franklin's competitive advantages and build on its culture of innovation. It addresses ways to revitalize aging neighborhood and commercial corridors, assist local entrepreneurs, provide job training and education, and harness the benefits of tourism, visitation, and the creative industries. Provides guidance for intergovernmental cooperation in addressing regional economic development.
4. **Housing.** Includes recommendations on housing needs and encourages homeownership, revitalizing existing neighborhoods, incentivizing upper-story housing, supporting aging in place and universal access, and encouraging development that includes affordable and workforce housing.
5. **Parks & Recreation.** Addresses park planning and acquisition, greenway and trail planning and connectivity, open space conservation, capital improvement planning, and the preservation of special landscapes, among other issues.



Franklin Community Park



Great Miami River

6. **Quality of Life.** Provides direction for government buildings, emergency services, schools, and libraries. A key focus for this section is managing limited resources, encouraging co-location, and supporting infill development. This element also addresses place-making to reinforce the design of Franklin's business districts and commercial corridors.

The Planning Process and Public Participation:

The Comprehensive Plan is a future looking document that incorporates citizen’s thoughts and desires for the community alongside an in-depth analysis of physical and social conditions in the City. These elements are then assessed and applied within the context of current best practices and regional and national trends to create recommendations for the future. The result is a holistic, informed, and future looking guide for city development.

Community Engagement:

Throughout the planning process, the planning team facilitated discussions amongst community members to delineate common direction and goals. Community issues and opportunities made apparent during discussions were used to formulate both general belief statements and targeted strategies and actions.

Physical & Social Conditions:

The Warren County Regional Planning Commission and City Staff analyzed and assessed a range of conditions including demographics, population and economic trends, land use, housing, mobility, and community character, among others. With an understanding of these existing conditions, the planning team and the Steering Committee could make more informed decisions and strategies for the City as a whole and key areas identified during the planning process.

Best Practices & Trends:

Community engagement and existing conditions were analyzed through the lens of relevant local, regional, and national trends. These trends were used to evaluate the broader picture of the future of Franklin, anticipating changing population demographics, and shifts in housing preferences and business industries.

The Comprehensive Plan was developed through the following six-step planning process:

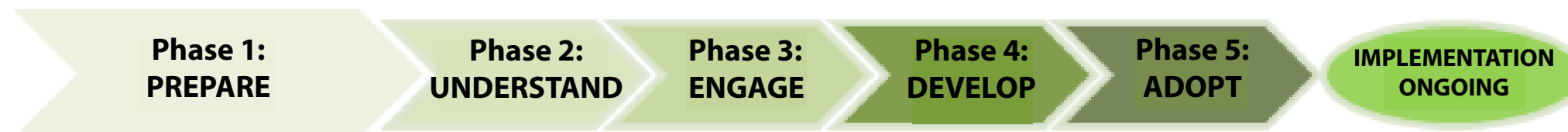
1. **Project Initiation.** This step included meetings with key City staff and the Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to lay the foundation for the project, research, and develop analysis over the community.
2. **Existing Conditions & Plan Analysis.** This step included a review and analysis of conditions within the City of Franklin as they currently exist and identified key issues and opportunities.
3. **Community Outreach.** This step included both stakeholder interviews and web-based activities to facilitate engagement with community members and gather feedback regarding issues and opportunities. Opportunities for public engagement were made available throughout the planning process.
4. **Community Vision, Goals, & Strategies.** This step established an overall “vision” for the future of the City. It provided focus and direction for subsequent planning activities.

5. **Draft Plan.** This step included preparation of a draft plan to address land use, transportation, parks and trails, housing, economic competitiveness, historic preservation, and community facilities. This step is the core of the Comprehensive Plan, reflecting the collective community vision for the City.
6. **Plan Adoption.** The final step included preparation of the final versions of the Comprehensive Plan document for local review and consideration. Ultimately, the Plan was presented to the City Council for review and adoption.

Issues and Opportunities:

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted by the planning staff, merging institutional knowledge between the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) with the knowledge of County and City staff. Results of the SWOT helped to assess the City’s existing conditions, and develop ideas to improve the City. These are as defined in the Comprehensive Plan. The results are summarized below:

- **Strengths** such as Franklin’s historic properties, downtown layout, school districts, and public services provide a close-knit small-town feel. Proximity to the I-75 corridor, Great Miami River, and utilization of trail systems are strengths that make the City an attractive place to live and visit.



- **Weaknesses** primarily were focused on properties and area in need of revitalization, the lack of retail, eateries, entertainment, infrastructure, community image, and resources to address homelessness, drug abuse, and mental health.
- **Opportunities** that could benefit the City include revitalization of neighborhoods and commercial nodes. As well as strategies to attract development based on its strategic location between Dayton and Cincinnati metropolitan area.
- **Threats** to the City were distinct: Drugs, homelessness, and a decrease in the population, along with a limited tax base and undesirable land uses, gas stations, and discount stores.



City of Franklin Mural



Franklin High School

Previous Plans:

The City of Franklin Comprehensive Plan 2006:

This is Franklin's fifth Comprehensive Plan, which demonstrates the City's longstanding commitment to planning. The 2006 Comprehensive Plan built upon the efforts of previous plans, while accounting for changes that have occurred in the community and region. The plan included the following main elements and offers recommendations for each element:

- Housing
- Natural Resources
- Community Facilities
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Land Use

The 2006 Comprehensive Plan also identified several focus areas including Downtown and the North and South Gateway areas.

Vision:

The qualities and characteristics desired for the City of Franklin by the year 2040 are expressed in the vision statement. The Comprehensive Plan is the blueprint to achieve that future vision. Creating and applying a vision requires citizens to reflect on the future and reach agreement on shared desires. In times of change or conflict, the vision statement can become a compass, pointing the way to a common direction and values. The vision statement below creates a picture of the Franklin community desired in 2040. The Guiding Principles that follow provide additional details about the specific elements identified as vital to the community.

Guiding Principles:

1. **Provide for Planned & Orderly Growth.** The Comprehensive Plan continues to consciously manage the timing, location, and characteristics of growth. Franklin's commitment to orderly growth ensures that the City welcomes new residents and businesses while sustaining the quality and affordability of municipal services and infrastructure demanded by the community. This Comprehensive Plan looks to the year 2040 and a City that is nearly fully developed. It is essential that Franklin carefully considers how growth completes the community. The Comprehensive Plan promotes development standards that ensure aesthetic beauty, increases property values, provides effective infrastructure, and enhances the community.

- 2. Ensure a Safe & Healthy Community.** The well-being of Franklin’s residents is a fundamental objective of the Comprehensive Plan. Providing a place that is safe and healthy involves more than police and fire services. Safe and connected neighborhood environments form the building blocks of Franklin. The development pattern encourages people to know their neighbors and focuses on community life. The street system allows vehicles to operate safely, while supporting trails, sidewalks, bike lanes, and other integrated systems. City infrastructure systems provide clean water and protects the water supply. The City is prepared to respond to emergencies and other conditions that threaten the safety and health of the community.
- 3. Support Parks & Provide Recreational Resources.** Franklin is committed to improving and investing in its parks and developing an interconnected trail system. The City devotes appropriate resources to the on-going maintenance of Franklin’s robust parks and trail systems. Parks are to be designed, coordinated, and maintained to offer a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities for people of all ages. These noteworthy community assets connect residents to nature, encourage an active and healthy lifestyle, and promote community interaction.
- 4. Plan for an Effective Transportation System.** Franklin is committed to a diverse and effective multi-modal transportation system that ensures the accessibility and connectivity of community amenities and services. As the City evolves and transportation technology changes, Franklin ensures that the transportation system adopts to new technology. While the City will accommodate the demand for safe, well-maintained roadways, it also recognizes that creative transportation with other aspects

of solutions are necessary. Transportation solutions should balance safety, efficiency, aesthetics, stormwater management, and quality developments.

The City believes alternative forms of transportation such as transit, biking, and walking are essential to the quality of life in Franklin. As such, the City will continue its commitment to pedestrian accessibility and actively participate in efforts to connect to the Great Miami River Trail and expand regional transit systems that serve Franklin.

- 5. Encourage Business Growth & Retention.** Franklin will be stronger if its residents have ample opportunities to both live and work in the City. As such, the City shall continue its efforts to attract, retain, and expand a diversified business sector which will provide a variety of jobs and strengthen the City’s tax base. Franklin must have the infrastructure and supporting services to support these efforts.
- 6. Promote Excellence in Education.** Excellence in education is part of the core values, quality of life, and identity of Franklin. City government will work collaboratively with public school districts and other stakeholders to provide quality and safe learning environments and to make the best use of public financial resources. The City strives to encourage a variety of options for educating children and to provide opportunities for learning at all stages of life.



- 7. Plan for Reinvestment & Redevelopment.** As Franklin ages, existing neighborhoods and commercial districts may need additional attention. Reinvestment and maintenance of both property and the infrastructure that serves it are required to ensure that Franklin’s positive identity endures over time. In order to effectively facilitate reinvestment and redevelopment, Franklin must capitalize on its long-term commitment to quality design and development.
- 8. Support Vibrant Commercial Centers.** Franklin will have a higher volume of residents and tourism in the City with the revitalization and redevelopment of commercial nodes. In doing so, the focus of attracting and retaining diverse business will provide more opportunity for residents and tourists to support newer businesses, and strengthen the tax base. Franklin requires a strong infrastructure to support these efforts and renovate for commercial land use.



City of Franklin railway

Vision:

The City of Franklin's planning process produced a vision that can guide the City's future over the next 20 years. This vision is firmly rooted in the aspirations of the Franklin community, as well as in technical research into feasible economic, social, transportation, and design strategies that can address these aspirations. This section presents the vision in two ways:

- A general vision that addresses the primary elements of the Plan.
- A vision statement that concisely summarizes Franklin's possibilities.

The Comprehensive Plan guides the use of land and the actions of City government to provide a sustainable quality of life, making careful and effective use of available natural, human, and economic resources, and ensuring that resources exist to maintain and enhance the quality of life for future residents. Franklin's vision is of a community where diverse opportunities for housing, employment, education, recreation, commerce, transportation, volunteer organizations, participatory government, and cultural activities are woven together into a unique identity. Franklin is a place where residents of all ages, and incomes are welcome and have the opportunity to thrive.

Franklin is a safe and healthy place to live, work, and play. These characteristics affect all aspects of community life and allow people to stay in Franklin as they age. Franklin believes in carefully planned growth that enables the City to welcome new residents and businesses and to improve the quality, capacity, and affordability of municipal services and infrastructure.

Downtown Franklin remains a great asset to the City for its economic contribution and history. Public improvements and redevelopment through strategic policy decisions have improved its marketability, aesthetics, and has created a stronger sense of place.

Quality parks, trails, and open spaces connect residents to nature, foster an active, healthy lifestyle, and promote community interaction. The availability, quality, and variety of educational opportunities are integral to life in Franklin. Neighborhoods are revitalized and provide a safe, healthy, and rewarding environment for a diverse community of residents; a community with an array of facilities and services to serve all residents, ranging from schools to flood controls, and from parks and playgrounds to downtown entertainment.

Creating the Vision Statement:

Stakeholders and CAC members voiced their ideas on the vision statement creation process, providing their own statements related to the vision for the City of Franklin. Members frequently returned to the best qualities for the City being strong public service, and a close-knit community.

Some of the common phrases used in the creation of these vision statements stemmed from ideas, like:

- Work cooperatively with the school system, township, library, neighboring communities, county, and state to improve quality of life.
- Preserving a close-knit and diverse community culture.

Vision Statement

The City of Franklin is anchored by a unique and lively Downtown with preserved historic buildings and murals, a world class river front park, green spaces, bike trails, and an ample collection of venues. Housing is diverse and relatively affordable, while the safe, clean streets and welcoming, friendly atmosphere are attractions in their own right. The City might be relatively small, but it's bursting at the seams with job opportunities.

Franklin is recognized for its:

- Unparalleled access to the Great Miami River.
- Environmental consciousness.
- Healthy living style with a farmers market.
- Award winning school district with modern facilities.
- Proximity to an array of institutions of higher learning.
- Quality public services and community spaces.
- Technology enabled amenities.
- Sprawling pedestrian-friendly recreation, entertainment, eateries.
- An active music and cultural scene.

If you want to live in a city with small-town authentic charm, Franklin is the place for you!

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The purpose of this chapter is to review and analyze the current land uses in the City and to update the Future Land Use Map. The future land use map communicates residents' vision, projects how the City should develop and reflect the uses desired over the course of the planning time frame (20 years). This chapter provides recommendations and effective land use strategies for the City of Franklin. The Land Use chapter should be used as a reference for zoning decisions.



LAND USE 2



Aerial photo of the City of Franklin

Background

Land Use:

The Land Use Chapter is a fundamental element of the Comprehensive Plan, it serves as the centerpiece. Land use makes up the basic structure of the City: what kinds of homes, businesses, institutions, and amenities the City has, the form they take, and where they are located relative to each other. Land use gives the City its unique character. The purpose of the Land Use chapter is to create a useful tool for decision makers (elected officials and planning commissioners) to guide growth and development; for developers as they plan projects; and for residents and others to make known the preferred direction for growth and new development.

The most fundamental decisions in planning begin with land use: what to put where.

This chapter is also a tool to improve public health, enhance the economy, resolve conflicts, and identify trade-offs in land use decisions. For example, increasing density may result in a higher population, but higher population can also help enhance livability and support businesses. Redevelopment projects may require higher intensity development, but redevelopment could also be used to help improve the image of the City. The Land Use Chapter documents the vision, preferences, and values of residents.

Trends and Challenges:

1. Strategic Residential Growth. Commercial and industrial growth help to keep Franklin a vibrant, healthy, and attractive place to work. There is sufficient undeveloped land for continued industrial and commercial growth. However, as a close to fully residentially developed City, Franklin is best positioned to accommodate future residential growth via the reuse of existing properties and with infill development. Plans for residential growth should be strategic, particularly regarding improving core neighborhoods and providing benefits to the City, protecting stable existing residential neighborhoods, and utilizing appropriately designed multi-family uses within core neighborhoods.

A Visual Preference Survey (a survey consisting of a series of images that participants must score according to their preference) assessed preferences about the appropriate massing, height, proportions, density, and the architectural elements of homes in established core neighborhoods and these changes should be reflected in updates to the zoning code (UDO). This should be done while balancing the desire of developers seeking to offer housing units that appeal to today's market with the interests of neighbors. New construction/infill will be an ongoing concern that should be addressed with the development of design standards/guidelines and the establishment of a trained design review board.

Several important physical features dominate the land use pattern of Franklin- among these are the Great Miami River and Interstate 75. The Great Miami River has historically influenced development for Franklin and continues to be an important scenic and recreational asset to the City.

2. Diverse Housing. Stakeholders who were interviewed by the planning staff responded to the question of the residential development mix in the City and the need for options for housing near where residents work. They express a strong preference for mixed use and diverse residential options, as opposed to only focusing on single-family housing. A dominant trend, in Warren County, is the overall aging of the population. This has a host of implications for land use, including changes in the type of housing needed, goods and services demanded, and reliance on non-auto transportation options. Additionally, the Reinvent Franklin public participation process found that both younger (those under 35) and older (those over 60) participants were equally in support of more housing options, in contrast to a single-family housing focus.

3. Adding Walkability & Bikeability. Much of Franklin (at least 50% of the residential units) was developed post 1966. These residential developments did not prioritize accommodations for pedestrians and bicycles. A transportation network that allows for additional non-motorized travel options increases the movement capacity of the existing residents and provides for more active lifestyles. Developing a complete non-motorized transportation network will take time and effort and should fit into a well-planned, incremental transportation network.



4. Ensuring Quality Development Through Zoning. Zoning establishes limits on the use, size, and shape of buildings within the City’s zoning districts to reflect their varying density and character. These limits help give shape to different zones and predictability to future development. Future development should be geared towards, quality and well-designed structures; sites designed to accommodate pedestrians and to create a sense of place; places that are interesting and with increased vitality; diverse housing types; and infill and mixed-use development. The current zoning code, originally adopted in 2009, does not adequately address these issues to the level articulated during the public participation process. For this reason, the City of Franklin needs to modernize the zoning code to ensure the desired type of development.

5. Developing Vibrant Commercial Nodes. A commercial node is an area that features small to medium sized businesses to serve the adjacent neighborhoods. These usually consist of walkable areas with a mix of uses that give residents easy access to their daily needs. Vibrant nodes will include commercial, office, and residential uses with a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment of sidewalks, street trees, furniture, and reduced traffic speeds. Nodes also could include public spaces (squares, plazas, etc.) to encourage social interaction. On-street parking and parking at the rear of the buildings are preferred. On-street parking adds a buffer area along the sidewalks that protects pedestrians from traffic. Commercial nodes should be developed along State Routes 73 & 123 corridors where existing commercial sites could be infilled or redeveloped. Commercial nodes should be encouraged through the City’s zoning code to allow for a mix of commercial and residential activity.



Industrial warehouse in Franklin



Aerial photo of Franklin

Land Use Vision:

The vision is a pattern of growth that enhances the livability of the City for its residents by promoting increased accessibility to employment, recreation, shopping, and other amenities while improving the aesthetics and image of the City. The goal is to protect existing and established residential neighborhoods and development, and to implement a land use strategy that redirects development patterns towards an efficient, sustainable, and livable growth pattern - quality redevelopment and infill development. The goal is to also promote thoughtful, and desirable development/redevelopment and to align well with other Comprehensive Plan chapters and City area plans.

As one moves north on State Route 123, the size and scale of the houses diminishes and the need for maintenance and upkeep increases. Similarly, socioeconomic issues increase the farther west one moves along State Route 123 from the interchange. Several initiatives are planned to address these issues.



Existing Conditions

Existing Land Use:

The City of Franklin is unique- a historic river city that combines commercial, industrial, residential, and historic character, with its strategic location along the Great Miami River and Interstate 75. The City includes a variety of land uses that provide great opportunities for revitalization, infill, and redevelopment. An analysis of the Existing Land Use Map, Figure 2.1, discloses that Public/Semi-Public land uses occupy more than 13% of the City land, this portion of the City includes undeveloped land with a large portion located within the City's wellfield and floodplain area (sensitive area). Higher-density residential uses are clustered within the City core while low-density residential use scatters along the City's edges. Most of the commercial and industrial uses concentrate along Interstate-75, State Route 123 and State Route 73.

Existing Land Use	Area (acres)	Percent
Residential	1467.7	27.84%
Commercial/Office	96.1	5.62%
Industrial	431.5	8.18%
Public/Semi-Public	732.4	13.89%
Recreation/Open Space	538.5	10.21%
Vacant	383.8	7.28%
Agriculture	1422.72	26.98%
Total	5272.65	100%

Table 1 - Existing Land Use

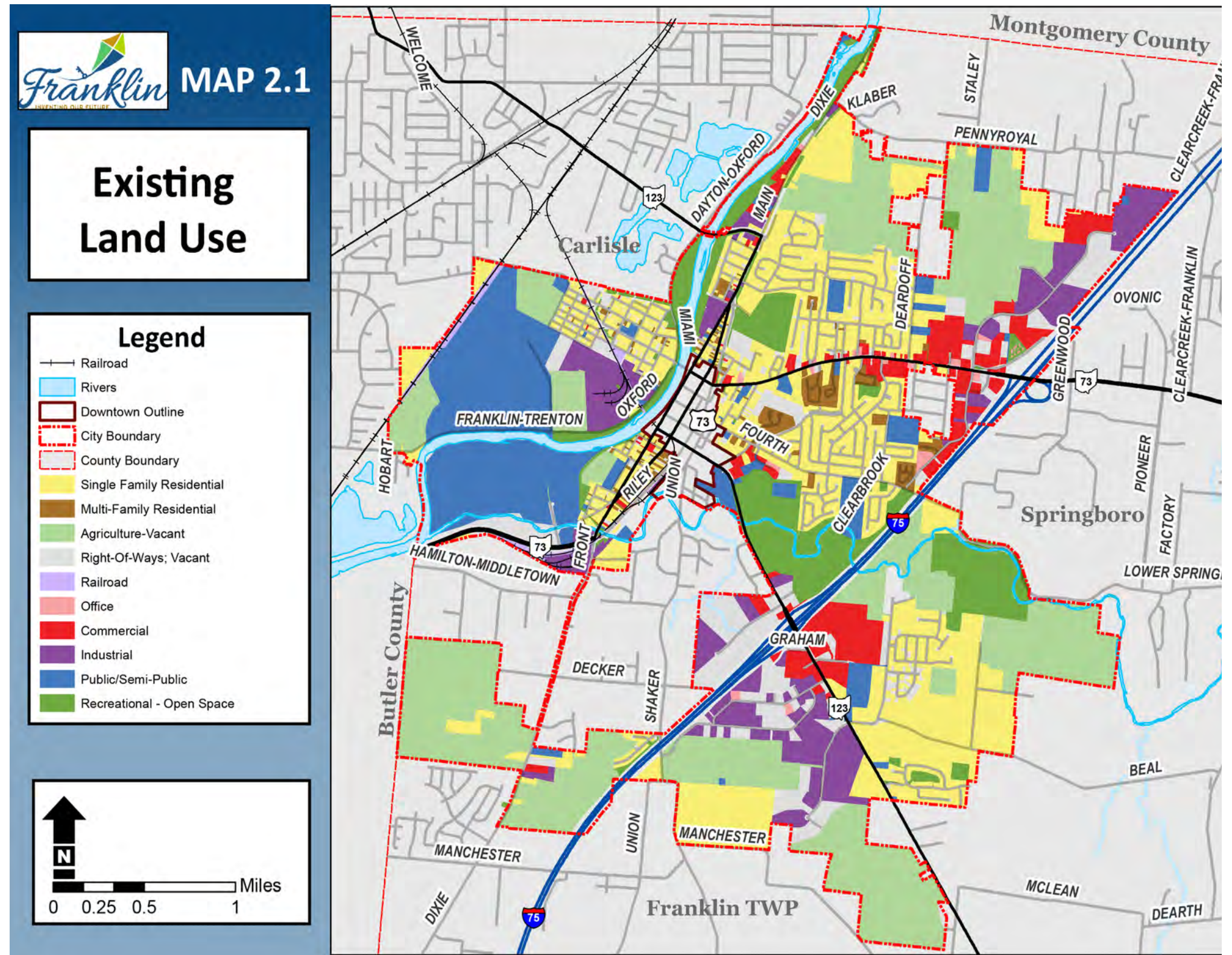


Figure 2.1 | Existing Land Use Categories

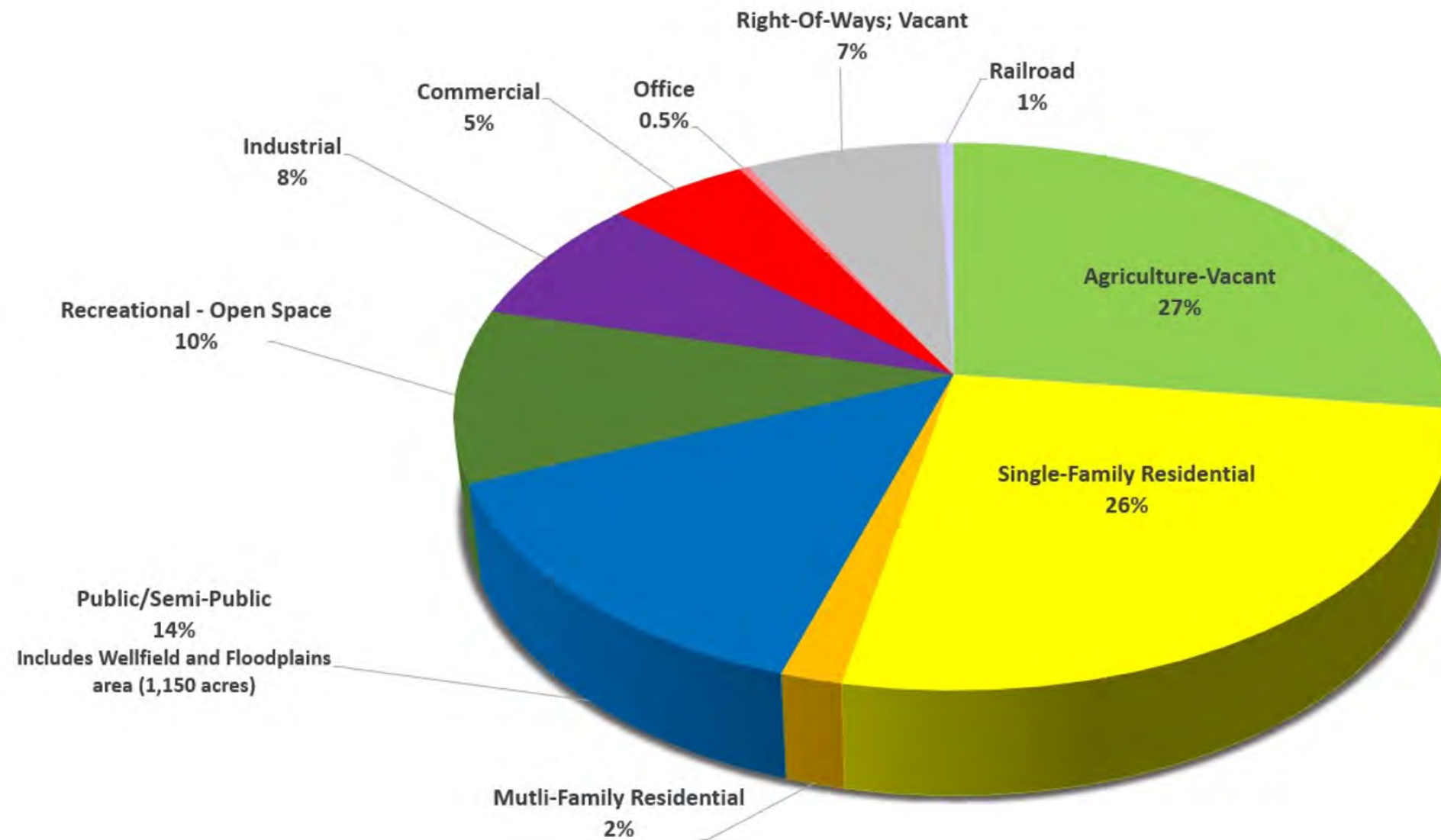


Figure 2.1 - Pie chart showing the existing land use, based on land use code from the Warren County Auditor's Office.

Development Potential:

Figure 2.1 shows that 26% of the area within the City is utilized for low-density residential uses followed by parks/open space 10%, industrial 8%, and commercial 5%. The public/semi-public land use category includes the City's wellfields. Multi-family is found throughout the City and functions as a buffer between single-family residential and commercial uses. Multi-family uses are concentrated mostly along State Route 73 and the within the core neighborhoods. Approximately 34.26% of the City's total land area is vacant/agricultural, with undeveloped parcels scattered throughout the City, indicating substantial potential for new commercial and industrial development. However, there is relatively little land in the City where additional residential development can occur, beyond annexed sites. Additionally, some of the remaining vacant or underdeveloped residentially zoned land is in environmentally constrained areas characterized by flood plains or aquifer recharge areas and is designated Open Space on the Future Land Use Map. Most new single-family residential construction will occur on infill lots scattered throughout the City's existing residential neighborhoods, in mixed-use developments, and on the fringes of the City. However, this analysis does not include the City's underutilized parcels, which have the potential to accommodate a mixture of commercial and residential uses (upper story residential).

A limited amount of vacant land is available for residential development within the City's corporate boundary, leaving future growth directed at redevelopment and infill of underutilized properties.



Historic photo of the City of Franklin railroad depot

Industrially zoned land, in particular the areas adjacent to I-75 interchange & along the rail line, should be considered strategic assets that should be preserved to continue the City's economic growth & development.

Table (2) presents the projected new industrial, commercial, and agriculture development potential. This projection is more than the maximum potential, since it does not reflect overall development constraints, such as topographic and natural resource limitations (1,150 acres are in the floodplain area & the groundwater protection area). Data collected is from the Warren County Auditor's Office.

Land Use Code	Area (acres)	Percent
Industrial	162.91	3.1%
Commercial	57.84	1.1%
Agriculture	931.91	17.7%

Above: Table 2 - Undeveloped Sites



Industrial warehouse in Franklin



Modula, located in Franklin

The Importance of Industrial Land:

Industrial land is a valuable component of Franklin's economy because of its contribution to the fiscal health of the City and future middle-skilled jobs. Although, the industrial sector is evolving and demands and characteristics for space is changing (manufacturers are trending to smaller and more centralized locations while logistics businesses are demanding larger buildings and superior regional transportation access), the City of Franklin should retain industrially zone lands for employment intensive industrial uses. Manufacturing jobs appear to be more valuable as they provide higher wages and have a greater opportunity for value added services, these jobs are also more compatible with the available skill level and education. The current planning and zoning/regulatory approach is to encourage redevelopment (plans) and allow for mixed-use development, including residential uses. This approach, within the industrially zoned areas, may result in industrial uses being priced out. Thus, even though this plan generally encourages mixed used development, the mixed-use policy direction should not be considered within industrial zoning districts (I-1 & I-2). Franklin's manufacturing base is diverse and growing and the availability of industrially zoned lands should be utilized for continued growth. The primary method to protect industrial land is to restrict the use and preclude non-industrial uses.

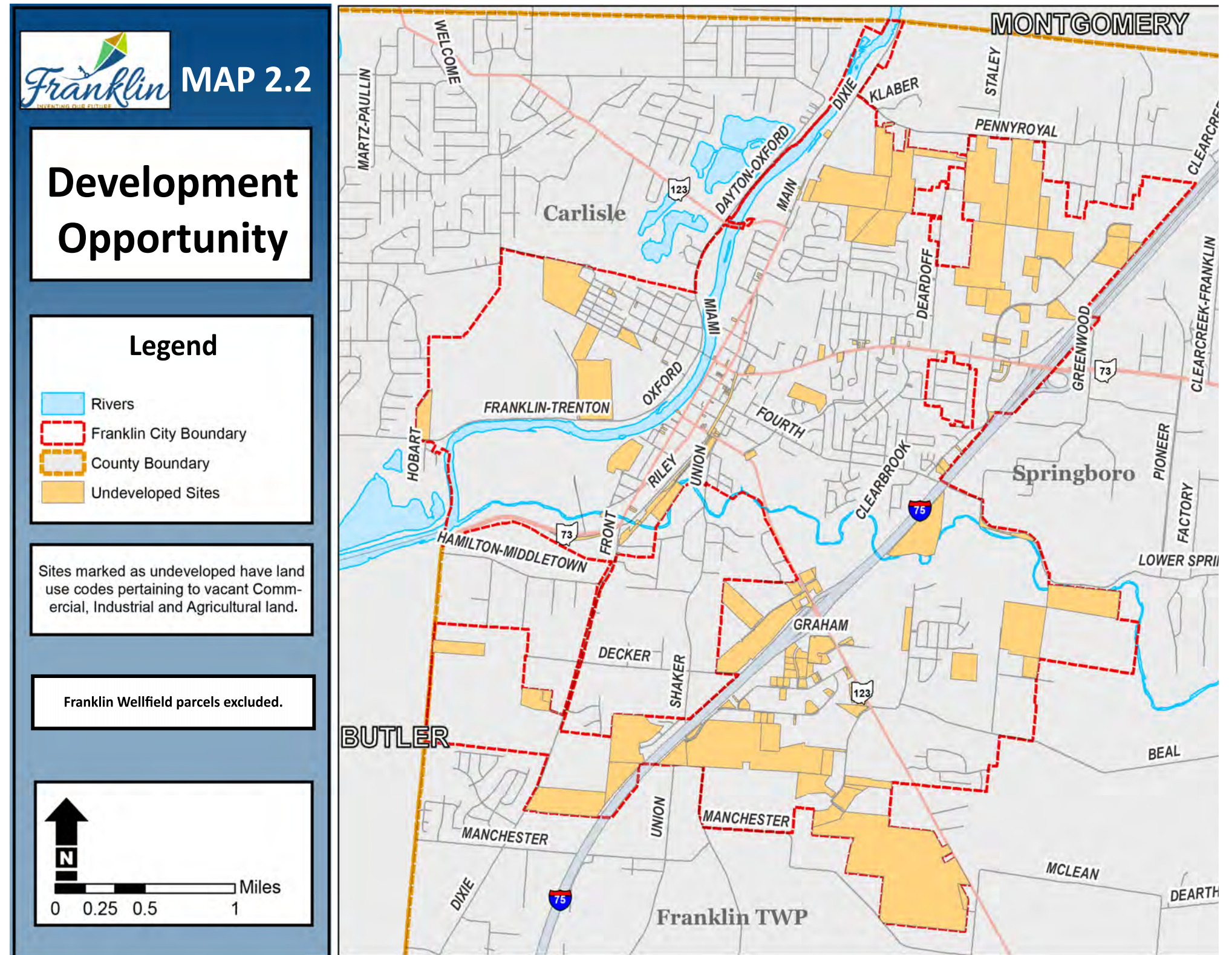


Non-industrial uses refer to residential and commercial uses, but restrictions should also consider uses like storage facilities that have high land consumption but provide little employment.

- Jobs within industrial oriented businesses are an important source of “middle skill” jobs.
- Manufacturing wages are typically higher than wages in other industries accessible to workers without a college degree.
- Unlike service industries, manufacturing wages approach a living wage.



Map 2.2, located on the right, shows development opportunities within the City of Franklin. This shows vacant commercial, industrial and agricultural land, as recorded by land use code at the Warren County Auditor’s Office. As noted, the parcels within Franklin that are part of the Wellfield have been excluded, as these are owned and maintained by the City of Franklin.

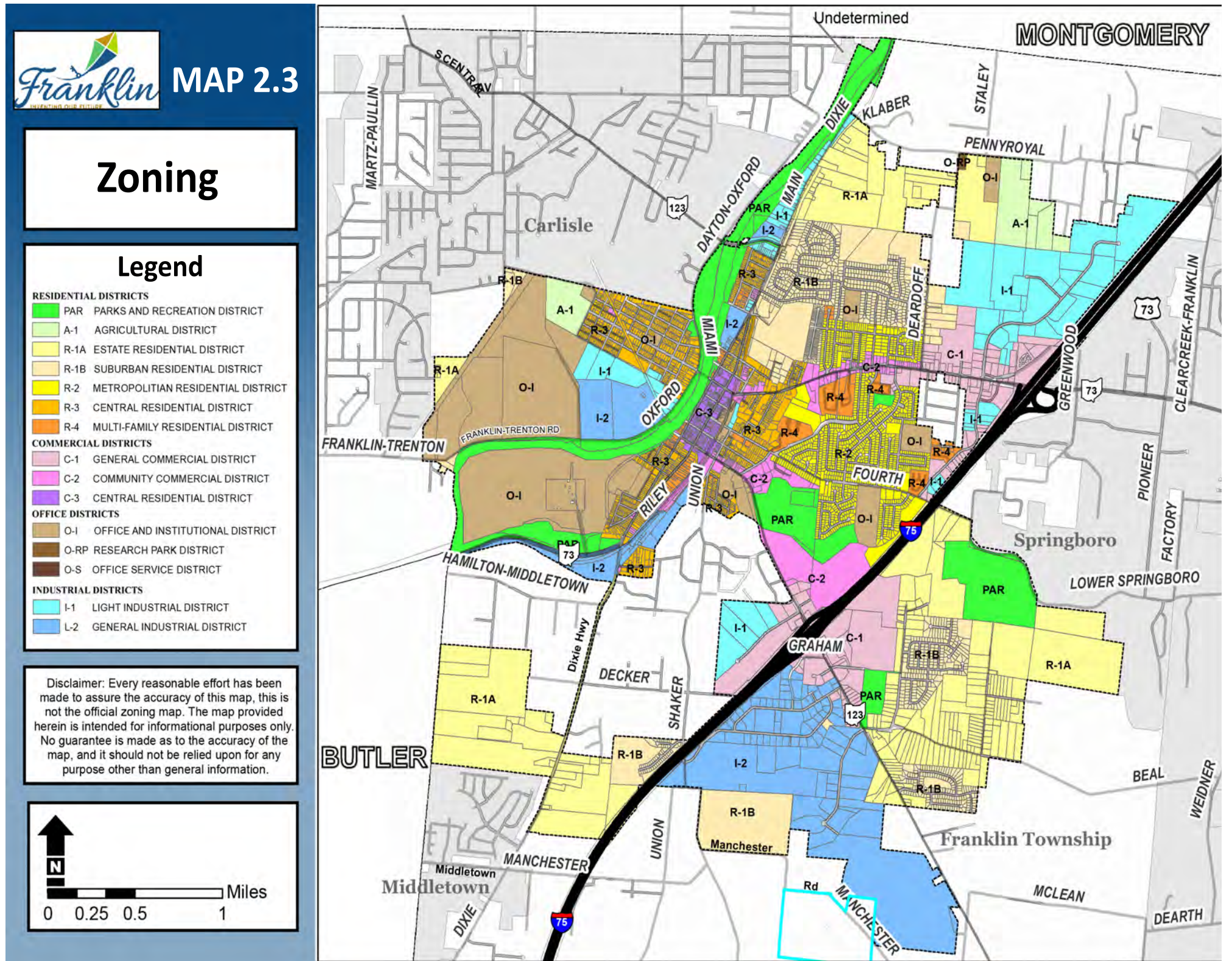


Zoning

Purpose & Direction:

Zoning affects future development and land use. A properly revised Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is the foundation upon which a reinvented Franklin should be built upon- when done well, the revised code will make it easier for Franklin to implement its vision. The revised UDO should reconsider permissible land uses, building densities, locations, setbacks to street widths, parking requirements, and should include design review, flexible development standards, and a simplified review process for preferred types of uses and developments.

Zoning should be used in a positive way to protect the City's health, safety, and welfare by regulating the use of land and providing general development standards to achieve desired outcomes (e.g., a new vision for an area based on a plan or set of policies) particularly in an area the City considers ripe for reinvestment. Particular attention should also be paid to specifying a desired pattern, form, and character of development in selected areas of the City. Care should be taken in crafting new standards and procedures, so they are not burdensome as to increase development costs and discourage local business start-ups. In those areas targeted for reinvestment, the UDO can be amended to encourage and, where appropriate, incentivize mixed-use development, infill housing, and walkable rather than drivable development. As an example, the mixing of uses - both residential and commercial - is a basic component of a walkable environment and contributes significantly toward reducing the number of vehicle trips necessary to meet the daily needs. "Mixed-use buildings" should be considered in several commercial and residential zoning categories as a permitted use.



Current Zoning:

The City of Franklin's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is divided into seven major categories: residential, commercial, industrial, office, agricultural, parks & recreation, and overlay districts. Certain categories such as residential, commercial, industrial, office, and overlay include multiple subcategories to further identify what types of uses are allowed in a particular zone. The commercial districts are mainly located along the I-75 corridor and the State Routes 123 & 73 corridors, while the industrial districts are mainly located along the I-75 corridor within the portions of the City that have suitable access to transportation routes and necessary utilities and that are away from residential uses. The current UDO does not reflect the updates that were incorporated in the City's updated Future Land Use Map. Updating the UDO should be a priority for the City and this update should be based on the recommendations of the Reinvent Franklin Plan and the Downtown Plan.

Zoning regulates & influences development through standards that guide how land is used, where residential or commercial buildings may be built, & the density of new developments to be constructed. It can be used to help attract new businesses, encourage the construction of new housing, & incentivize good development.

The UDO includes three commercial districts, two industrial districts, and three office districts. The commercial districts regulate various commercial uses including general commercial activity and low/high-intensity retail uses. Simultaneously, the industrial districts regulate office uses and industrial uses of both low and high-intensity and require that these uses operate without causing a risk to the health and welfare of the City's residents. In addition, there is a separate office district that regulates the office uses.



Speedway (SR 73 at Wells Bridge Dr)

The UDO also allows Gasoline Service Stations and Sexually Oriented Businesses as conditional uses within the industrial zoning districts. The Citizens Advisory Committee stated that the City should limit the development of new discount shops (dollar stores), gas stations, pawn shops, cash checking facilities, car lots, and carefully consider commercial and industrial uses that are low in employment intensity. These businesses impact the City's image and tax base. Thus, the UDO should be updated to include development standards and zoning criteria for these types of developments and any new development. In addition, reasonable regulations can be adopted to govern the operation of sexually oriented businesses and to prevent secondary impacts of this type of business.

Strategies:

Looking to the future, it is important that the UDO be updated and designed to help the City redevelop, revitalize, and attract quality and appropriate development. This should be done while aligning with the stated Comprehensive Plan priorities for neighborhood revitalization, job creation, commercial vitality, improved City image, and appropriate infill development. The following areas of UDO update are recommended:

1. Explore the inclusion of mixed-use districts along major corridors, adjacent to the river and core neighborhoods that provides opportunities to expand housing options. Allow greater flexibility for the development of mixed uses within select zoning districts.
2. Allow a diverse range of housing types, including missing middle, upper story residential, and accessory dwelling units.
3. Add infill development standards, within both residential and commercial districts, that encourage the development of vacant sites. This may include design options incorporating new urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) approaches within the core neighborhoods and along the State Route 73 commercial corridor.
4. Develop clear compatibility standards for new and redeveloped sites, particularly those adjacent to existing neighborhoods.
5. Review zoning districts allowable use list and provide limitations & exclusion of undesirable uses.

6. Evaluate bulk, height, building orientation, parking location, fenestration, landscape & tree preservation, lighting, building design, and general design standards to maximize long term economic potential and enhance the character and reinforce the City's vision as outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Establish a design review board.
7. Craft incentives for desired development patterns and forms. This should include a close examination of on-site parking requirements and opportunities to integrate shared parking, bicycle parking, reduced parking, parking location, and landscape and screening standards for parking lots.
8. Accelerate & simplify the review and approval process for desirable development. This should be coupled to predictable, clear, and easy to use development standards for developers, businesses, and residents. Include flexible development standards.
9. Review sign regulations, including potential customized regulations to enhance the identity of commercial corridors.
10. Update code to reflect federal & state influence on zoning regulations concerning billboards & signs, telecommunications, places of worship, vacation rentals, urban agriculture, wind & solar energy, and new uses.



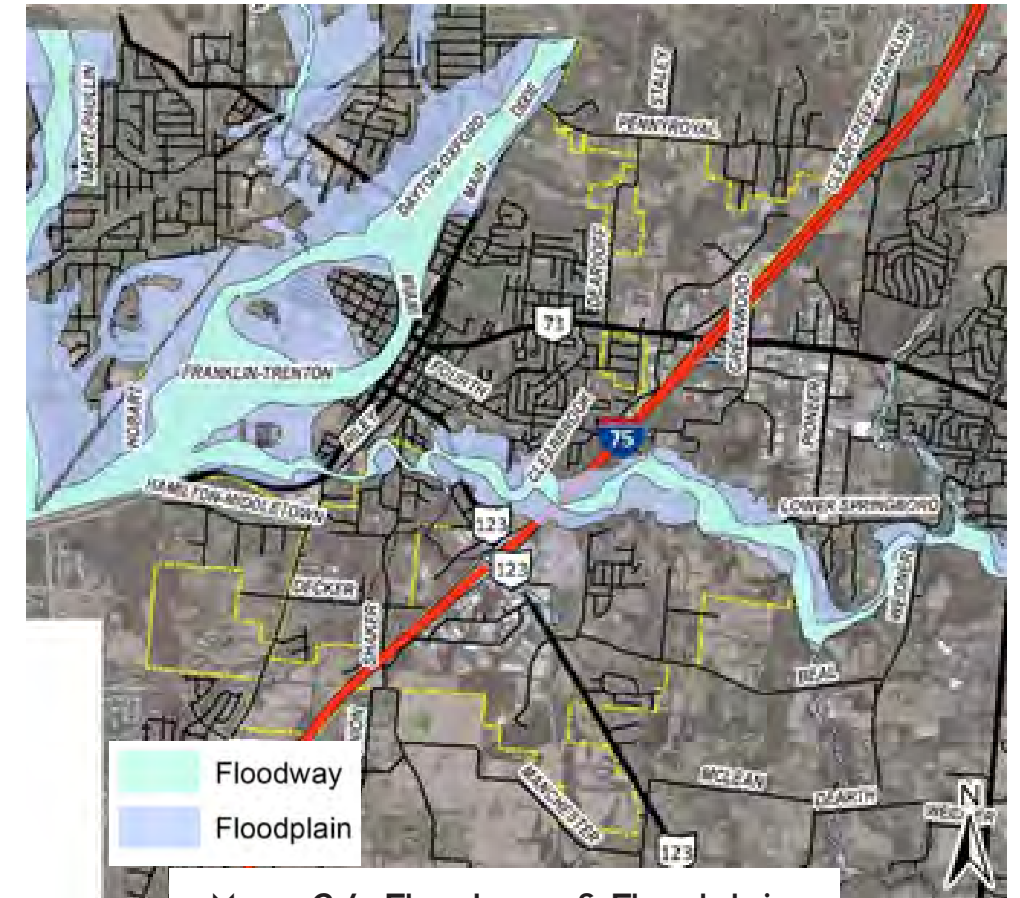
Environmental Resources

Floodways and Floodplains:

The floodplains and floodways in the City of Franklin are primarily located along the Great Miami River, Twin Creek, and Clearcreek. Approximately 1,150 acres of the City land is within the floodways and floodplains, which equates to 21.8% of the City area. Most of this land is owned by the City and designated as Public/Semi-Public or Recreational/Open Space uses.

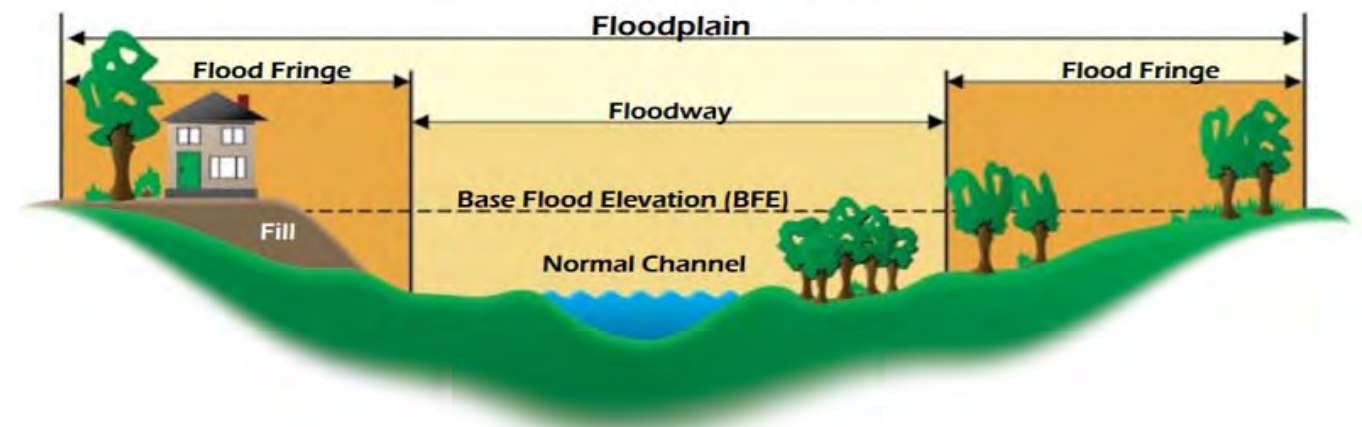
Floodplains provide flood risk reduction benefits by slowing runoff and storing flood water. They also provide other benefits of considerable economic, social, and environmental value that are sometimes overlooked when local land-use decisions are made. Floodplains frequently contain wetlands and other important ecological areas which directly affect the quality of the local environment. Some of the benefits of floodplains to a functioning natural system include:

1. Fish and wildlife habitat protection.
2. Natural flood and erosion control.
3. Surface water quality maintenance.
4. Groundwater recharge.
5. Biological productivity.



Map - 2.4: Floodways & Floodplains

Characteristics of a Floodplain



Construction should be limited in this area. Building in these areas are cautioned and require additional structural requirements and practices to ensure stability in case of flooding. The City of Franklin participates in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and has adopted a Floodplain Overlay District. The district includes special flood hazard areas that are subject to periodic inundation which may result in loss of life and property, health and safety hazards, disruption of commerce and governmental services, extraordinary public expenditures for flood protection and relief, and impairment of the tax base. The regulations are intended to minimize the threat of damages.

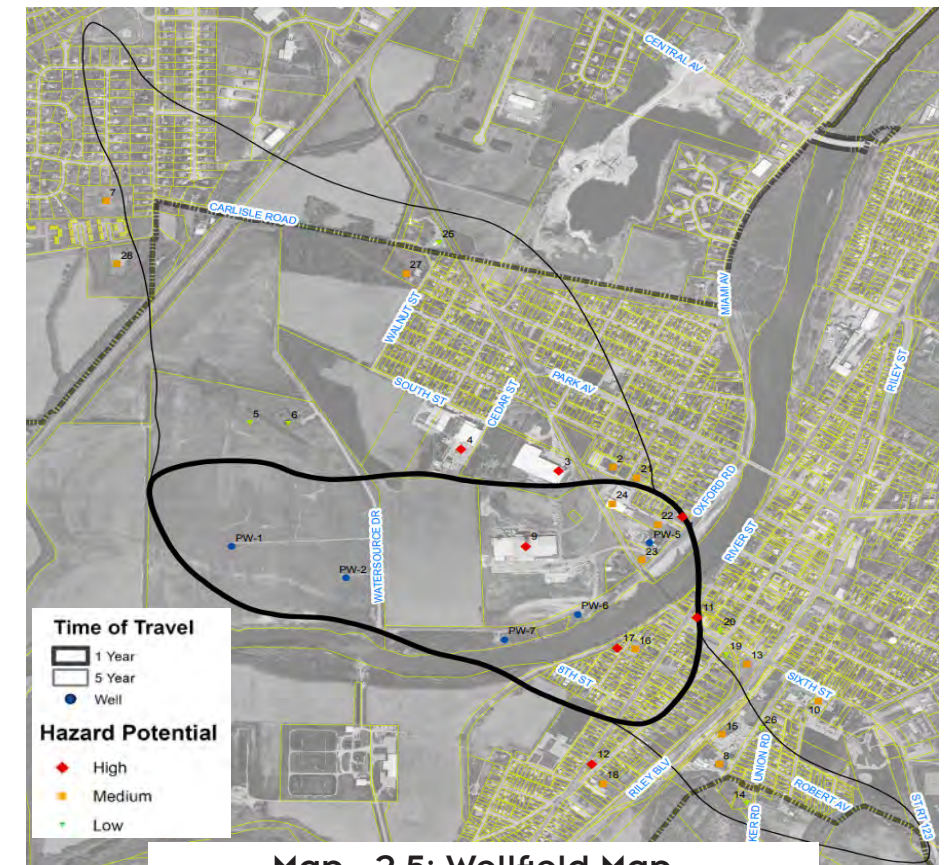
In 2021 FEMA maps were updated for a limited part of Warren County (Warren County within the Little Miami River Watershed). The maps provide base flood information, delineate areas subject to significant flood hazards within the County, and offer information that may be used when permitting development in the floodplain. The next phase of the update will include areas within the Great Miami River watershed- this impacts the City of Franklin. Thus, Franklin should actively participate in this update process and possibly update the City's Floodplain Overlay District maps.



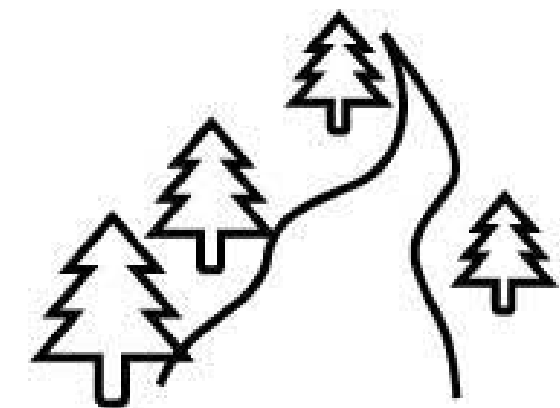
Aquifer & Groundwater Protection Area (Sensitive Area):

The Great Miami River is the principal source of drinking water for the City of Franklin. The City's service area includes the City of Franklin, portion of Carlisle, Springboro, and Franklin Township. Six wells provide the public drinking water to the City, five of these wells are located along the northwest bank of the Great Miami River and one well is located north of downtown on the east side of the river. Certain land uses could impact groundwater quality, particularly in shallow/surficial aquifers. To ensure the protection of these drinking water sources, a groundwater protection overlay district was established. The purpose of the Groundwater Protection Overlay District is to protect public health and safety by minimizing contamination of the aquifer and preserving and protecting existing and potential sources of drinking water supplies. The overlay district creates appropriate land use regulations that may be imposed in addition to those currently imposed by existing zoning districts or other city regulations. The Groundwater Protection Overlay District standards apply to all new construction, reconstruction, or expansion of existing buildings, and new or expanded uses.

The City should retain the Groundwater Protection Overlay District and update the overlay based on a new source water protection plan that requires the monitoring of land use activities and management practices for protecting public groundwater supply systems from contamination.



Map - 2.5: Wellfield Map



Sensitive Land Development:

Development on sensitive land (floodplains and watersheds) should be limited to specific uses like large residential lots, open space, parks, and other developments that don't significantly impact pervious surfaces. The intent is to:

- Protect water quality by reducing stormwater runoff and pollutants from impervious surfaces.
- Preserve ecosystem services, natural resources, and protect habitats.

Several practices are recommended for new development and redeveloped projects on the sensitive land. These include:

- Locate development and redevelopment where existing infrastructure exist.
- Cluster the project components (such as houses) closer together to reduce the amount of road, driveway, parking areas, and sidewalk needed.
- Use pervious pavement materials wherever feasible. Use natural systems to promote infiltration of water.
- Protect ecologically important areas of proposed developments.

In addition, the City should use Low-Impact Development (LID) and Green Infrastructure (GI) practices for the development of sensitive land. These practices reduce the overall cost of stormwater management and limit the opportunity for water to collect pollutants. These practices include open space development, permeable pavement, green roofs, rain gardens, and planting trees and shrubs. Public Green Infrastructure projects may be funded by federal programs, state grants, and even through public-private partnerships.

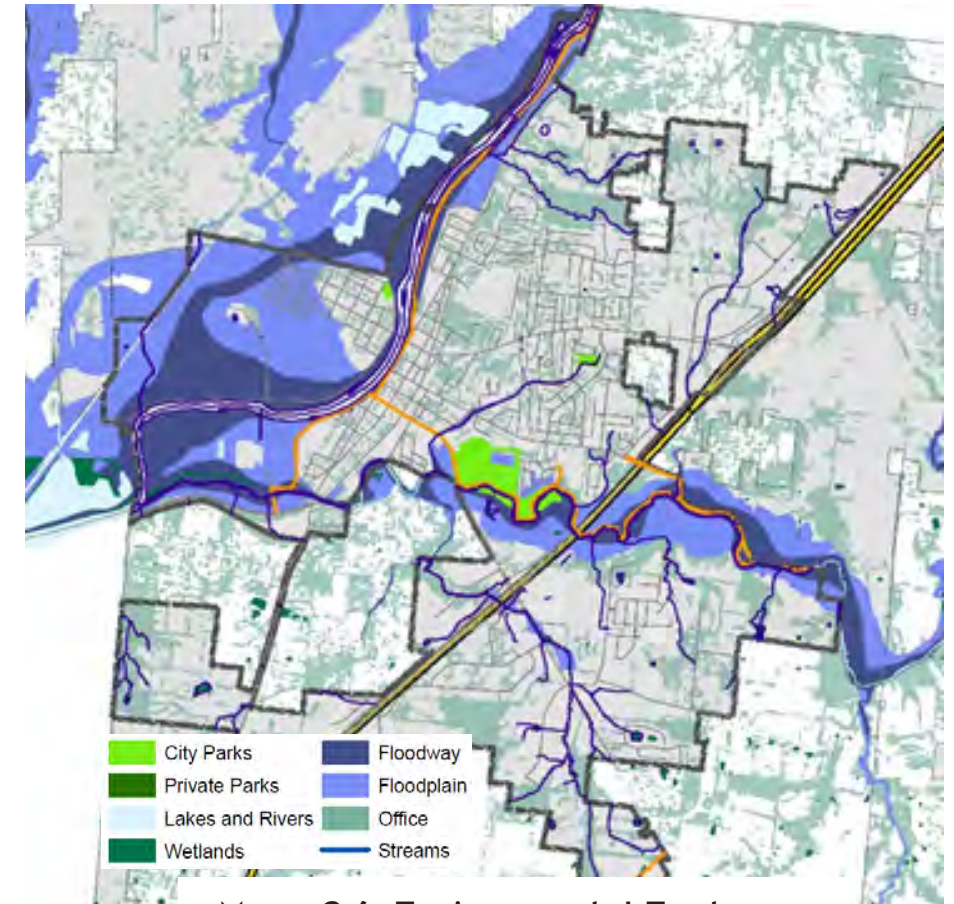
Environmental Features:

In addition to the floodway and floodplain, the City of Franklin has a vast amount of tree cover, and a couple of ecologically rich areas that include wetlands. Significant areas of importance with tree cover are primarily located in parks and along the Great Miami River. Many of the blotched light green areas are indicative of residential properties where trees remain on the property. It is important to protect the sensitive habitats that serve unique wildlife species. There are many benefits that wetlands serve:

1. Improved water quality.
2. Erosion and pollution control.
3. Flood abatement.
4. Habitat for wildlife.
5. Provides recreational opportunities and a scenic environment.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID)

The term Low Impact Development (LID) refers to systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the infiltration, evapotranspiration, or use of stormwater to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat. Both LID/GI practices aim to preserve, restore, and create green space using soils, vegetation, and rainwater harvest techniques. LID employs principles such as preserving and recreating natural landscape features, minimizing effective imperviousness to create functional and appealing site drainage that treat stormwater as a resource rather than a waste product.



Map - 2.6: Environmental Features

Map 2.6 above shows the environmental features within the City. The floodway and floodplain are most prevalent along the Great Miami River, and within the Wellfield in the northwestern portion of the City.

A smaller river runs within the City, connecting the Community Park with Hazelwoods Park, and crossing under Interstate 75. Data obtained is pulled from the Warren County Auditor's Office, Warren County Zoning, and the National Land Cover Database (NLCD).

Efficient Land Use

Infill Development:

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or under-developed parcels within areas that are already largely developed. This should be an important part of the City’s land use strategy to improve neighborhoods, creating more efficient mixes of housing, reducing blight, reinvesting in the City, and most important, the efficient use of the City’s limited land. Infill can return cultural, social, and recreational vitality to core neighborhoods.

Franklin’s infill development should occur on a variety of scales, including the rehabilitation of an entire block (new mixed-used development on land assembled by the City) as well as the construction of a single-family home on a vacant lot within a developed block. Different types of infill may be appropriate depending on the type of development needing to be achieved. Infill developments should also not be limited to a particular type of use to allow for a mixture of infill uses in select areas to accomplish a variety of goals, including the provision of a diverse range of residential and carefully located non-residential development adjacent to core neighborhoods.

Although encouraged, infill development must be compatible. Design guidelines and a design review board are useful tools for ensuring that infill development fits the existing context. Design guidelines that focus on infill development can guide the process of integrating new development carefully into the existing development with respect to block patterns, scale, building features, landscaping, and other characteristics and ensure more aesthetically pleasing developments.

The City should identify areas that have a high infill capacity and where they prefer to see infill development. This should be supported by further data collection on the availability of developable land or redevelopment potential.

A balanced mix of land uses & development patterns that support a sustainable City comprised of livable neighborhoods, vibrant commercial, compatible industrial areas, and appealing open spaces & parks.

Additionally the following is recommended:

- Map the location and size of vacant, infill, and potential redevelopment sites.
- Identify any hazardous or environmentally sensitive areas within the areas mapped.
- Determine the general availability and capacity of utilities and other services such as schools and fire protection to the areas identified.
- Determine if the current zoning supports infill development.
- Gather residents’ input and values about the area around the sites and the sites identified.



Concept drawing of infill development

Infill development could be an effective tool for the City towards the objectives of removing safety concerns that is associated with vacant or blighted properties. To produce successful infill, the City of Franklin should focus on a cooperative partnership with the development community, financial institutions, non-profit organizations, neighborhood organizations, and other resources. The City also can encourage the practice of the infill development through updating the UDO, providing more flexible building regulations, and creating incentive programs to make infill developments more attractive.

Mixed-Use Development:

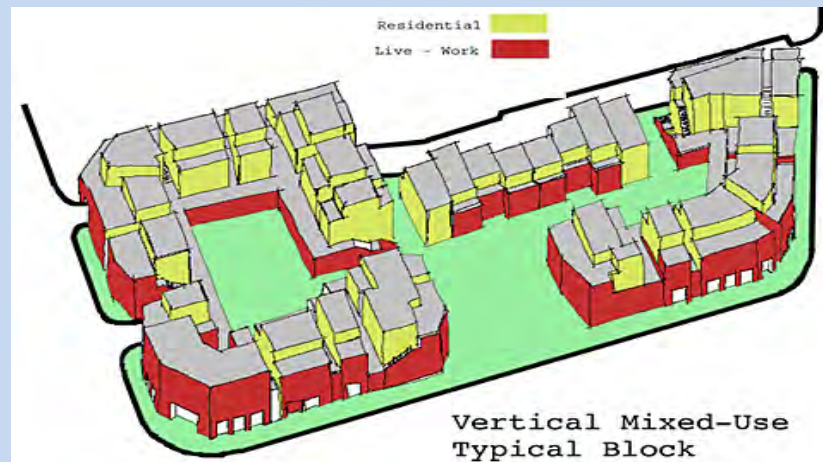
Mixed-Use development is characterized as pedestrian-friendly development that blends two or more residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, and/or industrial uses. However, mixed-use developments are not just limited to a multi-story development that incorporates commercial uses on the first floor with residential uses on upper floors, mixed-use development could provide three or more significant revenue-producing uses (such as retail/entertainment, office, residential, hotel, and/or civic/cultural/recreation). This type of development fosters walkable areas. The City of Franklin should consider allowing both horizontal and vertical mixed-use developments in commercial and residential districts, particularly within areas adjacent to the river and State Route 73 corridor, to help create environments where residents can live, work, and play.



Example Mixed Use Streetscape

TYPES OF MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Vertical Mixed-Use Development: This example of development combines different uses within the same building, provides for more public uses on the lower floor such as retail shops, restaurants, commercial businesses and provides for more private uses on the upper floors such as residential units, hotel rooms, or office space.



Horizontal Mixed-Use Development: This consists of single-use buildings within a mixed-use zoning district parcel, which allows for a range of land uses in a single development project and provides for a variety of complementary and integrated uses that are walkable and within a given neighborhood, tract of land, or development project.



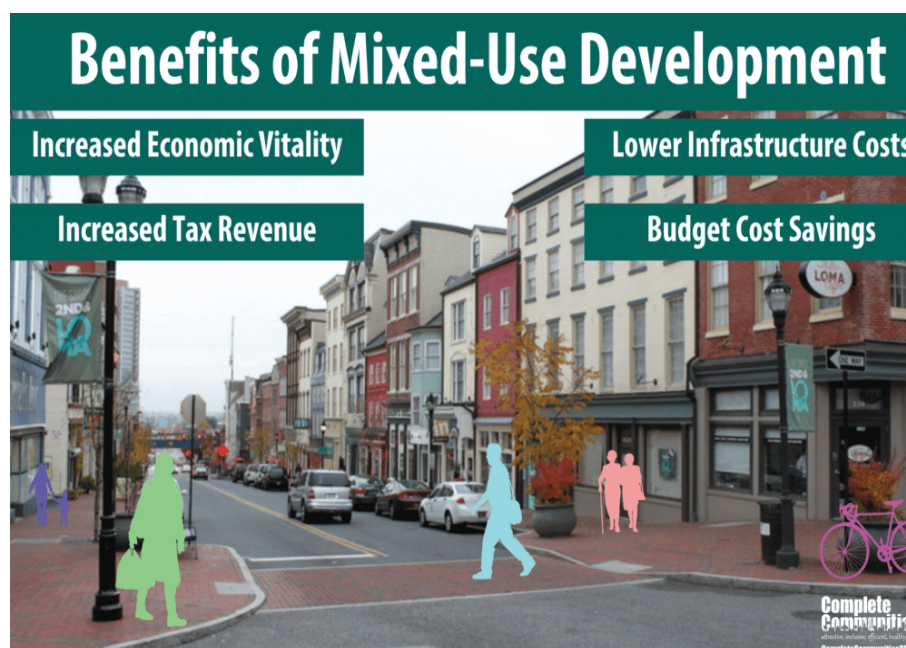
Benefits of Mixed-Use Developments:

- 1. Economic Benefits.** The mixed-use development is associated with fiscal benefits. Compact, mixed-use development requires fewer miles of roads and pipes, and fewer square feet of public facilities per person to provide a specific level of service when compared to low-density, single use development. Also, mixed-use developments increase property-value premiums associated with homes in pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods when compared to similar homes in auto-oriented areas. However, the revenue-per-acre benefits to property owners and county government of vertical mixed-use development are greater in higher density locations when compared to low-density.
- 2. Social Benefits.** Mixed-use development is associated with higher rates of walking and biking, traffic safety with fewer accidents per capita when compared to single use development. Meanwhile, compact, mixed-use areas are often well-positioned for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) initiatives that focuses on improving the design of the built environment to help reduce opportunities for disputes and violence and promote positive behavior.





An example of a mixed use development



Benefits of a mixed use development

Desirable Land Uses:

During the stakeholder interview and steering committee process, residents identified several undesirable land uses. These land uses were associated with an oversupply of that land use or had negative association with the use’s impact on crime and the City’s image. Also noted was the lack of a certain land use and service that residents had to seek from other communities (grocery stores and access to healthy foods).

Beyond these concerns, there was also consensus that because of the limited availability of development sites and the need to increase the city’s tax base, development and redevelopment sites should be utilized for uses that generate a sustainable employment density and create efficient use of land. The City is cognizant of how non-industrial uses on industrial zoned lands impact its tax base and should continue to be diligent about rezoning and reduction of industrial and commercially zoned lands.



There should also be an understanding of the impact of recent industrial trends on employment densities in industrial zones.

- Manufacturing is becoming progressively more automated; thus, employment densities may drop. Are mixed-use commercial and residential uses a more sustainable tax base?
- Technology is increasingly cutting down on noise, pollution, and other negative externalities that traditionally required greater compatibility and buffer zones.
- Warehouses and distribution centers are attempting to locate closer to population centers to decrease delivery times. These are low density employment uses but may be necessary for today’s lifestyle.
- The proliferation of the marijuana industry and its consumption of industrial land.

With limited foreseeable expansion to the supply of industrial lands and ongoing demand, the City should retain its industrially zoned lands for industrial uses to help extend the lifespan of the industrial land base within the City. The zoning code should be updated to identify desirable and beneficial land uses permitted within both industrial and commercial zoning districts. The desirable land uses should include but should not be limited to low land consumption uses with high intensity employment density. This strategy is particularly important for the industrial land along I-75, where there is competing interest for commercial convenience services. The City should be very particular about the non-industrial uses occurring on industrially zoned sites.

Cottage-Industry:

Cottage Industry is classified as a small-scale, decentralized manufacturing business where the manufacture of goods takes place mostly from home where the business owners save the rental, the associated utilities, and other costs related to the business. Modern cottage industry serves a market that seeks out original, handcrafted products as opposed to mass-produced, name brand products. The final products are usually sold to the local market, external agents, or intermediaries in other regions. Lately, several cottage industries are making a comeback with the growing popularity of e-commerce. The UDO could be a barrier to cottage industry but a modern approach to use classification can address emerging uses. The UDO should regulate the dimensional and design standards of the structure that will be used for the business within residential zoning districts. It should also regulate the number of employees, hours of operation, parking and traffic, and any potential adverse effects of the business on nearby residential properties and uses.

Cottage industry provides residents with access to the locally produced products, so the local economy benefits from the dollars spent nearby. At the same time, ingredients and supplies purchased locally help the local economy as well.



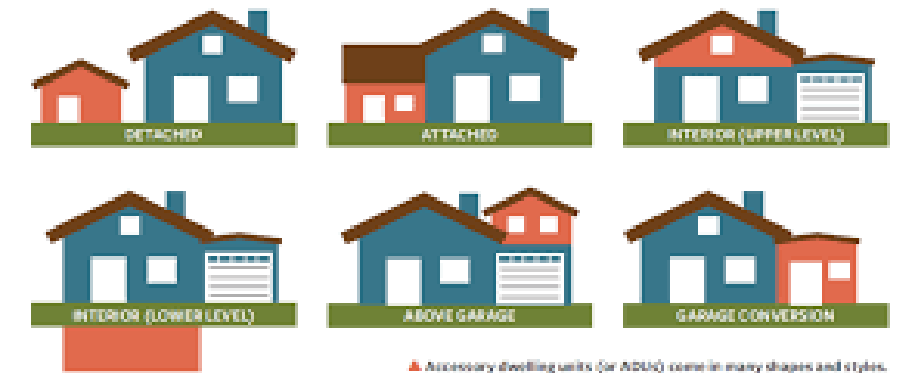
Accessory Dwelling Units - In-Law Units:

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a small residential unit that is located on the same property as an existing residential unit. Usually, the accessory dwelling unit consists of one or two bedrooms with a kitchen and a bathroom, and can be attached or detached from the primary dwelling. The City currently allows accessory dwelling units; however, the review process and standards should be reviewed, updated, and simplified. There are several benefits to an accessory dwelling unit that is associated with the residence of an on-site owner, including the following:

1. Efficient land use and growth for the City.
2. Housing for senior family member, adult children, or college graduates.
3. Desirable and properly maintained affordable housing for moderate-income residents.
4. The owners earn passive income through renting the ADU.
5. Increased property value.
6. Flex space for a home office or workout space for people who work from home.

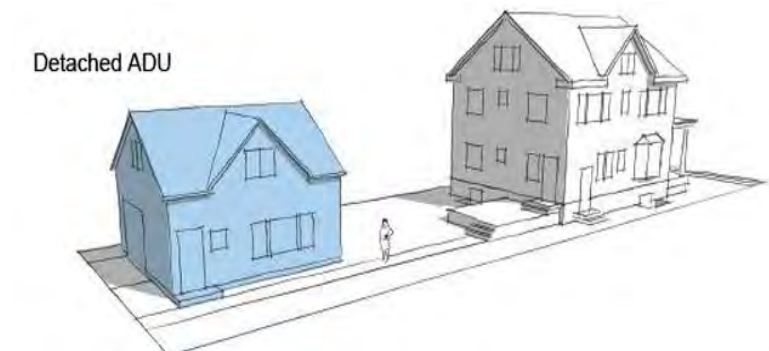


The City of Franklin can regulate Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) with zoning and overlay regulations that ensure compatibility with surrounding contexts while expanding housing options for Franklin's residents. The City can set forth regulations for the location, permit process, deed restrictions, zoning incentives, and design and development standards for ADUs. Moreover, the City can provide an ADU program that is flexible and include fiscal incentives such as loan programs, tax incentives, reduced development fees, and simplified permitting.



▲ Accessory dwelling units (or ADUs) come in many shapes and styles.

Shown above and below are some additional examples of ADUs, showing how this can be attached on an upper or lower level of the primary dwelling unit or garage. This also can exist as a detached secondary dwelling unit.



Upper Story Housing:

The active upper story residential units should be an important strategy to help revitalize and efficiently utilize development/redevelopment sites. Allowing and incentivizing upper story housing may help to reduce vacancies, enhance property values, and improve the overall economic health of the City. Upper story housing makes the building fully utilized and it places residents adjacent to local businesses. Successfully designed and managed upstairs residential units can secure a second source of income for the property's owners. Furthermore, upper story housing increases safety and provides needed and targeted housing opportunities. Upper story housing attracts empty nesters, retirees, and young professionals.

To create a vibrant environment, the City of Franklin should encourage street level retail shops and restaurants along major roads and within commercial districts, such as the State Route 73 and State Route 123 corridors and have offices and/or residences on upper floors. Careful design should ensure that this type of housing reflects the character of the surrounding area.

The City of Franklin can encourage upper story development by offering financial incentives (tax abatement for the reuse of vacant upper floors) and modifying the development regulations by adopting alternative zoning and building standards. Another strategy is by encouraging shared parking between different uses to decrease the need for any additional parking spaces.

Placemaking - Creating a Sense of Place:

The goal is to allow and build desirable, vibrant, and sustainable nodes that residents and visitors find comfortable - shopping, recreating, and socializing. These settings are efficient to build, manage, and maintain. However, a sense of place is more than the form of the place; it is the function and level of activity that occurs there. Whether intended or not, the zoning code is an important tool that can help create or destroy efforts towards placemaking, because it is through zoning that the City regulates the way placemaking elements come together.

Thoughtful use of zoning can help to establish the character of each area to reflect the scale of development, pattern of property ownership, function, and modes of travel. It is important to understand the impact of zoning and design review towards goals for placemaking and creating a sense of place. The City of Franklin is at a critical point where revisions to the UDO must be carefully and thoughtfully crafted to deliver the desired results. The UDO should reinforce those aspects of core neighborhood or commercial nodes that make it distinctive and functionally unique while ensuring compatibility with existing uses. All these factors must inform the zoning process and result in desirable, functional, and comfortable environments for work, home, or play. The key is that Franklin's area plans and development policy for these unique nodes must be clear enough to provide a basis for such zoning. In essence, the identification of the desired place characteristics should emanate from the City's planning policies and related strategies.

Multi-Family Residential Design:

Multi-family residential uses are limited in the City of Franklin, these uses are mainly located along State Route 73 corridor and within core neighborhoods. Additional multi-family residential uses are anticipated and in preparation for these new uses and to achieve high quality residential design, the City should adopt Multi-Family Residential Design Guidelines. Guidelines should assist project applicants during the project design phase and city staff and boards during the review and approval process. The purpose of the guidelines is to offer additional direction about the City's expectations and provide an evaluation criterion that helps in decision-making. The guidelines should be flexible enough to allow for creativity and innovation in design. The design principles could include the following:

- **Sustainability:** Encourage the efficient use of land, existing utilities, and other resources.
- **Health & Livability:** Promote public health by encouraging walking, biking, and other outdoor living areas options (pool, terrace, lounge area, etc) in these type of developments.
- **Physical Character:** Enhance essential design characteristics that make the multi-family developments attractive and livable and improve the image of the City. Medium density and mid-rise, multi-family residential uses should be designed to target the upper end of the market.

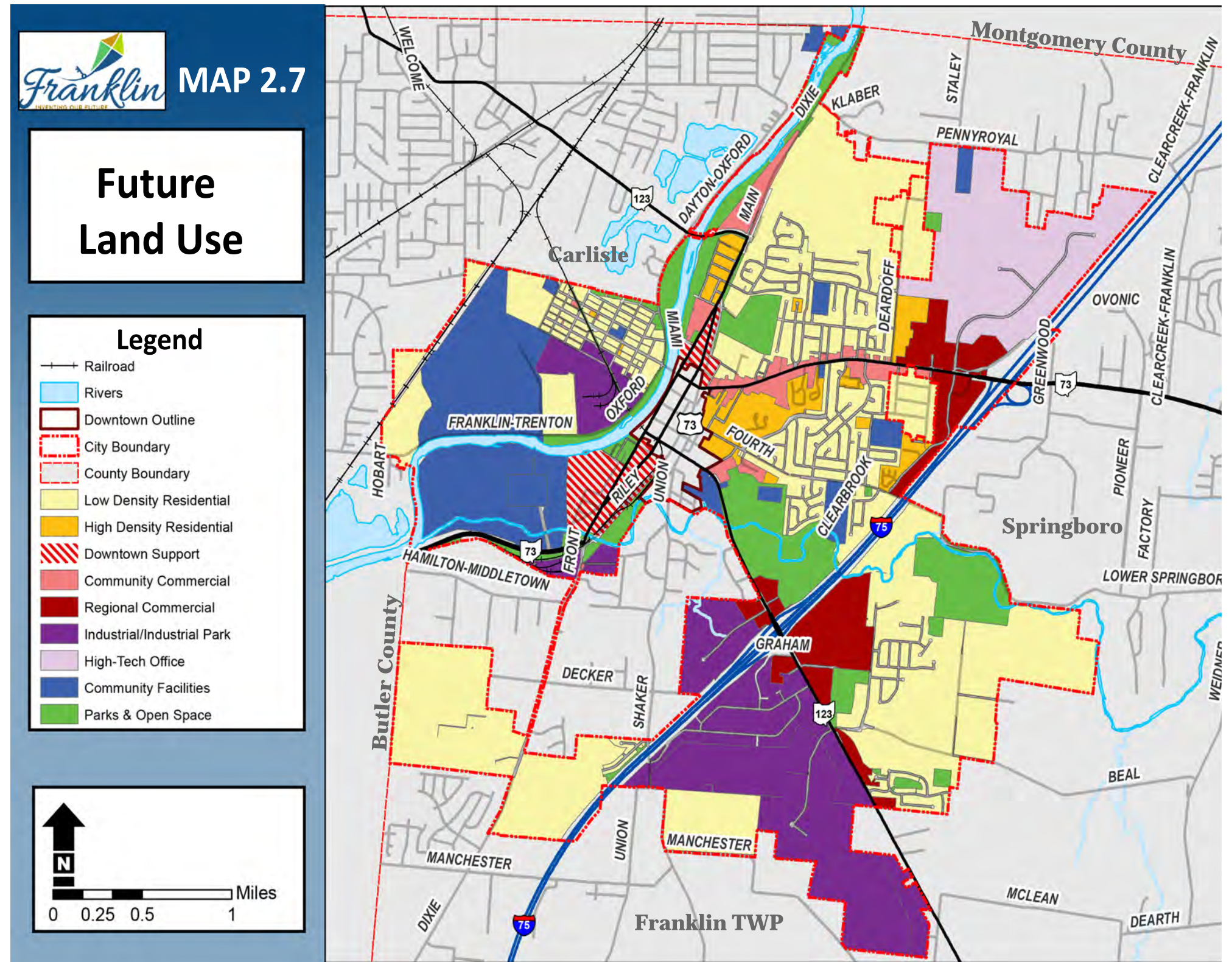


Future Land Use

Background:

Future land use is an important component to the overall comprehensive planning process because it provides a clear understanding of what the City expects for new development. The designations listed in this section should serve as a guide and policy framework for making land use decisions. The Future Land Use Map, Map 2.7, was developed from the current land use and zoning map and outlines anticipated land uses over the next twenty (20) years. The land use classifications used in the Future Land Use Map are described below. Nine (9) future land use categories have been created to allow for development of a broad spectrum of land uses throughout the City. The location of these categories has been determined based on the analysis of proposed development, existing land uses, environmental constraints, and other accepted planning principles.

A future land use map graphically communicates the City's vision and projects how the City should develop over the course of the planning time frame (20 years). It is the visual guide to future planning. The future land use map brings together most if not all the elements of the comprehensive plan such as quality of life, economic development, housing, and recreation. The future land use map is not a zoning map and differs from the Existing Land Use Map, Map 2.1. The Existing Land Use Map displays the types of uses currently constructed on the land, while the Future Land Use map displays the desired land uses.



Future Land Use Designation:

The Future Land Use Map classifies all parcels within the City of Franklin with a recommended land use, each shown with a different color. The map is supported by a detailed description of Land Use Classifications, which explain the general character of each land use type, including typical ranges for residential densities. In some cases, the recommended future land use is the same as the existing land use. However, for certain areas, the Future Land Use Map is different for parcels with existing uses that are expected to change or redevelop. In either case it is not the intent of this Plan to place existing uses in a situation where their value or the quality of life of residents is adversely affected. Rather, the intent is to demonstrate to potential purchasers or developers the City’s long-range view of how particular properties should be reconfigured and used.

Some classifications are very specific regarding the type of uses and densities that are expected. Other classifications identify general categories of uses that will allow for varying degrees of flexibility for future development or adaptive reuse of existing structures. These classifications are used in locations that have been identified as appropriate for mixed-use development or to promote co-location of compatible uses. Individual development sites may result in different mixtures of uses and densities. For select parts of the City that remain undeveloped or for which redevelopment is expected (State Route 73 Commercial Corridor and the 123 Gateway), Area Plans should be created to further define the expected future land use and to provide an additional level of detail for planning and design recommendations, including descriptions of planned mixed-use areas. The Future Land Use categories are described as follows.



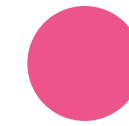
Low Density Residential: Low density residential uses principally include detached, single-family houses in subdivisions or platted neighborhoods. Religious institutions may also be found in this land use designation. Typically, low density residential represents 1-6 dwelling units per acre (du/a).



High Density Residential: High density residential uses principally include detached, single-family houses in subdivisions or platted neighborhoods. Religious institutions may also be found in this land use designation. Typically, high density residential represents 6-8 dwelling units per acre (du/a).



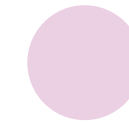
Downtown Support: The Downtown Support includes primarily office and high-density residential uses found adjacent to the downtown area. Limited retail is permitted, although the Downtown Center designation should be maintained as the primary retail destination. This land use designation accommodates horizontal and/or vertical mixture of retail, office, restaurant, and residential uses. Residential and office is permitted on upper floors in vertical mixed-use structures. High density residential represents multi-family apartments, duplexes, attached residential, townhouses, and loft apartments.



Community Commercial: The Community Commercial designation represents a mix of uses, including neighborhood commercial, office, and residential, in a single development. This land use is designated for areas with a mix of residential uses and supporting services, such as retail, restaurants, services, civic, or office.



Regional Commercial: The Regional Commercial land use designation accommodates large destination retail, wholesale, tourist attractions, lodging, and service establishments with a coordinated design, including shared parking areas and points of access to public rights-of-way. These areas may include auto oriented commercial uses with direct access and visibility from or to the interstate. Residential on upper floors is permitted provided that pedestrian-oriented design practices are used, and retail conveniences and open spaces are provided.



High-Tech Office: The High-Tech Office designation represents large office developments and larger scale corporate headquarters and research facilities that are typically found in business parks located on major thoroughfares. High-tech industrial uses such as light manufacturing and fabrication are also appropriate if activities are completely enclosed in a building and have no objectionable impacts on neighboring properties. Buildings should be designed to be architecturally compatible with office buildings. Warehousing is discouraged due to the minimal job creation benefits. Large open spaces, natural areas, and pathways are encouraged in the campus-like layout of business parks.



Industrial/Industrial Park: This designation includes a variety of light industrial uses as well as large corporate headquarters, offices, and research facilities developed in a campus setting located on major thoroughfares. The Industrial/Industrial Park designation promotes economic growth and business development, including office, research, trade, education, information, and technology services. These uses benefit from a location with frontage on a major thoroughfare or have interstate visibility and provide employment for area workers. Development must adhere to design guidelines due to the visible nature of these uses.



Community Facilities: The Community Facilities land use designation includes public or semi-public facilities including but not limited to government offices, police and fire facilities, hospitals, educational institutions, public utilities, and large places of worship.



Parks & Open Space: This land use designation includes active or passive parks such as playing fields, playgrounds, community centers, trails, and other appropriate recreational uses.

Future Land Use Map

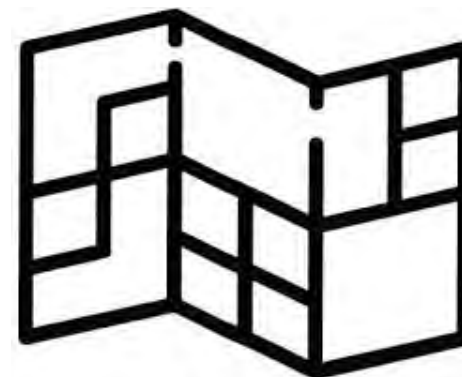
Background:

The updated Future Land Use Map preserves most of the previous future land use designations- few updates were made to the current Future Land Use Map (2009), the purpose of these updates is to reconsider the uses for several sites and designate more appropriate uses to those sites in accordance with the location, ownership (privately-owned/city-owned), and the existing uses of each property.

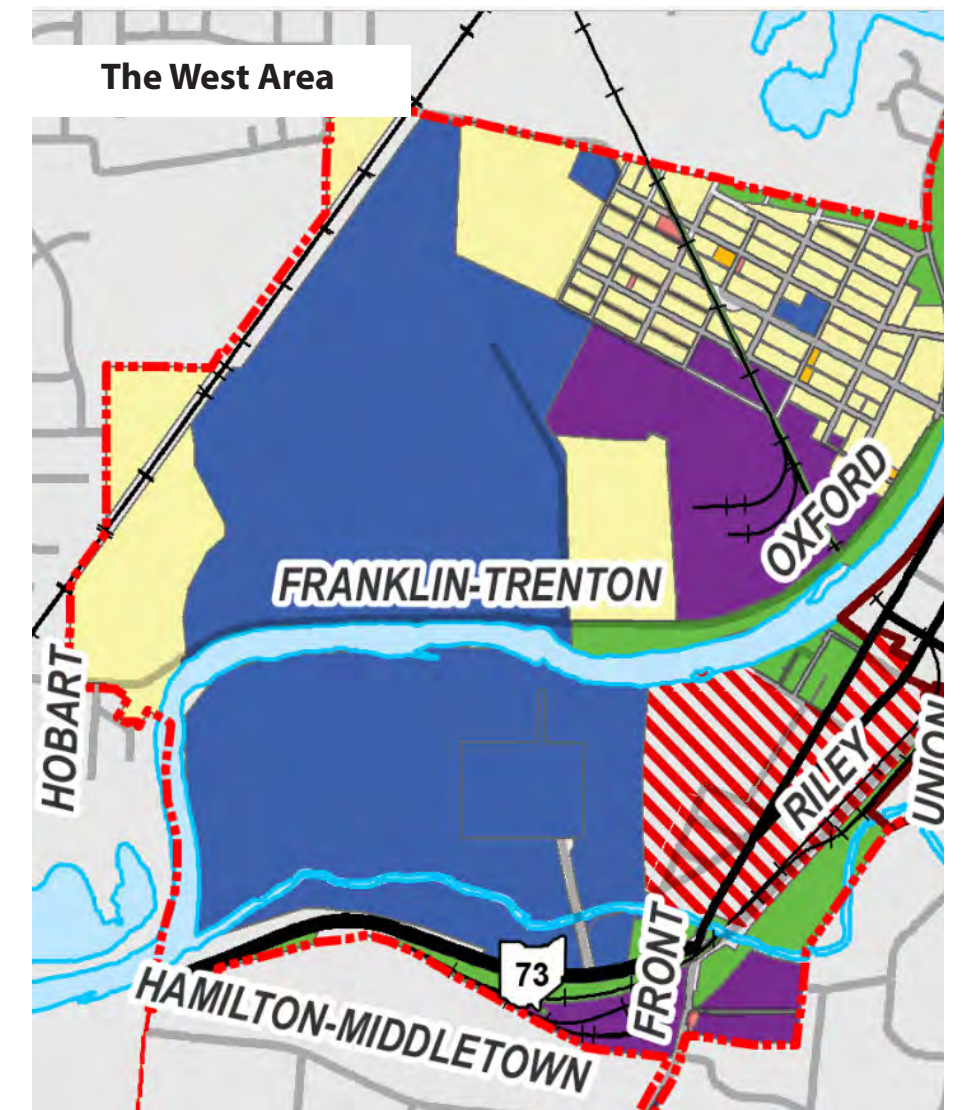
To analyze the Future Land Use Map, this section divides the map into four sections:

- The West Area
- The Northeast Area
- The Southeast Area
- The Southwest Area

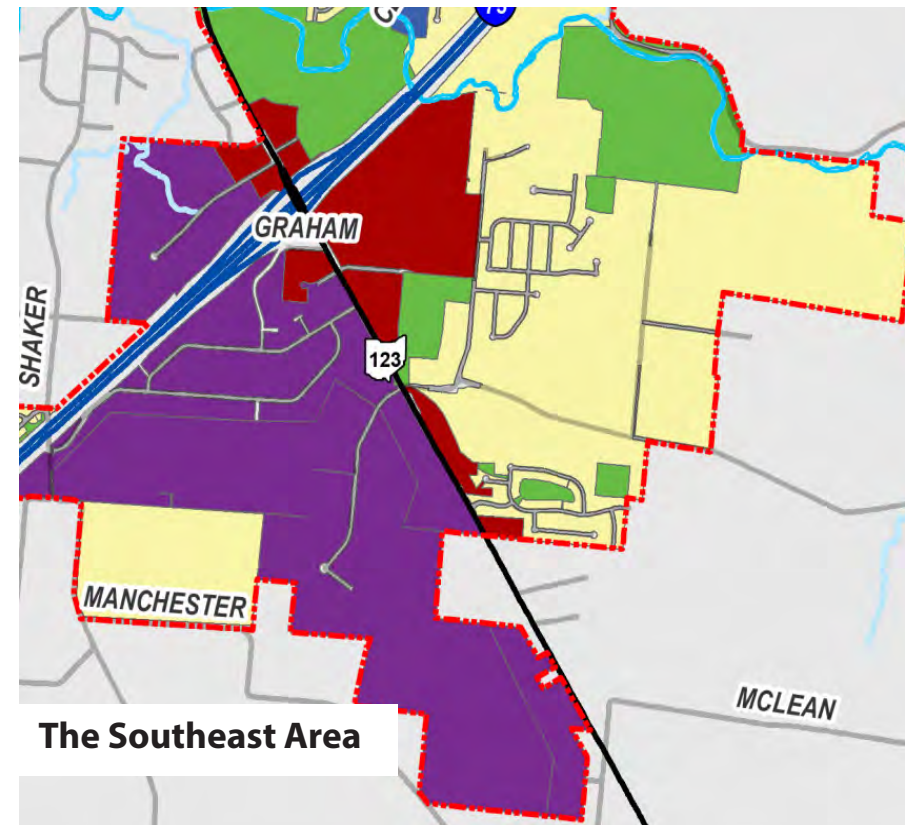
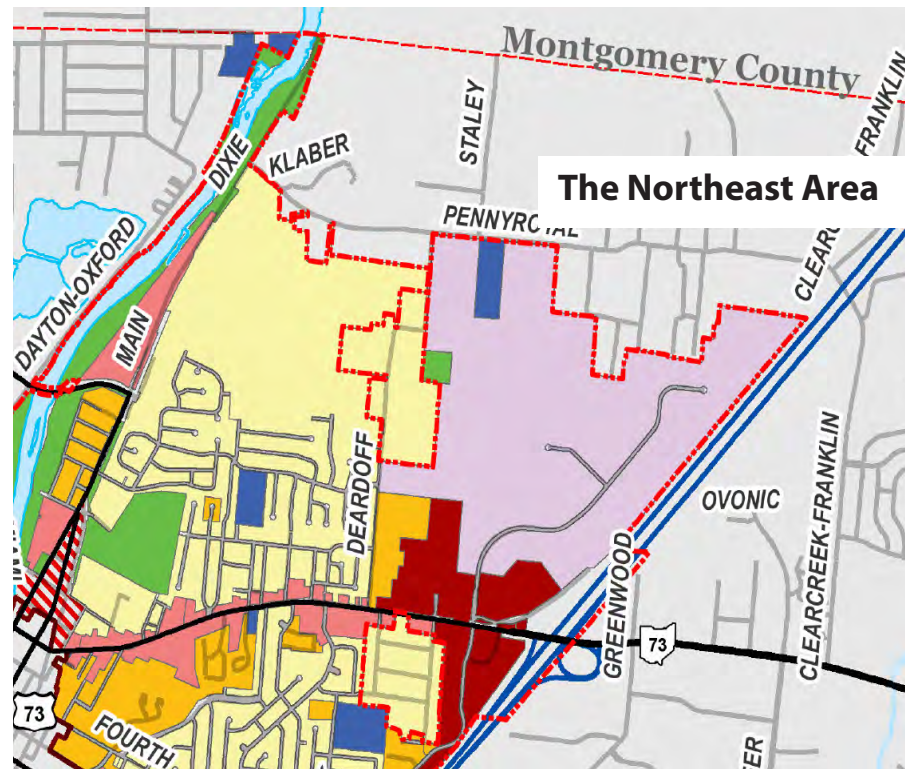
The updates to the 2009 Future Land Use Map include the following:



1. **The West Area.** Most of this area is within a floodplain and thus only minor updates are made to this portion of the City. The updates include designating the future land use for the industrial properties (Miami Valley Paper, Atlas Roofing Corporation, and Sonoco Flexible Packaging) as Industrial and the privately-owned properties as Low Intensity Residential. The city-owned properties are designated as Community Facility.

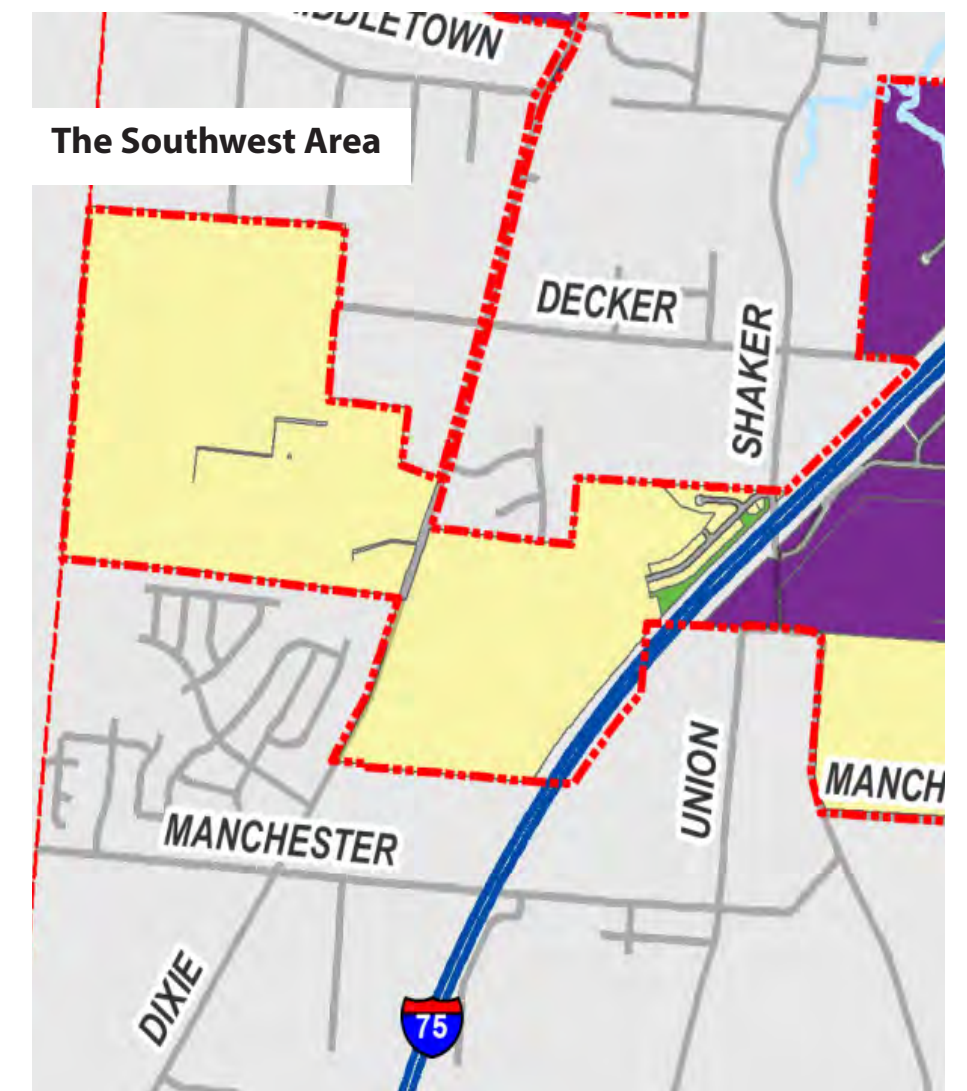


2. The Northeast Area. The updates for this area include reconfiguring designations along State Route 73 and applying a new commercial land use category; Regional Commercial. Also, the Commercial Mixed-Use has been revised to become the Community Commercial category. The commercial properties along State Route 73 and the I-75 Interchange, including the Walmart site, are now designated as Regional Commercial, while the remaining properties along the State Route 73 corridor are designated as Community Commercial. The residential properties that are located west of the Walmart site are updated to High Intensity Residential. Another update was applied to the vacant properties that are in the heart of the residential area, those properties are now designated as Low Intensity Residential. Similar updates are considered to the properties along the river by designating the future land use for the existing commercial/industrial properties as Community Commercial.



3. The Southeast Area. The Employment Mixed Use category in this area is updated to Industrial along State Route 123, while commercial properties along State Route 123 and the interchange are updated to Regional Commercial. The privately-owned properties west of the Springboro Park are redesignated to a Low Intensity Residential. There are two parks, Community Park and Hazel Woods Park, designated as Parks & Open Space zone and located northeast of the industrial zone. The annexed property along Manchester Road is also designated as Low Intensity Residential.

4. The Southwest Area. Most of the properties within this area are privately-owned properties, and the existing use of the properties is either agriculture or residential. The future land use designation for the adjacent properties in Franklin Township and the City of Middletown is residential which make the appropriate future land use Low Intensity Residential. Additionally, the City of Franklin incorporates the section of Dixie Highway between Manchester Road and Downtown; All land along this road is owned by Franklin Township, and is zoned as Residential.



Compatibility with Adjacent Municipalities:

The City strives to promote compatible land uses that are harmonious to the uses and activities being conducted within the City as well as on the adjoining lands or municipalities. The objective is to ensure that land uses within the City do not adversely affect or unreasonably impact the use or enjoyment of adjacent properties in adjoining jurisdictions or municipalities. In this plan, the proposed Future Land Use Map for the City of Franklin provides compatible uses to the adjoining properties in the cities of Springboro, Carlisle, Middletown, and Franklin Township. The plan recommends that the zoning process applies buffers and compatibility standards to screen properties in adjacent jurisdictions. A courtesy letter from the City of Franklin should be sent to the adjoining municipality and adjacent property owners in adjoining municipalities, notifying them of property development.

Districts with well-designed buildings, attractive signage, well-maintained facades, and a positive orientation of buildings to the street are often the most distinctive.



Focus Area

The 123 and I-75 Gateway:

The State Route 123 and I-75 gateway is of special significance to Franklin and could provide a unique niche in the future vision of the City. The area is located along I-75, east of State Route 123, and currently contains a large, underdeveloped tract of land with some adjacent commercial and single-family residential uses. Parallel to State Route 123, the area is developed with a somewhat dissimilar mixture of retail, commercial, and some residual industrial uses. Beyond the non-residential uses, there are adjacent neighborhoods to the south and east that will have a direct impact on proposed developments. These traditional neighborhoods are among some of the most notable in the City. This area has already received some focus, but further work is needed to create a high-quality place that will be treasured and maximize the area’s potential for regional scale development. The area is suitable for large commercial and office centers, lodging, or mixed-use. Primary land uses may include:

- Medium to High Intensity Office and Retail,
- Restaurants,
- Lodging,
- Existing Single-Family Residential,
- Limited new residential that is in a mixed-use capacity, and
- New multi-family homes with high quality design elements.

Strategies:

The high visibility; easy access to I-75; improved access from State Route 123; and the interchange area itself which has been recently enhanced with newly planted trees and landscaping; will enhance the market position for this area and thus a clear redevelopment strategy is needed. This area, particularly the Auto Dealers Exchange parcel, deserves careful and detailed analysis of all the opportunities and constraints that will form the basis of future land use decisions.

It is widely recognized that the appearance and compatibility of a land use proposed within this area is as important as the use itself. Design guidelines that regulate the built form, allow for appropriate transitions, sustain livability, and foster a sense of place that guide development. While the land use recommendations address specific areas and combinations of land uses, design guidelines address the way these land uses are sited and designed. Projects that fail to achieve the City’s expressed preferences and standards for this area will likely become a burden in the future. Strategies should include:

- Ensuring compatibility with the residential area.
- Installation of sidewalks to facilitate pedestrian activity and connectivity of sidewalk network to community amenities.
- Requiring high quality architecture styles.
- Work with Warren County Economic Development Department to market area to potential developers.
- Adopt a TIF district to help with the cost of infrastructure and district improvements.

The Grocery Store:

The community members through the stakeholder and Citizens Advisory Committee meetings stated their desire to have more grocery options in the City. One example that was mentioned by the community members is a small grocery store that offers the most purchased grocery and household items. A fast-growing grocery chain such as an Aldi is a viable use along the State Route 73 corridor. The store could be of a modest size (17,000 square feet). Research has identified the primary criteria for these types of stores:

- ≈17,000 square feet with 85 parking spaces.
- 2.5-acre site, with additional end-cap or inline space with 100' of road frontage.
- Dense trade area population within 3 miles and convenient access to population.
- Proper zoning (allows grocery stores).
- Daily traffic count more than 20,000 vehicles per day.



Example of an Aldi concept site

State Route 73 is a potential location that meets these criteria, the corridor is zoned as Commercial and designated as Community Commercial use on the Future Land Use Map. The corridor also is the only area of the City that has a traffic count greater than 20,000 vehicles per day according to the traffic count data from the OKI Regional Council of Governments.



Aldi lot layout and location criteria map, from Aldi website

Listed above is a map, showing some surrounding Aldi locations within the United States. Per Aldi's website, there are over 140 Aldi locations within the State of Ohio. Through CAC recommendations, a grocery store within a walkable distance of downtown is an important development for the community. Through these primary criteria, this would make State Route 73 a potential location within the City, with close access to downtown, and safe access for residents to walk to and from.



Aldi store design



Aldi aisle design

Strategies and Recommendations

Strategies:

The land use strategies cover a broad range of topics. Generally, the goals are for efficient land uses; focus commercial and industrial investment along key corridors and Interstate 75; promote high-quality urban design; encourage mixed-use development; provide convenient access to local services, employment, and recreation and promote vibrancy, which supports walking and reduces the amount of driving needed to satisfy daily needs. To be a useful day-to-day decision-making guide, the Land Use chapter must be adaptable to unanticipated changes and be specific to current conditions and issues in the City. To balance these goals, it will be necessary to closely monitor and update the Land Use chapter on a regular basis. In addition, the following strategies are recommended:



Aerial view of Franklin

1. Ensure that provisions within zoning, subdivision, development, and other regulatory codes support environmentally and economically efficient land use development. The zoning code should be updated to achieve the previously stated recommendation under “Zoning” (Pages 22-24) in addition to the following:
 - a. Reduce the amount of land devoted to off-street parking to use land more efficiently. Consider modern approaches to parking requirements. These approaches should include reducing parking requirements through strategies such as shared parking, maximum parking standards, and bicycle parking. Reduce the parking requirements whenever it is possible to reflect other transportation options and land use mix.
 - b. Reduce the setback requirements for commercial and industrial uses.
 - c. Accommodate mixed-use development and upper story residential on valuable urban land and promote the use of alternative transportation methods. Zoning should be updated to allow mixed land uses (vertical and horizontal mixed-uses) by right in select districts.
 - d. Provide regulatory flexibility regarding building height, housing density, floor area, lot coverage, yard setbacks, landscaping, and other zoning provisions for mixed-use developments in key areas targeted for redevelopment.
5. Pursue redevelopment of opportunity sites for higher-density mixed-use development or infill housing. Target development opportunities to nearby, compatible land uses to shorten trips and facilitate alternative modes of transportation, such as walking and bicycling.
3. Identify area(s) within the City that could be appropriate for infill development and craft flexible regulations (building height, building setbacks, and lot layout) to accommodate infill development while also ensuring compatibility with adjacent development.
4. Promote high-quality urban design that is pedestrian friendly, promotes a healthy environment, and enhances the public realm. Design and zoning standards should be updated to permit mixed-use developments in select zoning districts and in select locations. Design and zoning standards should activate the streetscapes with active first-floor uses, street trees, public art, outdoor commercial uses, and other uses that contribute to a vibrant street life.
5. Prepare a market analysis to estimate market demand and supply for new or expanded residential, commercial (e.g., retail and service business categories), and industrial business opportunities and ensure that sufficient land is reserved for future commercial and industrial development. Assess the real estate market and consider the viability of mixed-use development in specific areas.
6. Limit the rezoning and use of industrially zoned sites for non-industrial uses. Understand the strategic importance of protecting existing industrial land from conversion to non-industrial uses to maintain strategic reserves of a shrinking resource, and to continue the growth of good jobs that serve a wide array of workers and business owners. However, existing non-industrial business should be offered the potential to grow in place.

- 7. Reconsider uses that are currently allowed such as Gasoline Service Stations, Self-Service Storage Facility or Mini-Warehouse, and Vehicle Repair Service within the industrially zoned districts. The permitted uses within the industrial zoning districts (I-1 and I-2) should allow intensification of industrial sites to support greater number of jobs per acre.
- 8. Provide a combination of financial and regulatory incentives to mixed-use developers for projects that are located near areas that are targeted for market-ready (re)development. Incentives may include permit fee reductions, tax abatements, expedited development approval processes, and density and building height or floor area bonuses.
- 9. Identify opportunities for infill and redevelopment to take advantage of existing infrastructure.
- 10. Enact clear design guidelines so that streets, buildings, and public spaces work together to create a sense of place and ensure high quality and attractive developments. This should include compatibility standards to ensure adequate transitions from commercial and industrial uses to adjacent residential uses and streetscape design standards.
- 11. Preserve open space and the sensitive area of the City of Franklin (aquifer).



Example mixed-use streetscape

- 12. Reduce potential conflicts that can result from increased development around the I-75 interchange area by ensuring that growth and development can occur without overloading the capacity of local roads. Additionally, lead detailed land use planning efforts around the I-75 and State Route 123 interchange. Plan for and program local infrastructure needs (for example, roads and traffic circulation improvements, sidewalks, surface water), including those needed to accommodate future development and redevelopment.



Example mixed-use streetscape

- 13. Preserve the integrity of existing stable single-family residential areas by ensuring adequate buffering from more intense adjacent uses. Consider alternative forms of single-family residential development, such as small-lot subdivisions and townhouses, in suitable locations.
- 14. Redevelop distressed and underutilized commercial and industrial properties through various financial incentives to efficiently make use of existing infrastructure. The City may assist in site assembly for redevelopment of blighted areas.
- 15. Develop and implement corridor and small-area plans to refine the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and subsequently encourage high-quality infill and redevelopment.
- 16. Promote retention and expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new businesses.
- 17. Encourage high-intensity use of remaining industrial land to promote efficient land use and increase the City's tax base. Discourage new low-yield industries and those with nuisance characteristics.
- 18. Enforce architectural and site design standards, including landscaping standards, for new commercial, industrial, and attached residential development. Ensure that landscaping is properly maintained.
- 19. Review zoning regulations periodically for new development to ensure a high aesthetic quality and compatibility with the surrounding area.
- 20. Consider adopting a tree preservation ordinance to ensure that valuable mature trees are preserved as new development occurs.

This chapter focuses on road and transportation infrastructure improvements and its impact to residents' quality of life; vitality of commercial nodes; public safety; and economic development. The City of Franklin is known for having well maintained roadways - important for improving quality of life and economic success. Continued transportation investments and maintenance is crucial for future growth of businesses and industry. Moreover, connecting residents and visitors to City amenities such as parks, restaurants, and other businesses improves quality of life and adds vitality. The transportation goals and recommendations in this chapter are in support of the City's big-picture goal of improving quality of life, attracting good businesses, and improving the image of the City.



TRANSPORTATION 3

The rail line that crosses the Great Miami River in the City of Franklin

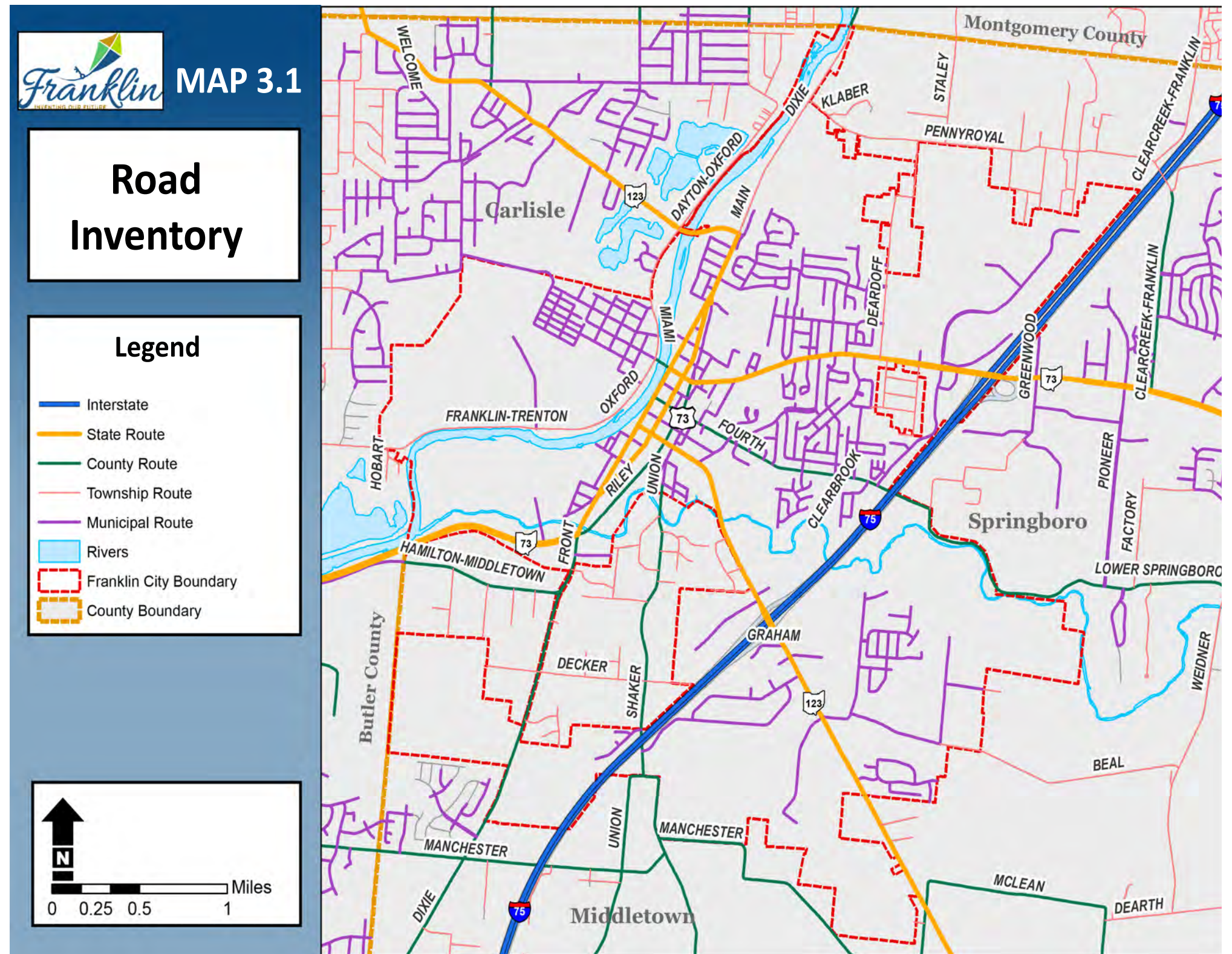
Background

Existing Conditions:

The City of Franklin’s transportation network plays a vital role in the City’s economic health and overall livability. Access to I-75 provides the City with the ability to attract jobs and serves as a midpoint to Dayton and Cincinnati. State Route 73 and State Route 123 connect the City to neighboring Springboro and Middletown. I-75, State Route 73, and State Route 123 are major assets that provide convenient access to the City’s commercial and industrial areas (minimal turns for truck traffic) and opportunities to attract future growth.

Other major roadways include North Main Street which turns into Dayton Cincinnati Pike going into Miamisburg; Dixie Highway which turns into Dayton Cincinnati Road going into Middletown and Monroe; and 4th Street which turns into West Lower Springboro Road going into Springboro. Along State Route 123 (south of the interchange), there is room for further industrial and commercial growth. Such growth will require supporting infrastructure to ensure continued safety and appropriate access. In addition, efforts to address access management, traffic flow regulation, and cooperation with other governmental agencies should ensure responsible growth and a cohesive transition.

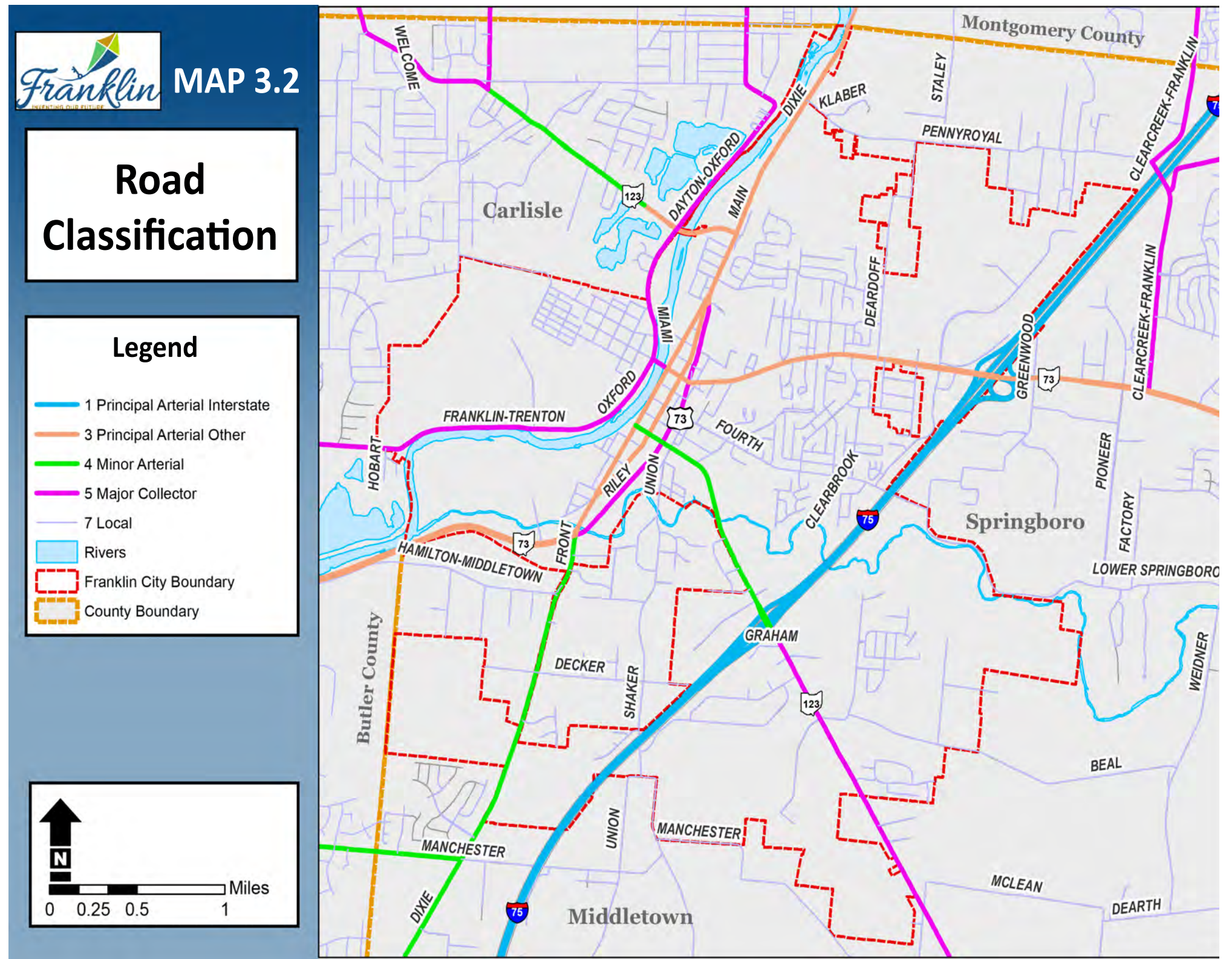
Much of Franklin’s traffic congestion results from peak period commuting traffic, as well as school drop-off traffic at certain times and locations. Although the concept of transportation goes far beyond automobiles, the conversation invariably comes back to traffic, congestion, and cars. When asked about key issues in Franklin today, stakeholders participating in the Comprehensive Plan update process almost always cited traffic circulation along the State Route 123 & I-75 area, Franklin Trenton Road, and the Lions Bridge.



Roadway Classifications:

The City of Franklin's road network serves both local and regional traffic. The classification system is established by the Warren County Engineer's Office and includes principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors, and local roads. The different classifications denote the anticipated traffic volume and speed of traffic. Where principal arterial roads have higher traffic volume and speeds, and local roads have the lowest traffic volume and speeds.

Major Roadway	Classification
Interstate 75	Principal Interstate Arterial
State Route 73	Principal Arterial
State Route 123	Minor Arterial (North of I-75) / Major Collector (South of I-75)
Riley Boulevard	Major Collector
North Main Street	Principal Arterial
Dixie Highway	Minor Arterial
Central Avenue	Minor Arterial (North) / Principal Arterial (South)
Miami Avenue / Dayton-Oxford Road	Major Collector

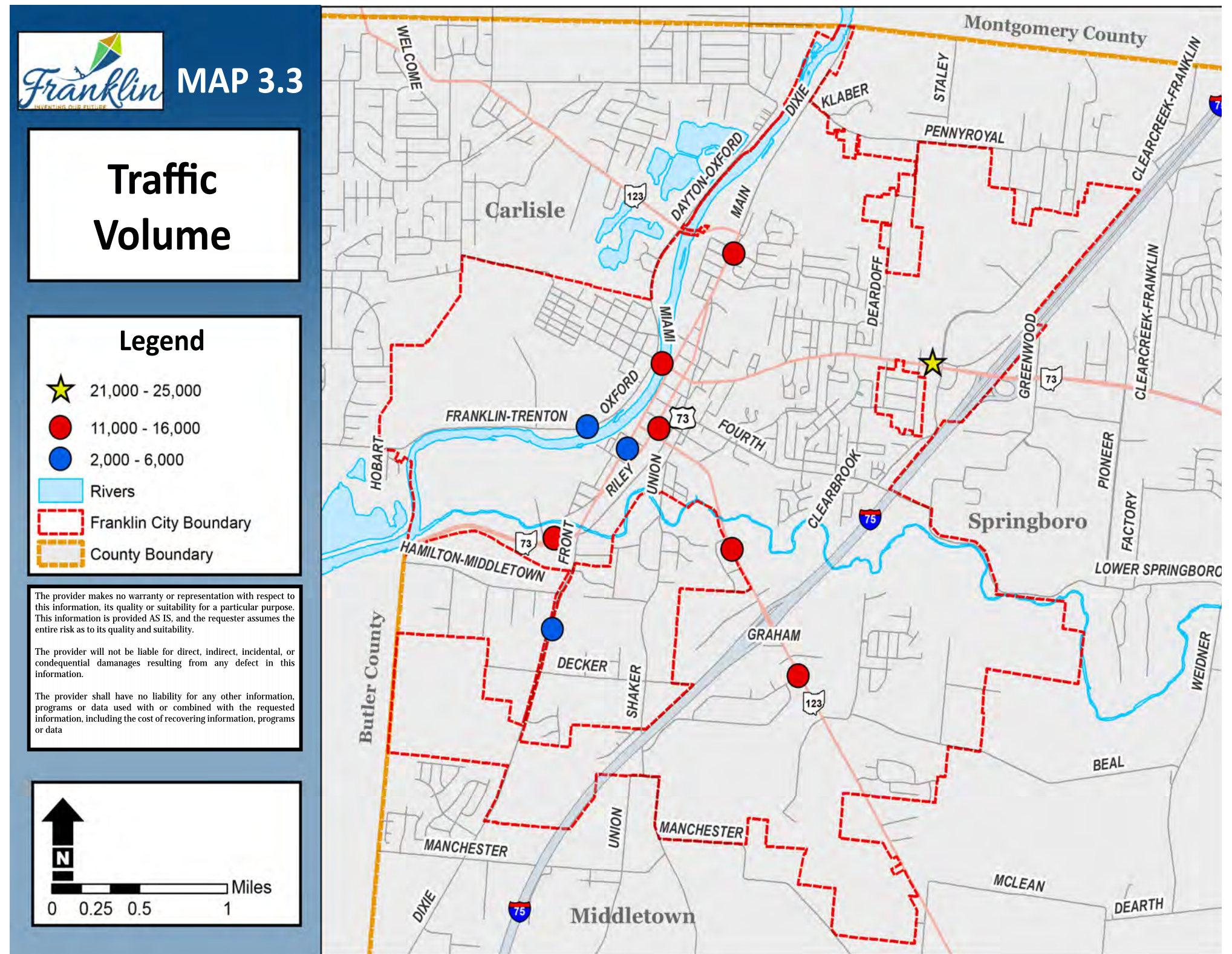


Source: The Ohio Department of Transportation's Transportation Information Mapping System (TIMS)

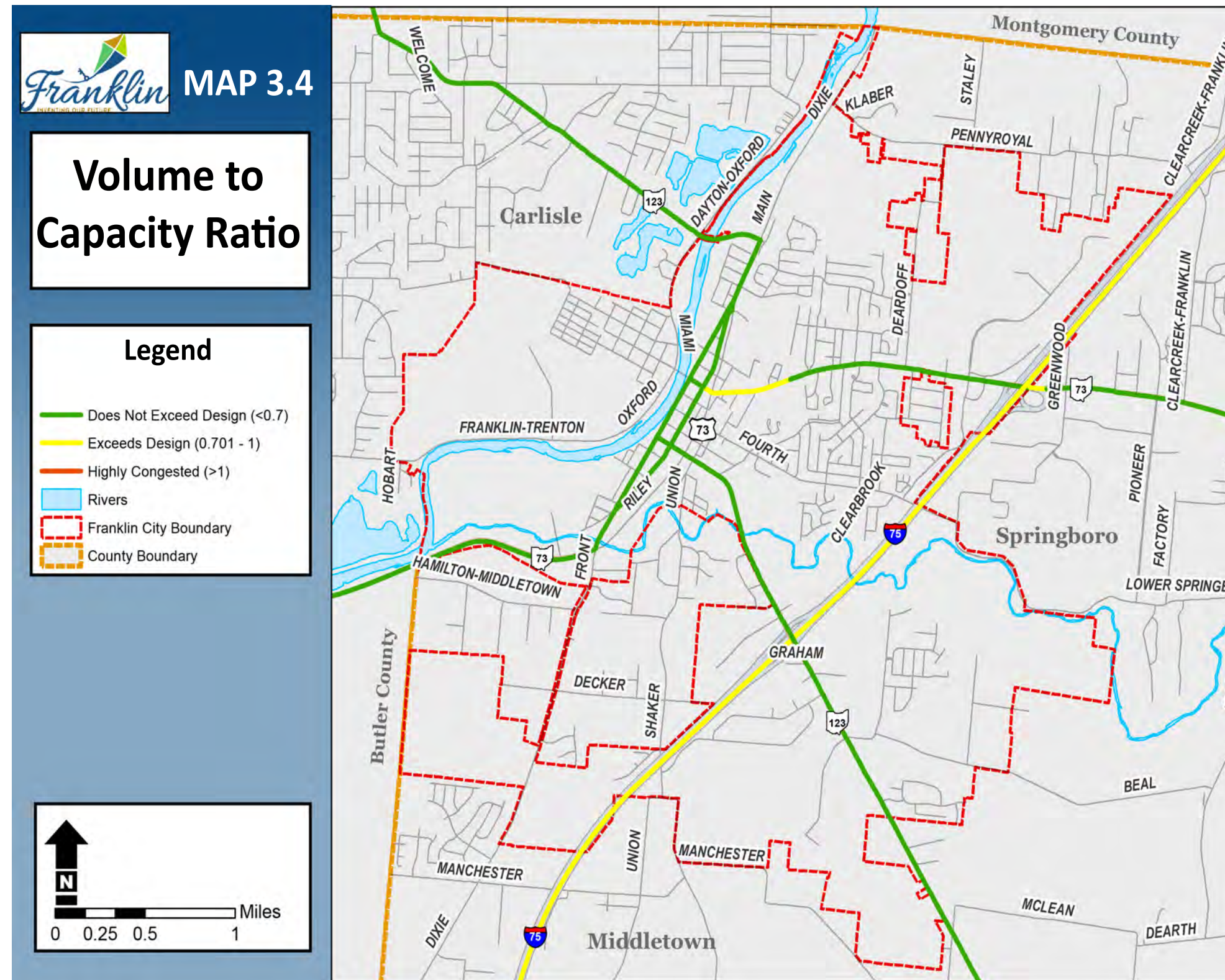
Traffic Volume:

Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes show how many vehicles travel on each respective major roadway (see Map 3.3). These volumes were obtained by ODOT and are updated periodically. The highest volumes are along roadways connected to major economic centers such as State Route 123, State Route 73, Riley Boulevard, Main Street, and I-75.

Major Roadway	AADT Count (2018 & 2019)
Interstate 75	117,200
State Route 73	21,400
State Route 123	12,700
Riley Boulevard	15,100
North Main Street	14,100
Dixie Highway	5,600
Central Avenue	11,900
Miami Avenue / Dayton-Oxford Road	4,800



Source: The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission



Source: The Ohio Department of Transportation's Transportation Information Mapping System (TIMS)

Traffic Volume Capacity:

ODOT has compiled data that takes existing volume and applies it to how each main road type was designed and installed. Map 3.4 informs that currently, most of State Route 73, State Route 123, Riley Boulevard, and Main Street are all effectively moving traffic on a daily basis. The Volume to Capacity Ratio Map (Map 3.4) illustrates a highlighted yellow at the intersection of Riley Boulevard and East 2nd Street, which indicates that traffic exceeds the road's designed capacity. The CAC confirmed that this area is highly congested at peak hours and also confirmed that West 2nd Street, crossing the Lion's Bridge, also experiences peak hour traffic-gridlock. Anecdotally, the traffic-gridlock is the result of southwestward trips to the City of Middletown, which lacks a more direct route, and left turns for Main Street onto West 2nd Street. There is an existing traffic light at the intersection of West 2nd Street and Dayton-Oxford Road, however, this map shows that at peak times there is a larger number of vehicles stacking.

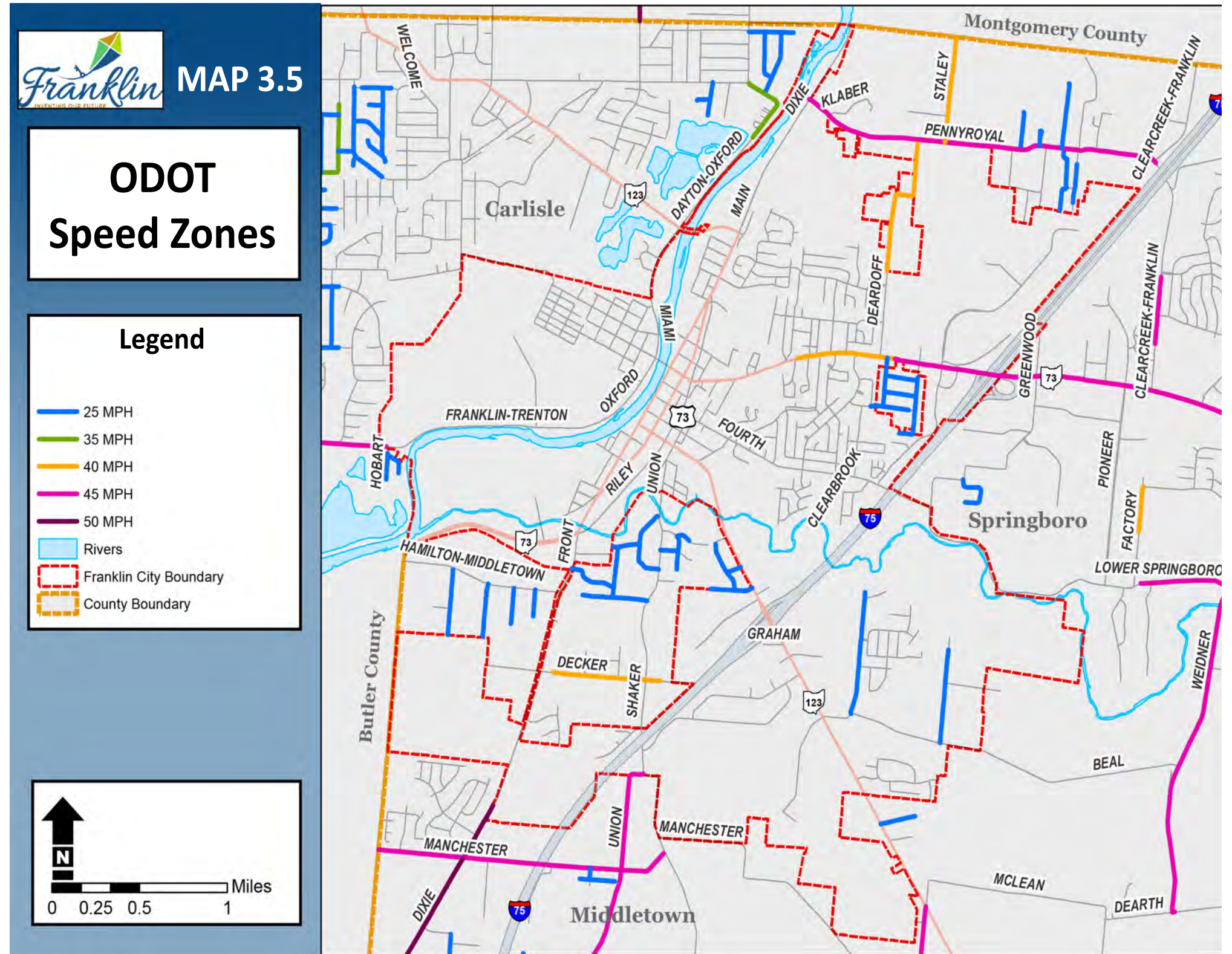
This does not mean that lanes need to be expanded in order to accommodate the traffic. There are several tools that can be used to improve traffic flow and safety. One such way is to install roundabouts at these intersections. A roundabout at West 2nd Street and Dayton-Oxford Road is a possible solution.

State Route 73 and the surrounding streets, such as Riley Boulevard and Main Street are a truck route. Improvements along these routes should include consideration for the turn movements of larger trucks towards the interchange. The improvements should include pedestrian safety, comfort, and aesthetics. A right-turn slip lane onto State Route 73 from Riley Boulevard may be an alternative.

Traffic Speed:

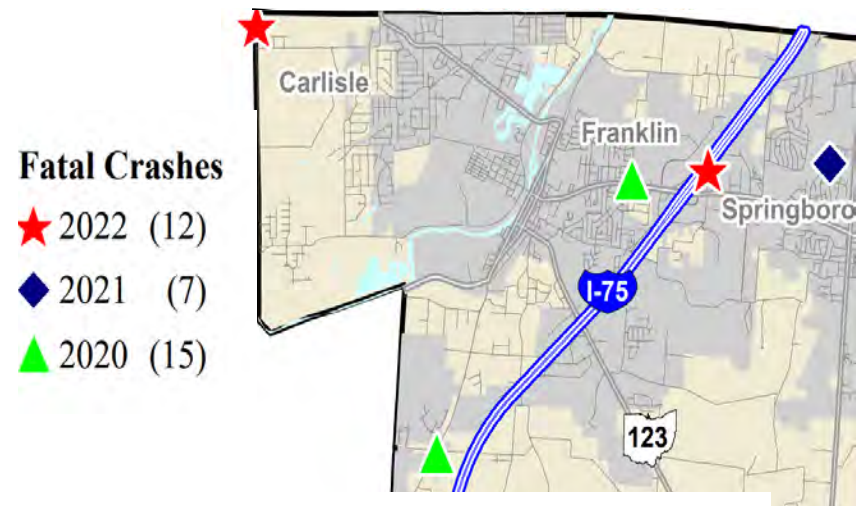
Traffic speed is another factor in safety; one that is prioritized when it comes to business and industry. Map 3.5 illustrates speed zones within the City of Franklin and indicates that State Route 73, east of I-75, is of a higher speed (45 mph).

Major Roadway	# of Lanes	Speed (mph)
Interstate 75	4	65
State Route 73	2	45
State Route 123	1	35 in town, 55 out
Riley Boulevard	2	35
North Main Street	2, then narrows to 1 (1-Way)	25
Dixie Highway	1	35
Central Avenue	1	35
Miami Avenue / Dayton-Oxford Road	1	35



Fatal Crashes:

According to the Ohio State Highway Patrol, in 2020 there were a total of 15 fatal crashes in Warren County. Of those 15, two were within or near the boundaries of the City of Franklin. One occurred on State Route 73 and another on Dixie Highway.

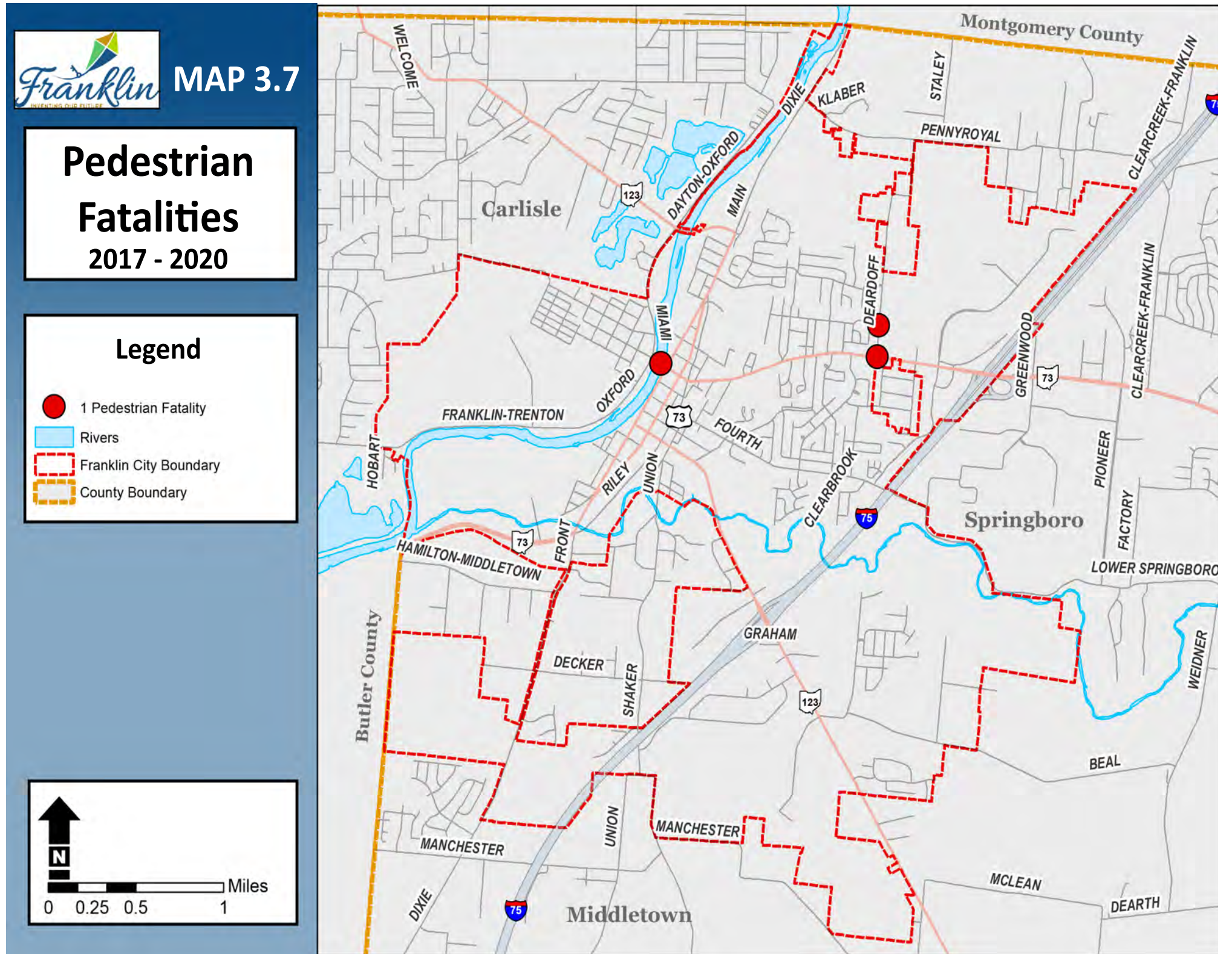


Map - 3.6: Fatal Traffic Crashes 2020 to 2022 YTD

Source: The Ohio State Highway Patrol

Pedestrian Fatalities:

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, there were three pedestrian collisions, which resulted in fatalities, occurring between 2017 and 2020. Map 3.6 above shows the locations of these collisions to be along State Route 73; on Lions Bridge along West 2nd Street; and on Dearthoff Road near State Route 73. These locations illustrate areas in need of safety improvements.

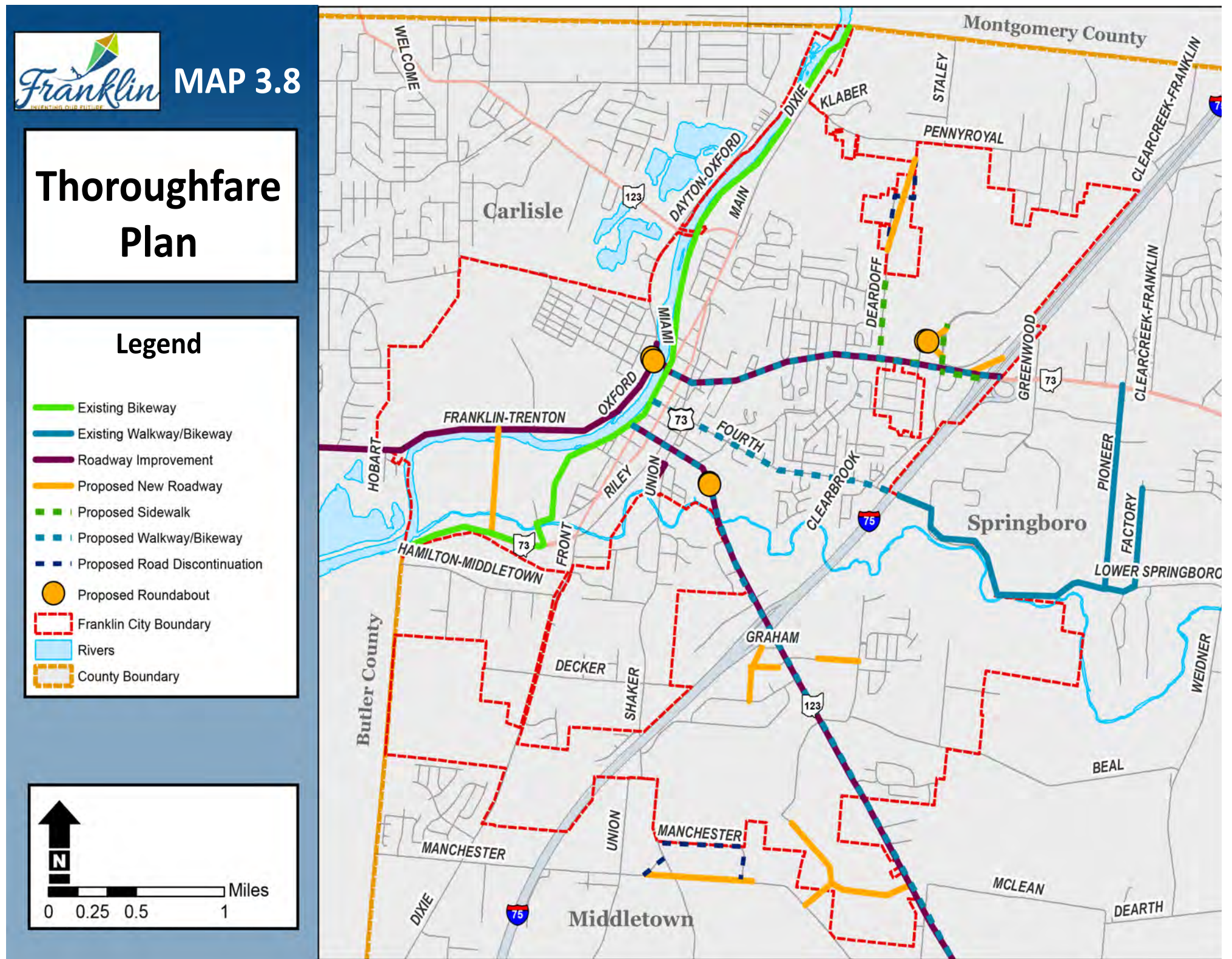


Source: The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration

Roadway Connectivity

Designing and constructing a roadway network with a high degree of connectivity is an important, efficient strategy for accommodating increased traffic. As the City and surrounding areas attract more tourism, gain more workforce, and increase in population, more vehicles will be traversing Franklin's roadways. To alleviate existing and future congestion, connections to existing roads should be made to create more direct routes for traffic dispersal. An interconnected roadway network can accommodate more travel demand than a roadway network with limited connectivity.

Franklin's traditional grid-style street layout, within core neighborhoods provides excellent connectivity because streets are interlinked at numerous points, intersections are closely spaced, and there are few dead-ends. The presence of a grid pattern and alternate parallel streets allows State Route 73 and other major roads to serve their main purpose-moving vehicles over longer distances-while shorter trips can take place on local streets. However, this degree of connectivity was not carried over into Franklin's newer development projects, which are developed with isolated cul-de-sacs, require access onto arterial streets, and often inhibit walking and bicycling. The continuation of this form of development will create congestion by overloading the limited number of intersections within the road network. Typically, the best solution for new residential development is to provide for a balance of increased connectivity with the opportunity for cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets where appropriate, and the use of traffic calming measures for reducing speeds and improving safety. For existing residential areas, the recommendation is to focus on providing infrastructure for alternate means of transportation (walking and bicycling).

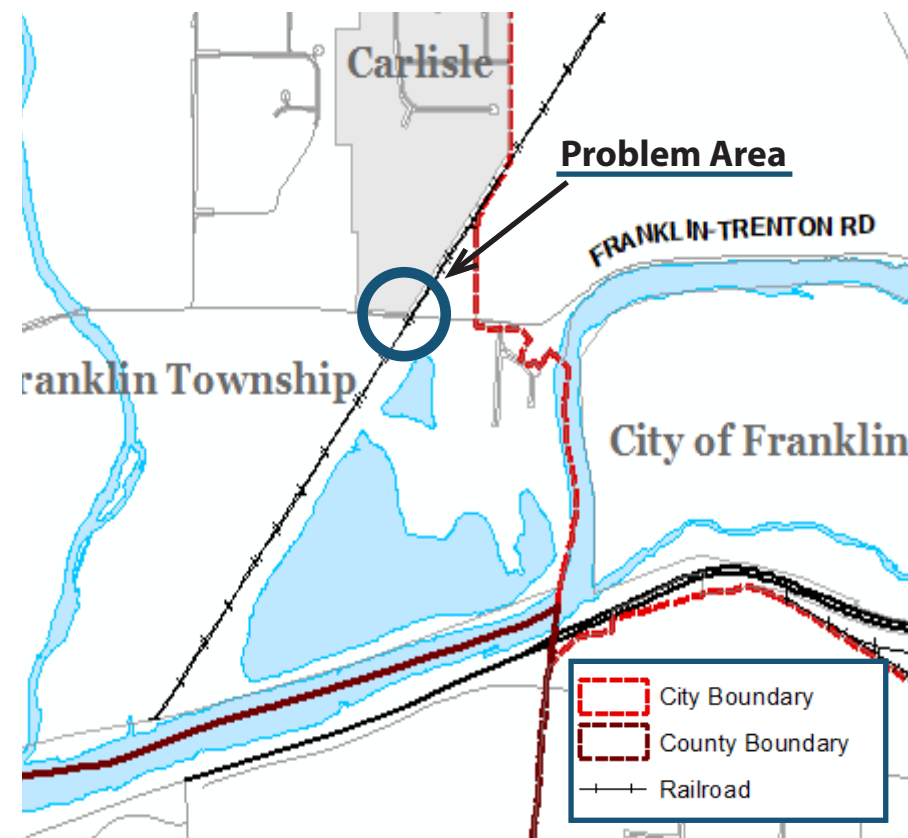


The best opportunities for future road connectivity are within the City's developing commercial and industrial areas. Currently, within these areas, the road network relies heavily on State Routes 73 and 123, East and West 2nd Street, and Riley Boulevard. Traffic is projected to increase along Commerce Center Drive and southeast State Route 123. Greater connectivity could relieve traffic flow along these major networks. Fewer vehicles needing to use the main routes mean a shorter travel time.

Connectivity should be implemented with other traffic circulation improvements such as roundabouts, traffic calming techniques, and road diets. Road diets make an area more walkable. Walkways and trail connections should be considered for pedestrian and bicyclist safety and overall health and satisfaction of the residents. Map 3.8 shows the recommended street and sidewalk connections.

The potential benefits of roadway connectivity include:

- **Safety:** Safer system for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- **Reduced Congestion:** Decreased traffic on arterial streets.
- **Travel Efficiency:** Continuous and more direct routes.
- **Better Emergency Service Response:** Improved emergency vehicle access and faster response times (more access options).
- **Encourages Walking and Biking:** Increased opportunities for walking and biking, thus increasing physical activity.
- **Improved Vehicle Distribution:** Better distribution of vehicular traffic across the road network.



Location of the problem railroad underpass along Franklin-Trenton Road

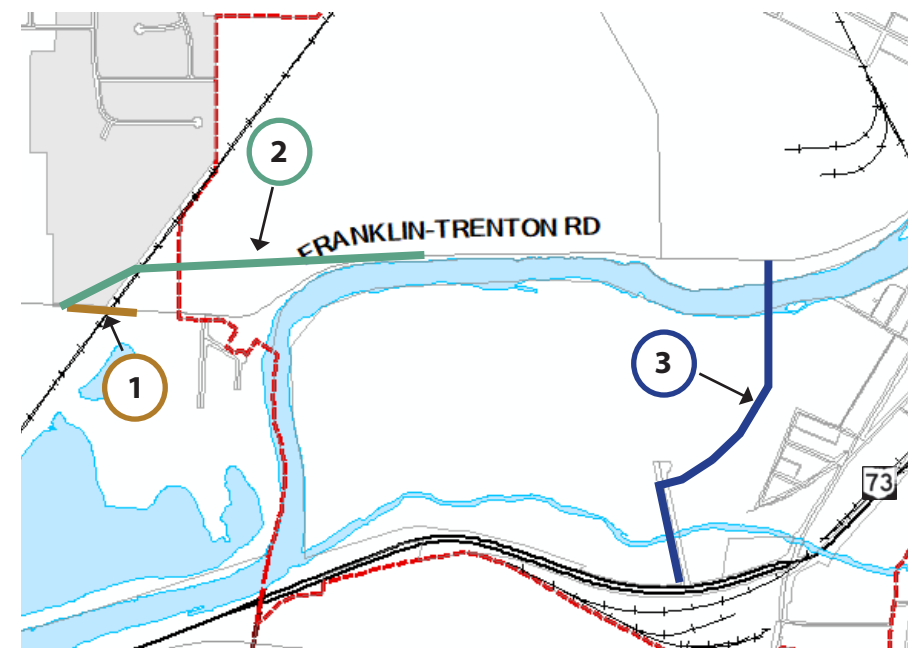


Illustration of the three possible solution

Improvements to Franklin-Trenton Road:

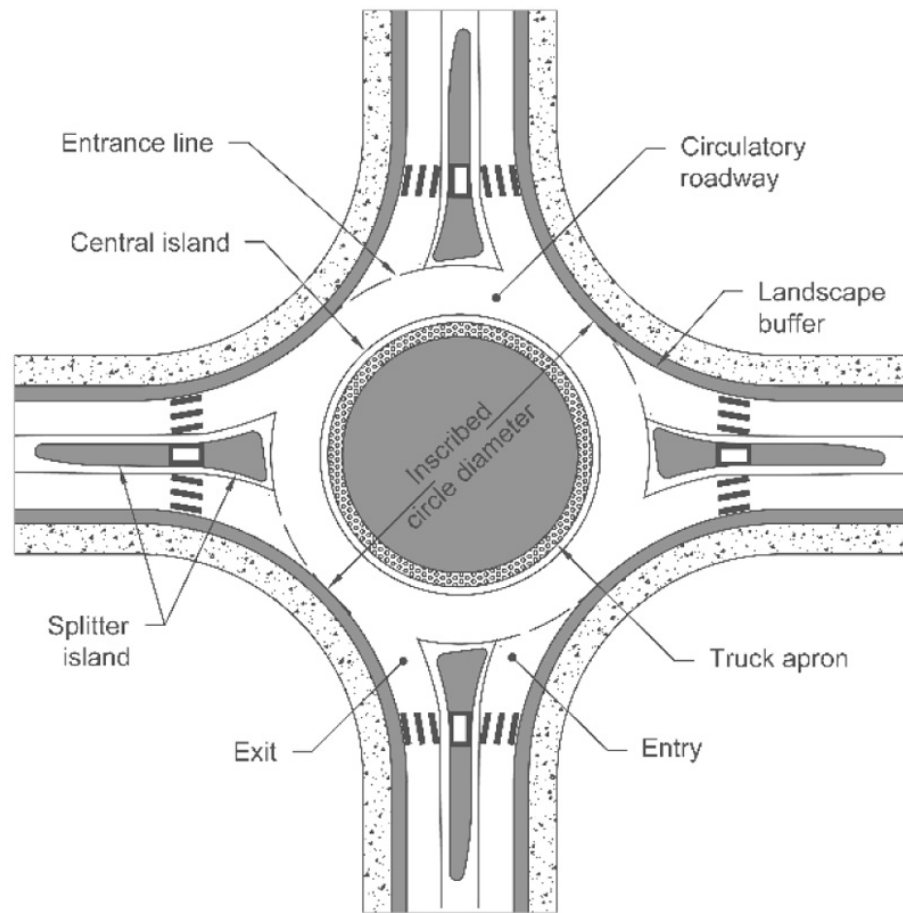
The railroad overpass between Middletown and Franklin along Franklin-Trenton Road sometimes causes traffic delay and congestion. The Warren County Engineer's Office pointed out the cause for congestions as the limited height and width of the overpass, and immobilization of certain semi-trucks and large vehicles. Although this railroad overpass is outside of the City, it has notable impacts on the City traffic circulation. Three possible alternatives were identified:

1. Underpass reconstruction.
2. Rail overpass reconstruction.
3. Construct a bypass between State Route 73 and Franklin-Trenton Road near the Franklin Wastewater Treatment Facility crossing both Clear Creek and the Great Miami River with bridges.

The bypass was identified as the most desirable alternative. This option, although costly, has the additional benefit of creating an alternate route of traffic traveling to and from the City of Franklin. This alternative would benefit the City of Middletown and Franklin Township, thus all three jurisdictions should work towards a preferred solution and implementation.



Railroad overpass along Franklin-Trenton Road



Roundabout design elements



Roundabout example



Typical roundabout signage



Pedestrian refuge island and access along a roundabout

Roundabouts

According to the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), the advantages of roundabouts include improved vehicle and pedestrian safety, better access for oversized and emergency vehicles, and increased capacity for traffic circulation.

Roundabouts are safer because of the natural traffic-calming geometry and how few decisions a driver will need to make. Roundabouts are safer for pedestrians, as vehicles move at slower speeds of typically 15 - 25 miles per hour, and pedestrians only need to cross one direction of traffic at a time. At a normal traffic signal, a driver has 32 potential conflict points, whereas at a roundabout, there are only 8 potential conflict points. The decisions drivers make at a roundabout are to: yield to any cars already in the roundabout, enter the roundabout, and exit at the first right, take the second exit to go straight, take the third exit to go left, or take the fourth exit to make a U-turn.

Roundabouts are safer for both motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. A study from the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety (IIHS) identified that the overall safety of residents increases through the implementation of a roundabout versus a standard intersection. As identified in the study, roundabouts reduce vehicle crashes by 39%, injury crashes by 76%, and fatal crashes by 89%.

As part of Franklin's Downtown Plan, a roundabout will be installed on State Route 123 to mitigate the existing and impending traffic volume-providing continuous flow of traffic with fewer accidents and less time idling in traffic.

Lions Bridge and Miami Avenue Roundabout:

Heavy traffic and gridlock are prevalent along State Route 73 (East/West 2nd Street) toward Carlisle and Southwest toward Middletown. Through data collection, the City of Franklin has identified that these traffic issues are largely due to an increasing number of illegal left turns being made from West 2nd Street onto Miami Avenue (Dayton-Oxford Road). Commercial vehicles, including semi-trucks making left turns on West 2nd Street or westbound trucks diverting through the Mackinaw Historic District also contribute to the traffic circulation issues in this area.

A single lane roundabout is recommended to solve these issues. A typical single lane roundabout measures approximately 120 feet in diameter. According to preliminary measurements, (Figure 3.1), installing a single lane roundabout may be feasible, as it would avoid the levee and minimally impact private property and Lion’s Bridge.

This roundabout would easily accommodate larger vehicles such as buses, fire engines, and semi-trucks with use of a truck apron or “spillover lane”. The truck apron (spillover lane) circles the center island and is slightly elevated with rolled curbs that allow the rear wheels of a larger vehicle to roll over it while discouraging smaller vehicles from using it. The center island provides an opportunity to add landscaping, signage, or a landmark to make a lasting impression.

The initial costs of building roundabouts varies and may be more expensive than a traditional intersection. When comparing long-term cost and maintenance, roundabouts are more cost efficient. For example, electric costs can be reduced by an estimated \$5,000 a year per roundabout. The service life of a roundabout is more than double with 25 years, compared to 10 with a traditional intersection.



Illustration of Miami Avenue and 2nd Street intersection, and the diameter and size of the roundabout

Street Concepts

The three following roadway design and planning concepts are similar, and each seek to create a better and safe environment for pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist while improving roadway aesthetic, connectivity, and resident's quality of life.

Complete Streets:

The complete streets approach creates public environments that are safe for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists, with additional benefits of better lighting and decreased accidents. This approach also encourages improved pedestrian & bicycle access, pleasing community aesthetics, and better community health and quality of life.

Green Streets:

The Green Streets approach focuses on the natural environment while promoting environments for a healthier lifestyle (promotes walking and biking). This approach integrates green stormwater management to filter, reduce flows, and improve watershed health, with street tree canopy that serve as stormwater interception, air quality improvement, and temperature mitigation.

As shown below, elements of a green street are similar to that of a complete street, with similar streetscape utilization. Stormwater management is an integral distinguishing design element that aligns the focus of a green street approach towards environmental feature inclusion.

DESIGNING GREEN STREETS

Green streets are thoroughfares that temporarily store and treat road runoff at its source by incorporating vegetated water catchment and filtration devices in the form of small rain gardens and bioretention systems. Components such as flow-through planters and other sustainable solutions allow stormwater from the street to enter planters through cuts in the curb where the plant material removes impurities and allows water to naturally infiltrate or be stored elsewhere. Water-loving plants that thrive so close to traffic are used in green street design, adding beauty and function.

Context-Sensitive Streets:

Context-sensitive streets focus on roadway designs that are appropriate and unique to the road's setting and function. This approach considers six different factors when planning and designing a roadway to get the best possible outcome:

- **Functionality:** What is the function of the proposed transportation facility?
- **Natural Environment:** Is there a large natural feature, like a river, to be accounted for?
- **Social Environment:** What is the residents' perception of the project area?
- **Transportation Behavior:** How are people traveling in this area? Pedestrians? Bicyclists?
- **Economic Environment:** Does the intended project impact local businesses?
- **Cultural Characteristics:** What features do the residents value? Could this project change or enhance them?



Cross-sections of a complete street

Street Concepts Takeaway:

Consideration of these three street concepts could result in improved access; quality of life, safety, and environmental impacts. As the City of Franklin implements new and redesigned roadways, the elements within these three concepts, such as functionality, the natural environment, social environment, transportation behavior, economic environment, and cultural characteristics should be applied to ensure that roadway improvements will have a positive impact. This includes impacts and the uses of the roadway by bicyclist and pedestrians (often, referred to as active transportation). Other considerations should include providing benches and designing spaces for people to linger, particularly elderly residents who may not be able to walk for long periods of time.

The application of Green Streets concept is especially important within the City of Franklin, because of its proximity to Clear Creek and the Great Miami River as well as extensive and sensitive floodplain and floodways. The Green Streets concept should be considered to improve stormwater management with “green” practices such as street trees, flow-through planters, bioswales, and groundcover both along roadways and paths, as well as by the river. Riverbank plantings ensures that erosion will be kept at a minimum. The placement of trees along roadways should also be designed to improve City aesthetics.

There are many grants available for the implementation and upkeep of complete streets along with active transportation. The City of Franklin should apply for these grants and work with the Regional Planning Commission and the Warren County Health District for support.

City Street Character

A city’s streets and sidewalks can either add to or subtract from an overall impression of the City. As the City of Franklin grows, it is important to look at best practices to welcome visitors and improve traffic safety while maintaining aesthetically pleasing streetscapes, intersections, medians, and gateways.

Streetscapes:

A streetscape is a collection of the visual elements of a street including the road, building facades, sidewalks, street furniture (i.e., streetlamps, benches, etc.), trees, and open spaces to form a street’s character. Lighting, as an important element of the streetscape, should be carefully planned and implemented. A lighting plan should be developed on a commercial district or roadway corridor level to improve safety and visibility while also establishing cohesion and identity of each district. Benches should be installed in appropriate locations to provide a resting and gathering spaces.

Intersections:

Landscaping at intersections can also improve the City’s character and aesthetic, and improve beautification of the City’s streetscapes. City gateways will be the main focus areas for such landscaping. However, landscaping at some other major intersections, such as shopping areas or along high trafficked roads, will achieve a cohesive character.



Streetscape along Skokiaan Drive



Residential intersection between Apache Street and Sherman Drive.

Residential:

Though many of Franklin’s neighborhoods have sidewalks, there is still opportunity to improve the safety and aesthetic of the residential streetscape. Crosswalks can offer more visibility to pedestrians, making it safer to cross. Similarly, overhead streetlights can improve safety through visibility. Many neighborhoods already have these, however even distribution and upgrades to the lighting to give a more cohesive look to the City will help with the overall aesthetic. Street trees can offer shade to pedestrians as well as add tree cover to the City which improves the look of the City while decreasing the amount of concrete or asphalt allowed to trap heat.



Photo of residential areas



Photo of residential areas

Commercial:

The commercial corridors on State Routes 73 and 123 are both highly trafficked stretches of road, however, they should make improvements to the walkability and accessibility to attract more businesses to the area and gain more patronage and foot traffic.

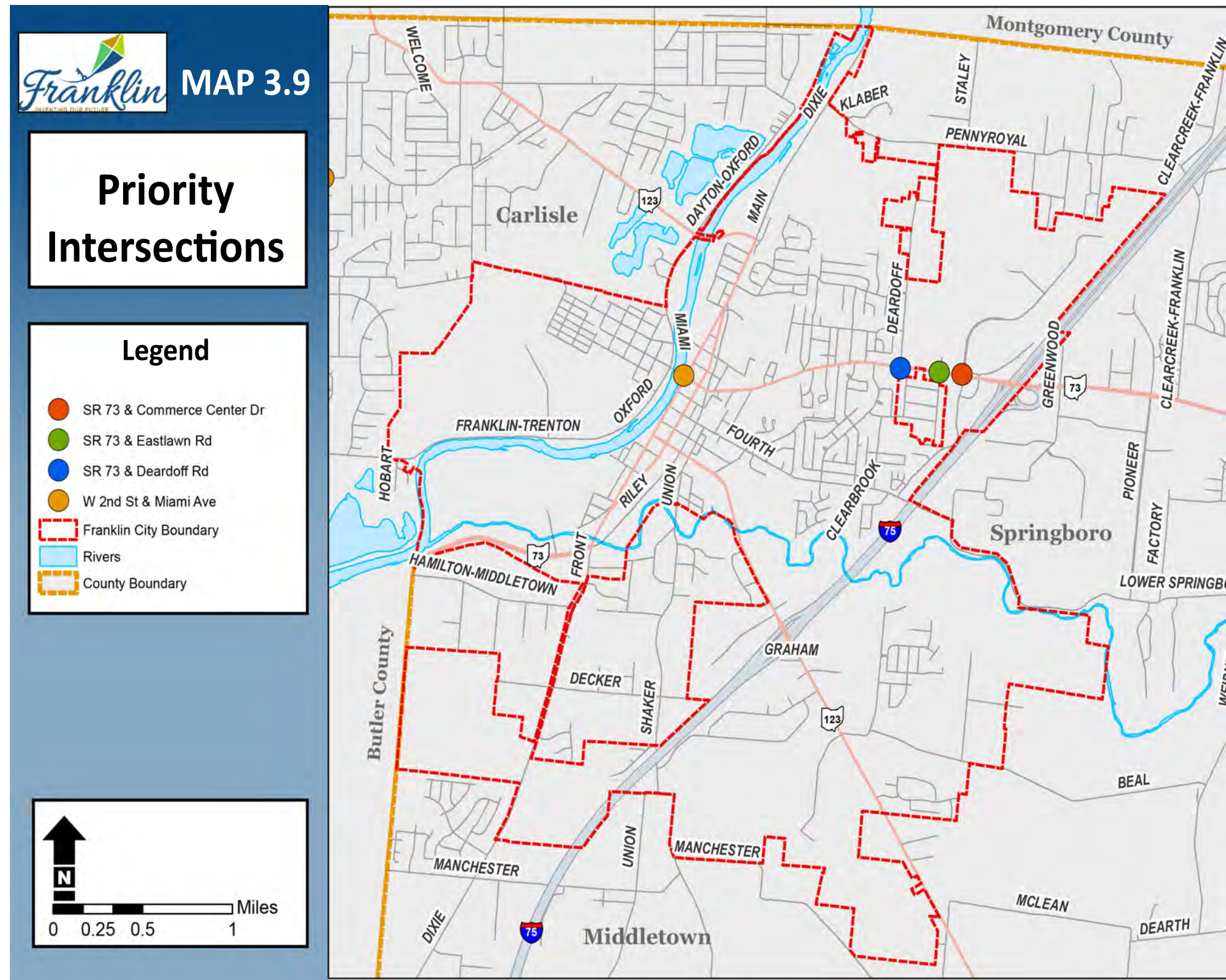
Safety can be improved through the installation of sidewalks and crosswalks. For many on foot, a median can provide a break for pedestrians trying to cross a busy road without a nearby crosswalk. Where possible, low maintenance medians should be installed. These medians can provide a safe turn lane for drivers but also can be decorative and improve the character of the City.



Photo of a downtown commercial area.



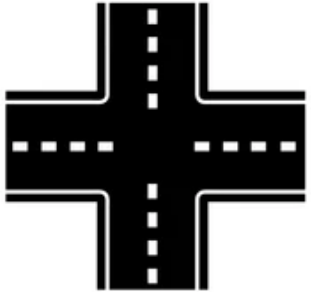
Photo of interior commercial parking lot landscaping and facade



Safety Improvements

Due to the high traffic volume along State Route 73 and across the Lions Bridge on West 2nd Street, safety is a priority along this corridor. Key intersections are identified as priorities for safety improvements (Map 3.9). These intersections are West 2nd Street and Miami Avenue, Deardoff Road and State Route 73, Eastlawn and State Route 73, and Commerce Center Drive and State Route 73.

- TOP REASONS FOR SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS**
1. Lack of sidewalks,
 2. Lack of adequate crosswalks or crossings,
 3. High traffic speed,
 4. High traffic volume,
 5. Number of necessities or amenities in the area, and
 6. High number of potential pedestrians.



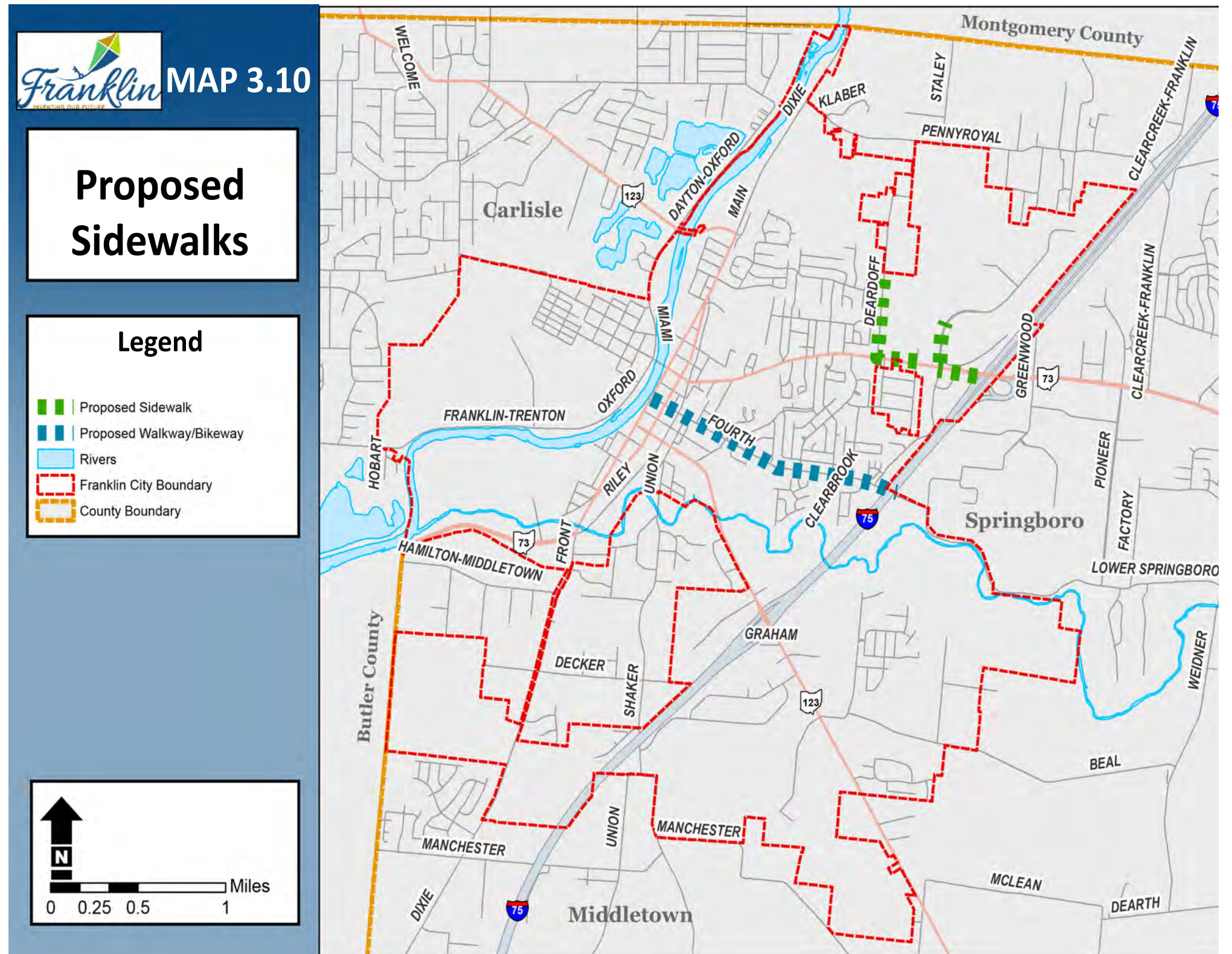
Sidewalks:

Sidewalks with clear separation from the roadway give pedestrians a safe place to walk. The presence of sidewalks in a neighborhood or commercial center encourages active transportation and promotes healthy lifestyles, adding to quality of life.

On State Route 73, there are a few places (Map 3.10) where sidewalks are only on one side of the street, or there are no sidewalks, or there is a lack of internal pedestrian circulation.



Photo of a uniquely painted crosswalk



Major Roadway	Sidewalks	Bike Facilities
Interstate 75	-	-
State Route 73	Yes (60%)	No
State Route 123	No	No
Riley Boulevard	Yes (60%)	No
North Main Street	Yes (75%)	No
Dixie Highway	Yes (50%)	No
Central Avenue (Kenneth Koons Boulevard)	Yes	No
Miami Avenue / Dayton-Oxford Road	Yes (30%)	No



Crosswalks:

Crosswalks provide a clear path for pedestrians and a clear stopping point for motorists to allow for the safe crossing of pedestrians. As previously stated, there are a few intersections that either lack crosswalks or both sidewalks and crosswalks near local grocery and food options.

There is an opportunity for the City to implement safe crossings that both create a safer environment but also add flair to the City. The City can implement crosswalks that utilize local artists' visions of what their City's greatest assets are at busy places of commerce or city gateways such as State Route 73. Shown below is a look at a potential crosswalk upgrade on Choctaw Circle near George H Gerke Elementary School.

This area currently has a crosswalk and some sidewalks for pedestrian circulation. Creative crosswalks can be painted on local roadways as long as it is not a State Route or Highway.



Example of a unique crosswalk with the Franklin Kite

Pedestrian Refuge Islands:

Often, traffic speed is prioritized over every other element when it comes to designing a thoroughfare. However, it is also important to look out for those walking or biking.

Pedestrian refuge islands are a safe place for pedestrians to stop when crossing multiple lanes of traffic. These islands are constructed to have a curb that protects the pedestrians from oncoming traffic so vehicles cannot easily swerve onto the island. Often, these islands also have plantings such as street trees or flower beds.



Placement of a pedestrian refuge island at a signaled crosswalk

In places where enough traffic exists to create a hazard for pedestrians, however, there is a need to provide safe crossing, pedestrian refuge islands can be a very useful tool. Though, a signal may not be warranted in such an area, a pedestrian refuge island can provide that break for pedestrians to only have to encounter one direction of traffic at a time instead of having to make the full trip in one go. Pedestrian refuge islands can also help in cases of elderly or disabled people crossing a wide intersection even with a signal.

As there are larger intersections on State Route 73 with existing crosswalks, pedestrian refuge islands can be implemented to provide a safety net for pedestrians trying to cross as well as a visual cue for drivers to be more cautious and to not speed. Where State Route 73 turns into East 2nd Street nearing Riley Boulevard, pedestrian refuge islands should be implemented especially where one side of the street has breaks in sidewalks or where there is a destination nearby. These islands will also serve to be a natural visual cue to slow down as lanes are reduced, and potentially be a source of city beautification.

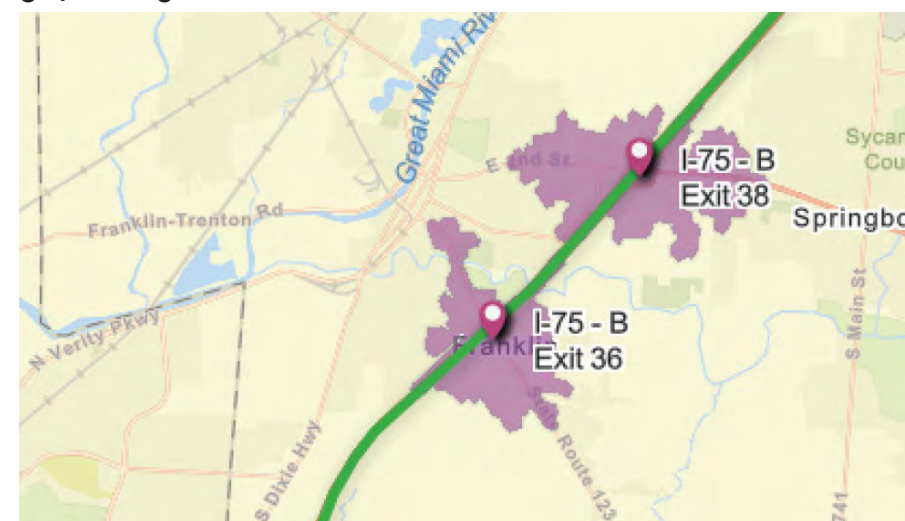
Unintended Benefits: Pedestrian refuge islands also have added unintended benefits such as reducing the amount of head-on collisions from opposing sides of traffic; additional space for street trees or other city beautification; and acts as a natural speeding deterrent as often times the presence of an island will reduce lane width which causes drivers to reduce their speed.

Cost & Maintenance: The overall cost of a pedestrian island is in the low to mid range as such an improvement lasts anywhere from 10 to 15 years and does not require a signal. The overall maintenance of the improvement will depend on the types of plantings or if only paving shall be used.

Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicles (EVs) are gaining traction among consumers, governments, and automakers as the benefits of EVs increase. Many automakers have announced their commitment to EVs by diversifying their offerings and making pledges towards electrifying their fleets over the next few years. In response, the State of Ohio has identified gaps within the state’s electric vehicle supply equipment network, particularly along the Interstate roadways, and has developed programs to incentivize the delivery of private sector EV infrastructure services. With two interchanges, the City of Franklin could capitalize on the opportunity that EVs can bring, which include lower maintenance costs than traditional gas vehicles, increased economic activity; and higher air quality for residents. Franklin could become ‘EV-ready by developing a comprehensive course of action to efficiently and effectively provide for EV charging infrastructure to support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and foster economic development.

The City of Franklin contains two of the possible eight candidate locations to fill an identified EV service location gap along I-75.



Ohio EV Charger Coverage Gap Planning Map

The City will have tremendous influence over how and where EV infrastructure is built and could serve as a critical and necessary partner in the market transformation. Therefore, Franklin should be “EV-ready” in policy, regulation, capital improvements, and in planning for public and private infrastructure. EV-ready implies the following:

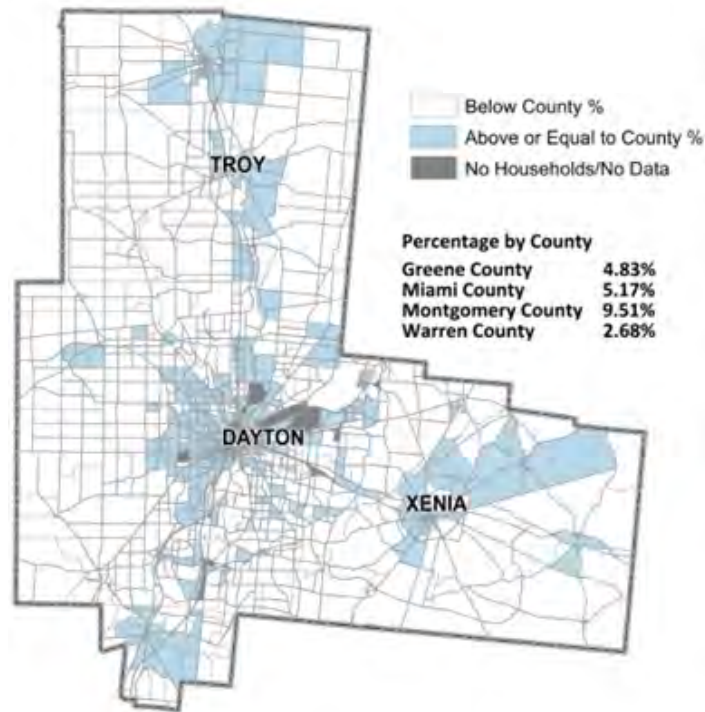
1. **Policy.** Acknowledge EV benefits and support development of charging infrastructure.
2. **Regulation.** Implement development standards and regulations that allow EV infrastructure.
3. **Administration.** Create transparent and predictable EV permitting processes.
4. **Programs.** Utilize state programs to overcome market barriers.
5. **Leadership.** Demonstrate EV viability in the City fleet. If cost effective, Franklin could also demonstrate how EVs work within the City fleet. More importantly, however, integrating EVs into City fleet demonstrates the market readiness of EVs.

Regulations should facilitate market expansion and transformation, while acknowledging uncertainty about how technology will develop. A simple approach maybe to create a clear by-right path for installing EV charging infrastructure, including signage identifying EV charging locations. Nevertheless, a standardized permitting process that directly addresses EV infrastructure services and that allow contractors and City staff to know exactly what information and documentation is needed to install EV is necessary. The permitting processes should be updated to best reflect changing industry best practices.

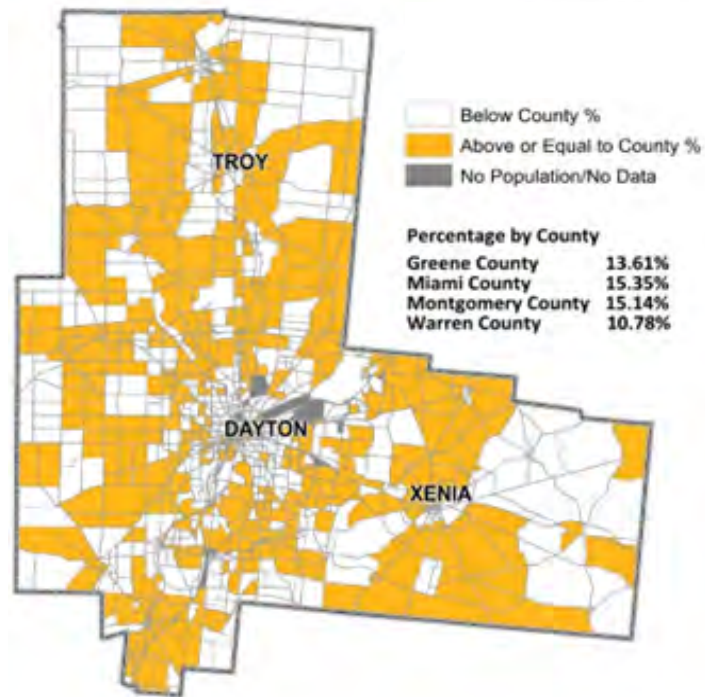
Disabled / Elderly Transportation

Franklin Township works with the City of Franklin to provide free transportation to the City's elderly and disabled residents. Riders must be at least 60 years of age or have a documented disability and are encouraged to schedule their rides at least one week in advance to ensure availability. There are also limits to the travel radius, where drivers can take passengers up to 10 miles of the Township Administration Building. This service prioritizes necessary trips such as doctors' visits, shopping, and other select destinations within surrounding jurisdictions.

This is an essential program that opens possibilities for seniors or persons with disabilities that wish to live on their own or age in place. However, as shown in maps 3.11 through 3.14, the prevalence of zero car households match that of elderly, disabled, and poverty households. The City of Franklin has a poverty percentage of 16.8%, the elderly population is at 13.8%, and 6.6% of households do not have a vehicle. More can be done to improve the flexibility and availability of this service with possible expansion to include households below the poverty line. The City should work with Franklin Township to expand services and opportunities available.

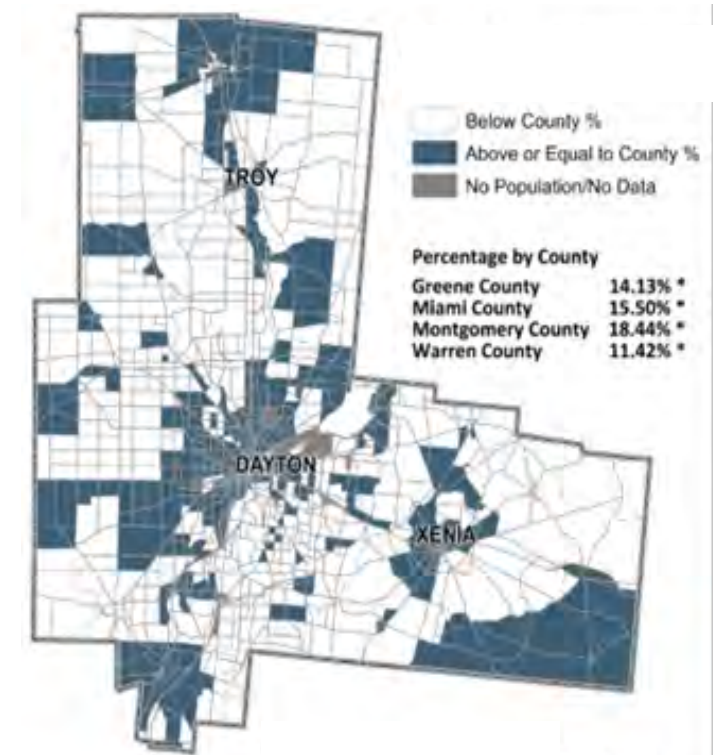


Map - 3.11: Zero-Car Housholds

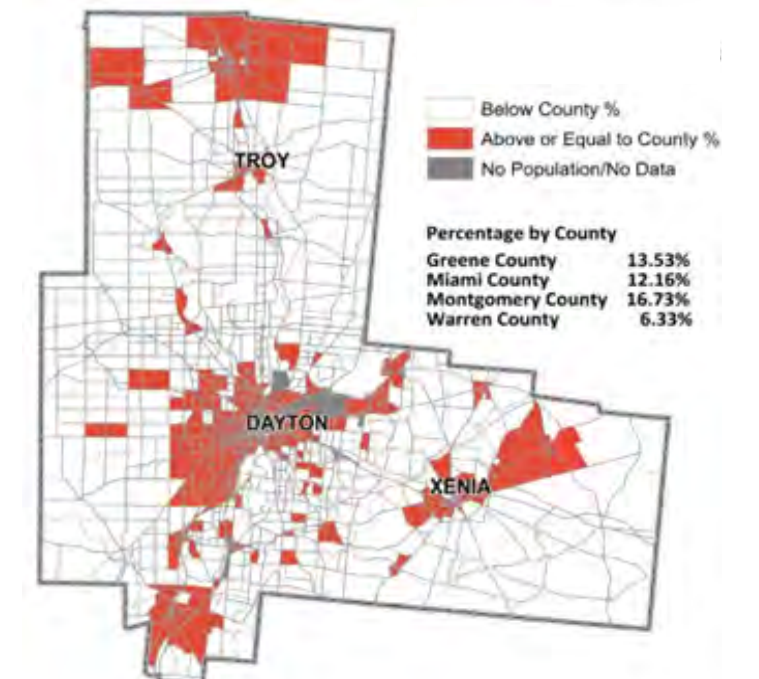


Map - 3.12: Elderly Population

Maps from the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission.



Map - 3.13: Disabled Population



Map - 3.14: Poverty Population



Franklin Township Senior Bus

Strategies and Recommendations

This section outlines strategies that will help further develop, improve, and maintain the existing road network and active transportation options. This is meant to be a guide for decision making as it relates to overall anticipated land use and quality of life improvement. As the City grows and changes, this document must also be adaptable. Trail recommendations are contained in Chapter 6-Parks, Trails, and Recreation.

1. Adopt & Implement “Complete Streets” Policy & Design Standards:

- a. A roadway beautification plan that supports the installation of street trees along major commercial corridors. Design concepts for streets, sidewalks, and transportation infrastructure that support public life and placemaking (gathering, lingering, and engaging in commerce and social or cultural activities), in addition to their transportation functions. This includes appropriately incorporating seating and plantings.
- b. Recommendations for the inclusion of bike lanes.
- c. Request that appropriate departments, boards, and committees review, revise, and develop as needed, appropriate planning documents, zoning code, subdivision regulations, site plan review process, design guidelines, and other programs to make sure Complete Street design principles and standards are incorporated.
- d. Seek appropriate funding and grants for the implementation of Complete Streets policies and standards.

2. Balance Street Capacity Improvements With Pedestrian Safety:

While a limited amount of widening may be necessary (especially near major intersections) to accommodate expected traffic volumes, the policy of the City should be to keep travel lanes to a minimum number and width to provide better opportunities and improved safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

3. Apply Traffic & Safety Improvements at Key Intersections & Segments:

- a. Add a traffic light at the intersection of Beal Road and Shotwell Drive; realignment of intersection for better sight distance and access; pedestrian refuge and other pedestrian safety improvements at intersection; crosswalk treatments across State Route 123; left-turn lanes along both Beal Road and Shotwell Drive onto State Route 123.
- b. Install pedestrian islands along State Route 73 and 2nd Street, in locations needed to access major destination uses and commercial activity centers.
- c. Add a bike lane and ensure sidewalks along the entirety of 4th Street.
- d. Work with Franklin Township to discontinue two small sections of Manchester Road which contain an angled stop and two major bends in the road.



- e. Address the State Route 123 and I-75 area/corridor which is of critical concern. The corridor has a typical 70-foot width (12-foot travel lane and 3-foot shoulder), a continuous left-turn center lane over large areas, no sidewalks, no bike lanes, multiple curb cuts and wide-open access (no curbing and full pavement to the street) on numerous lots, limited internal connections, little or no public streetscape treatments (i.e., street trees), and limited private landscaping treatments. While ODOT has jurisdiction over the State Route 123 corridor, the City could affect positive change through site plan review, working with the state to affect streetscape and pedestrian enhancements, or possibly taking jurisdiction over a larger segment of the State Route 123 corridor. In addition, a traffic impact study should be conducted for the intersection of State Route 123 and the ramps for Interstate 75 to mitigate difficult semi-truck turn movements. Franklin has experienced noticeable and sustained industrial development over the past decade, generating a growing demand for freight activity and increasing pressure on the City's transportation network, in particular the State Route and I-75 area. Trucks are critical for the City's economy to function.



Aerial view of State Route 73 and I-75 Interchange

- 4. Ensure Road Connectivity:** As streets are developed, connectivity should be a main focus. Connected roadways create efficiency in travel times and should be considered a development opportunity. A connected network provides a multitude of routing alternatives, allowing the best method of dispersing traffic and limiting congestion. Having a thoroughfare network with a high degree of connectivity also enables individual streets to become narrower, which slows traffic and increases vehicular and pedestrian safety. High connectivity also allows emergency service vehicles many options to get to the site of an emergency call. Priority roadway connections include:
- State Route 73 to Franklin-Trenton Road.
 - Implement a section of road which connects Deardoff Road to itself without major bends to improve safety.
 - Work with Franklin Township to connect Manchester Road to itself more directly and connect Manchester Road to State Route 123 and Shotwell Drive to improve circulation.
 - Continue William C. Good Boulevard to Scholl Road.
 - Connect Industrial Drive to Graham Drive and William C. Good Boulevard.



- 5. Install Sidewalks in High Pedestrian Areas & within New Development:** Connectivity standards in Franklin should not be limited to automobiles. Encouraging a network of connected sidewalks and trails makes walking more convenient and enjoyable and increases pedestrian access throughout the City. By increasing the number of routes through the City, pedestrians are provided more interesting walking and jogging alternatives to access a variety of neighborhoods and destinations, and more opportunity for social interaction. As funding allows, older neighborhoods should have sidewalks installed where there are no sidewalks or sidewalks only on one side of the street. Priority should be given to neighborhoods with schools, parks, and other amenities close by. Safe routes to school should be identified. Sidewalk width should be a minimum of 6 feet along State Routes and busy commercial corridors.
- 6. Install Roundabouts to Improve Traffic Circulation & Public Safety:** Roundabouts are a great alternative to the traditional four way stop or signalized intersections. They provide several benefits including increased safety- improve intersection safety for motorists and pedestrians, better traffic flow, enhanced aesthetics, and reduction of energy use. There are several locations which could be converted to a roundabout. These locations are identified below.
- Intersection of State Route 123 and the new high school & Community Park.
 - Along Commerce Center Drive to access additional potential development.
 - Intersection of West 2nd Street and Miami Avenue to allow for traffic to move west.

- 7. Comprehensively Implement Bike & Pedestrian Safety; & Aesthetic Improvements Along 73 Corridor:** State Route 73 is a primary east west corridor in the central segment of the City, and the most highly traveled route in Franklin. There are several problem segments that need to be upgraded along the corridor. Potential short and long-term recommendations for traffic and safety improvements along the corridor should include a complete sidewalk network including connecting sidewalks to adjacent streets and neighborhoods, crosswalks, landscaping, bike lanes/trails, and pedestrian refuge islands. The City in conjunction with the City of Springboro should coordinate the design of the corridor.
- 8. Continue to Support Rail Service:** Although the City's freight rail network is small in terms of rail infrastructure mileage, it plays a key role in supporting the City's economic competitiveness and quality of life and allows the City to stand out as an important business and transportation hub.
- 9. Capitalize on the Advantages of Electric Vehicles:** Encourage and work with local businesses to install electric vehicle charging stations in their parking lots. There are grants available for businesses.
- 10. Develop a Solution to The Franklin-Trenton Road Rail Overpass:** Coordinate with the City of Middletown to establish a desirable connection between North Breiel Boulevard and Franklin-Trenton Road. The purpose of this is to decrease the traffic across the Lion's bridge and to improve the traffic circulation into the City of Middletown.

The CAC, stakeholders, and residents developed a shared understanding of the City's future needs regarding land use and policies that will ensure a successful and strong economic future; an economic future that retains, attracts, and grows business activity and that provides quality jobs. Protecting existing industries and promoting new industries was often mentioned as an important piece of a sustainable Franklin. Residents felt that the City needs to build on the well-established industrial development foundation and that this will ensure continued job opportunities and resilient economic development. The City of Franklin can establish positive outcomes fiscally, physically, and for residents' quality of life with a well-planned economic development effort.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 4

City of Franklin Employer, Modula

Background

Economic Development:

This Chapter is meant to help focus economic development efforts to be more strategic and effective in responding to forthcoming changes in Franklin. The City of Franklin plays a major role in economic development by allocating land for manufacturing and commercial uses, providing water and sewer service to development sites, offering tax credits and incentives, completing planning to accommodate growth, encouraging high quality schools, planning for desirable housing, ensuring efficient permit processes, and providing parks and recreational activities that improve Franklin's quality of life. The City of Franklin has accomplished many of the policy goals identified in previous iterations of the Comprehensive Plan and this is reflected in the economic progress Franklin has experienced.

"Economic vitality" is defined as the capacity to be economically competitive, resilient, and attractive to private and public enterprise.

This update allows the City to move forward and focus on its next big strategies and strengths while adjusting to address new demands in the economy - placing great emphasis on workforce development for skilled employees, creating new job opportunities, and developing a sense-of-place to ensure workers choose to live in Franklin. This should continue job growth, increase wages and disposable income, and improve economic vitality. The goal is economic vitality that enables residents to enjoy satisfying economic activities and that contributes to their economic well-being (good jobs); improves their quality of life, results in projects that are sustainable in the long-term, and development that creates a robust and balanced tax base for the City.

This section documents existing conditions, identifies critical issues and opportunities, articulates an agreed-upon economic development vision, identifies existing programs and resources for implementation, and recommends strategies. Most of the strategies identified must be undertaken by departments within City government; the remaining strategies will require partnership with some of the many businesses, non-profits, and County organizations/departments. These strategies, developed with CAC and residents, are meant to be inclusive and collaborative, and will succeed with a high level of coordination.

Industrial and business development is the primary focus and is covered in four focus areas: location-based opportunities, workforce development, entrepreneurship and innovation, and quality of life.



Entrance to Franklin shopping center, Laynecrest Plaza

Goals and Guiding Principles

Goal:

This section acknowledges the unique position the City of Franklin occupies in Warren County's economy and outlines the goals and guiding principles for action that were discussed and developed by the CAC and stakeholders. During the planning process, the CAC, stakeholders, and residents developed a shared understanding of the City's future needs regarding land use and policies that will ensure a successful and strong economic future; an economic future that continues to retain, attract, and grow business activity and that provides quality jobs. Protecting existing industries and promoting new industries was often mentioned as an important piece of a sustainable Franklin. Residents felt that the City needs to build on the well-established industrial development foundation and that this will ensure continued job opportunities and resilient economic development. Nevertheless, the CAC encourages the City to dynamically embrace change and seize on new avenues of opportunity and to encourage and recognize innovation, hard work, and good character and community involvement of residents and business.



Guiding Principles:

In the context of an economic strategy, these guiding principles are a set of statements expressing how economic development is defined. These principles were crafted through input from the CAC, the stakeholders interviewed, and the online survey throughout the planning process.

1. **Core Resiliency.** Protect the City's core economic base and major employers by retaining businesses and providing them with the support necessary to continue doing business in Franklin, including a skilled local workforce-identifying multiple paths to enhance workforce. Increasing access for City of Franklin residents to learning and employment opportunities results in sustainable employment at living wages.
2. **Future Focused.** Position Franklin for future industrial and commercial growth by understanding trends and adopting a proactive approach to economic development. Align investment and assets in ways that drive future development to the City of Franklin.
3. **Entrepreneurial Spirit.** Cultivate the City's entrepreneurial ecosystem by investing in quality of place and catalyzing innovation that will continue to attract professionals to Franklin.
4. **Cultural & Place Vitality.** Strengthen Franklin's cultural vitality by promoting the arts; the Great Miami River and tourism while also marketing the City as one of Miami Valley's cultural hubs. Build upon quality-of-life assets that support economic development and support the efforts of residents to prosper both personally and professionally.

Existing Conditions

Background:

The City of Franklin has many assets that serve as catalysts for future industrial/business development and progressive economic opportunities along the State Route 123 area, the State Route 73 corridor, and areas adjacent to Interstate 75. The consensus is that Franklin is poised to further capitalize on its strengths-significant amounts of vacant industrially zoned land, convenient access to Interstate 75, proximity to two airports - the Dayton International Airport (25 miles) and Dayton General (6 miles), active rail service and good physical infrastructure, and effective City economic development incentives. However, several measures identify areas to be addressed. These include higher unemployment rates compared to Warren County, disparities in education and workforce skills, and transportation challenges that make it difficult for some segments of the population to get to work. The City should also effectively market a positive image of itself.

The City of Franklin plays a pivotal role in Warren County's economic success and can establish positive outcomes fiscally, physically, and for its residents' quality of life with a well-planned economic development strategy. Although, industrial and business economic development is the primary focus, recommendations for commercial destinations (commercial placemaking) and tourism (arts and sports tourism) are explained as important and recommended economic development strategies.

State Route 123, Commerce Center Drive; Dixie Highway, Franklin Trenton Road, and the Watkins Glen Drive area are reinforced as the primary industrial districts.

Industrial Parks and Sites:

Today, The Cincinnati and Dayton metropolitan areas are some of the state's fastest-growing metropolitan regions. As Cincinnati and Dayton grows, so will Franklin. Franklin is a well-established industrial city with both older and recent manufacturing facilities in place and the evidence points toward an upward trajectory for Franklin.

Franklin Interstate Park is an older park with some property available. Recent industrial parks such as the new business park along I-75 (privately held – Heritage Commerce Park) has significant potential for growth (140 undeveloped acres). Both Shaker Industrial Park and Franklin Business Park are newer in time frame and are both quite develop-able with additional services being made available. These two sites represent two of the largest tracts currently available in western Warren County. In addition, both areas are close to active railroad service making each prime for both heavy and mid-level manufacturing operations. Both sites lie quite well and have excellent access to Interstate-75 for both goods and employees. These sites are best situated to those industries needing both truck and rail capabilities: Plastics, Chemicals, Advanced Metals, Automotive and Distribution.



Business parks in Franklin, per Schueler Group

Top 20 Companies with Greater than 50 Employees:

1. Faurecia Exhaust Systems, Inc.
2. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
3. Burrows Paper Corporation
4. Valued Relationships, Inc.
5. Huhtamaki, Inc.
6. Ample Industries, Inc.
7. Atlas Roofing Corporation
8. Pfizer Inc.
9. Carington Health Systems
10. Ferco Tech, LLC
11. Franklin City Schools
12. Adesa Corporation, LLC
13. Price Brothers Retail LLC
14. General Engine Products LLC
15. R L Drake Company
16. Unifirst Corporation
17. Pharmacia Hepar LLC
18. The Outlook Group Inc.
19. WC Educational Service Center
20. Tech Way Industries, Inc.

Source: Warren County Economic Development (2022)

Live-Work Location:

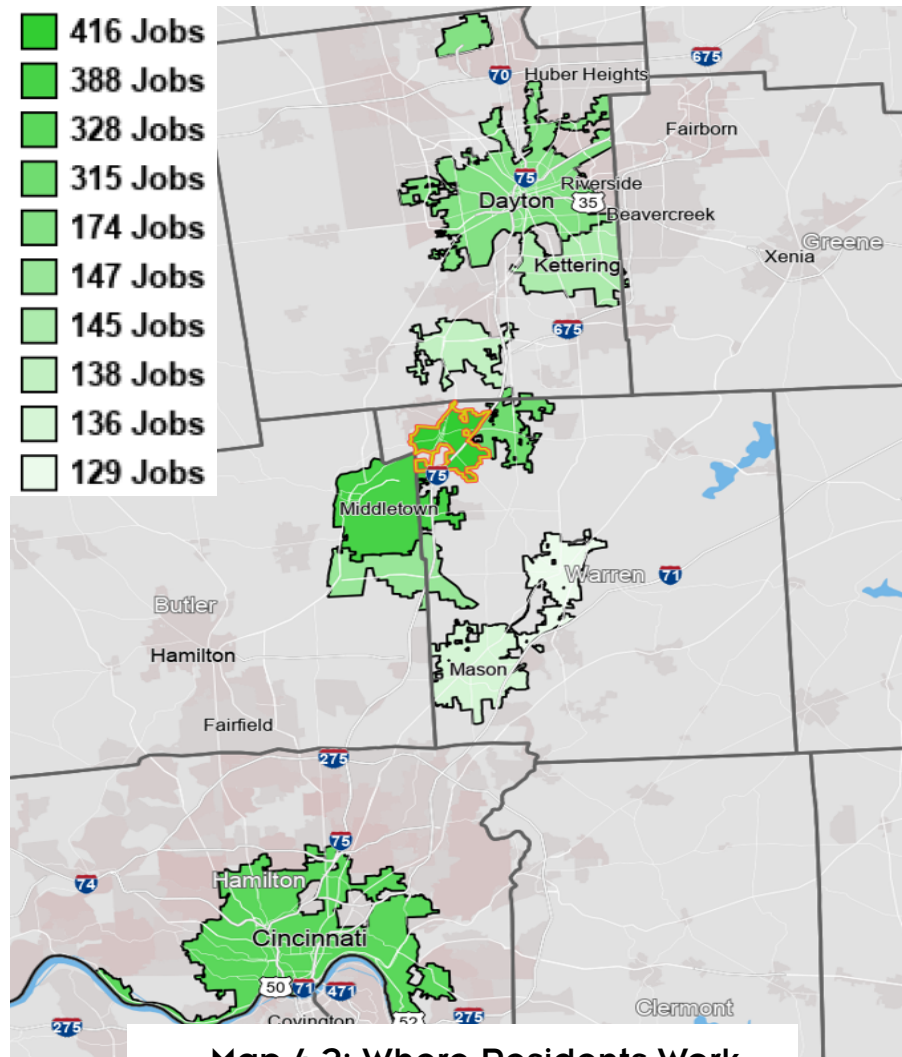
According to the 2019 U.S Census Bureau “On the Map” data, 522 individuals lived and worked in the City. 5,539 individuals worked within the City but lived outside and 5,406 individuals worked outside the City and lived within the City. Ninety one percent of Franklin’s workforce accept employment outside of the City. Their commutes to distant employment centers (Mean Travel Time: 21.5 minutes) require a greater percentage of the family budget to be spent on transportation and reduces take-home pay. This trend particularly impacts low-income families.

One of the challenges facing the City of Franklin is how to provide housing and a quality of life that is attractive to those working in Franklin. Approaches such as mixed-use developments, vibrant commercial nodes; safe and decent housing, walkable commerce corridors, or connected neighborhoods that combine transportation planning with better land development policies can help address this issue, while also enhancing the quality of life for residents. Based on the educational attainment of residents and the type of established industrial companies, it is reasonable to presume that the City’s robust industrial sector provides high to reasonable paying jobs that are filled by employees that don’t live within the City and that City residents are filling lower paying jobs outside of the City.



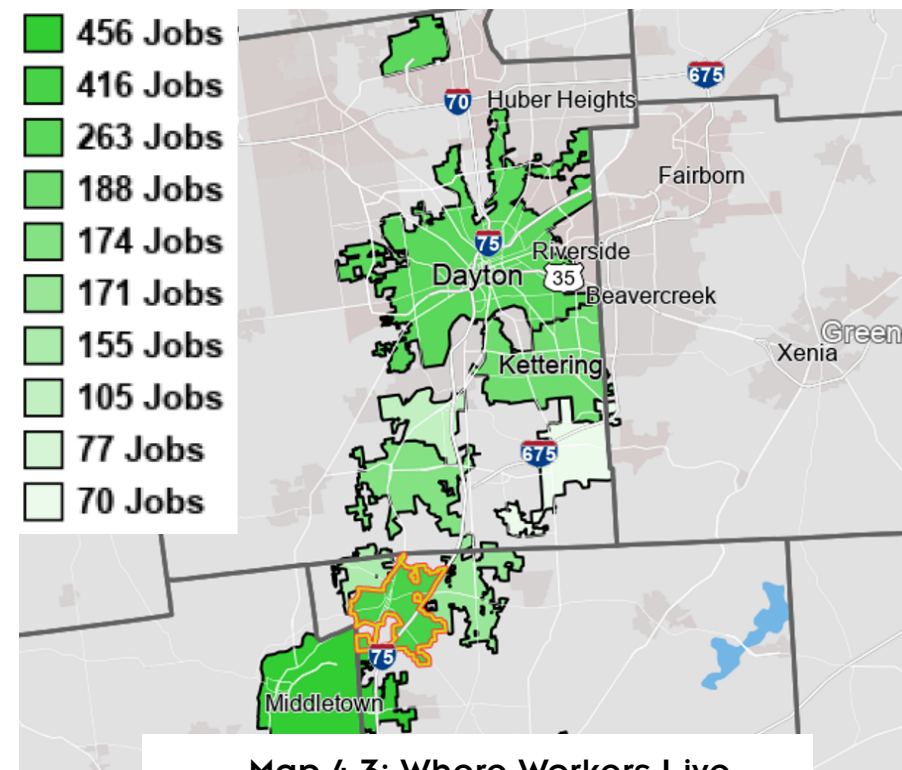
Map - 4.1: Live/Work Location

The arrows illustrated do not indicate the directionality of worker flow between home and employment locations. Shown above is a map of the City of Franklin, and the live/work locations within the City. As illustrated through development patterns, an established employment center is vibrant within the City. 5,539 individuals are employed in the City, but live outside of the City boundary. 5,406 individuals live inside of the City, but travel outside of the municipality for employment. The other 522 individuals live and work inside the City of Franklin. In total, the number of individuals that live in Franklin, but have to travel outside of the City for work is 91.2%. The labor force for the City is 11,467 employees.



Map 4.2: Where Residents Work

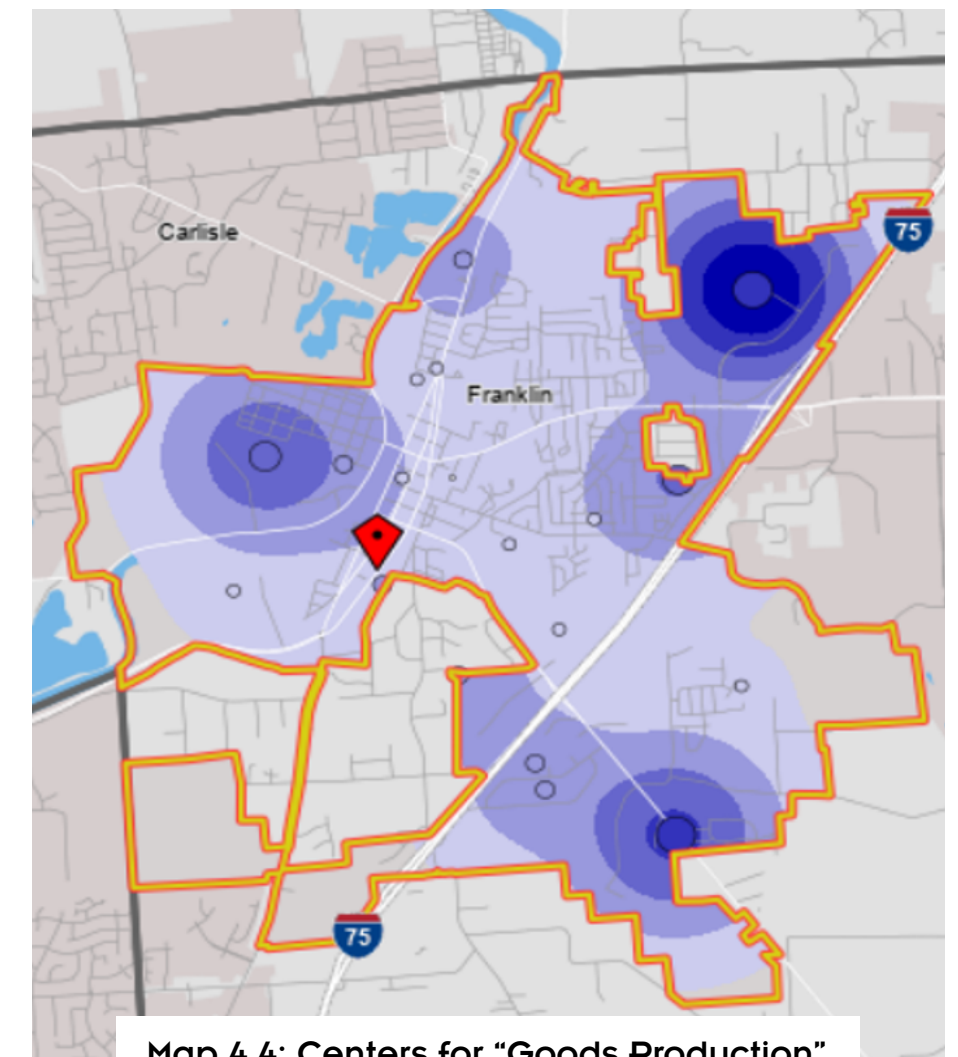
Shown on Map 4.2, the City of Franklin has many residents that travel outside of the City for work. Many of which travel to the City of Dayton, City of Cincinnati, and City of Middletown. As previously stated, these high number of residents that work within certain proximity of the City alter the mean travel times. Only 522 residents were also employed within the City.



Map 4.3: Where Workers Live

Location	Count	Share
All Places	6061	100.0%
Franklin	522	8.6%
Middletown	517	8.5%
Dayton	283	4.7%
Kettering	203	3.3%
Springboro	201	3.3%
Miamisburg	194	3.2%
Carlisle	180	3.0%
West Carrollton	114	1.9%
Lebanon	81	1.3%
Germantown	79	1.3%
All Other Locations	3687	60.8%

Source: ESRI Community Analyst (2022)



Map 4.4: Centers for "Goods Production"

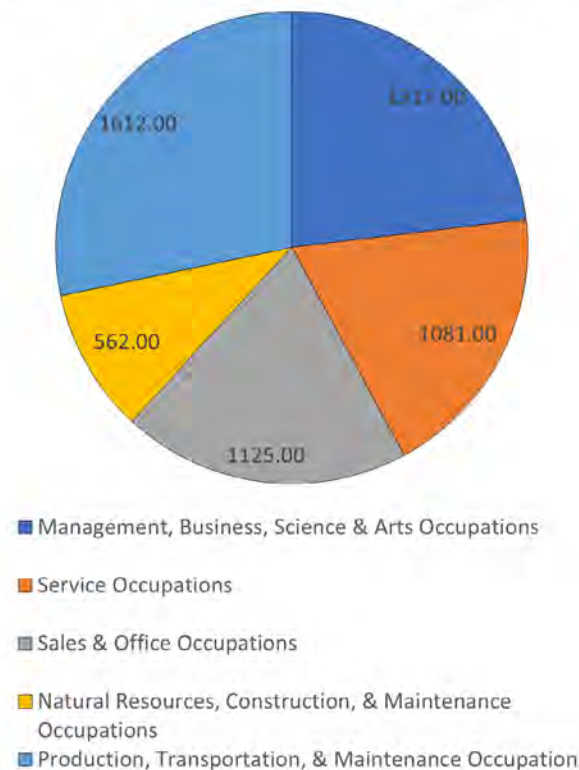
Illustrated on Map 4.4 are vibrant locations for merchandise production, through industrial uses, such as manufacturing, production, and assembly. All locations that are marked are industrial parks. Towards the Southeast are Franklin Springs and Franklin Business Park; Towards the Northeast is the new industrial park along Commerce Center Drive, Heritage Commerce Park.

Employment Sector:

The top employment sectors are illustrated in Figure 4.1. “Manufacturing” was the top employment sector and grew substantially from 2010 to 2020 by 287 jobs. Conversely, some employment sectors lost jobs between 2010 and 2020. The Information, Public Administration, Wholesale Trade, and Other Services sectors lost 253 jobs. During the same period, Construction sector lost 41 jobs. Overall, the City gained 600 jobs and the top employment sectors continues to be Manufacturing, Education and Health Care, and Retail Trade.

Franklin’s workforce generally mirrors its business mix, with higher percentages of workers employed in manufacturing and service jobs (34.3 percent of the City’s workforce & 21.6 percent of the County’s workforce in 2019 (Census)).

Figure 4.1 | Employment Sectors



Source: Census (2019)

Residents Employed by Industry:

Employed Population 16 Years & Older	2010	2020
Manufacturing	1242	1529
Educational Services, & Health Care & Social Assistance	831	910
Retail Trade	500	820
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation, & Accommodation & Food Services	444	524
Professional, Scientific, & Management, & Administrative & Waste Management Services	397	404
Finance & Insurance, & Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	285	353
Transportation & Warehousing, & Utilities	274	319
Other Services, Except Public Administration	281	260
Construction	284	243
Wholesale Trade	300	140
Public Administration	174	133
Information	85	54
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, & Mining	0	8
Total	5097	5697

Source: Census (2019)

Workforce Earnings:

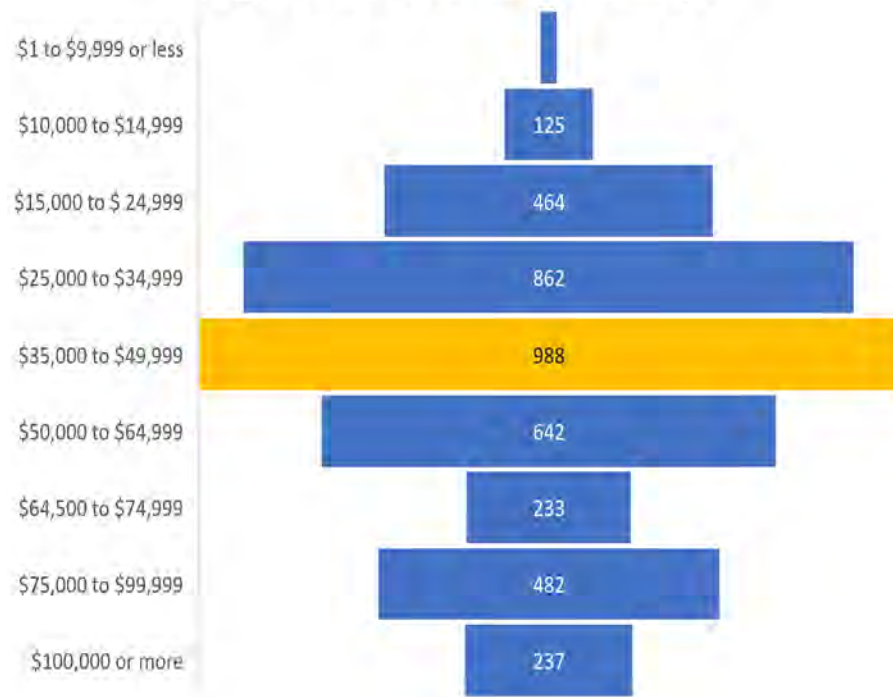
Educated residents are essential to a healthy City economy. Workers educated in STEM skills are better prepared to find employment and excel in key industry, and higher levels of education are correlated generally with higher earning potential.



Modula Impact	Statistics
Jobs Created	100
JO Support	\$225,000
Jobs Created Payroll	\$3,744,000
Capital Investment	\$26,500,000
Year	2019

Modula, as a business, is one example of the impact in job creation and investment that one employer can have for the City of Franklin. Development potential throughout the City, and specifically in industrial parks, provides more opportunity for new employers and investors to invest in the City’s potential.

Figure 4.2 | Workforce Earnings



The median earnings (dollars) for full-time, year-round workers with earnings was: **\$41,158**

Employment	Males	Females	Median
Production, Transportation, & Material Moving Occupations	\$40,877.00	\$29,786.00	\$37,760.00
Production Occupations	\$48,611.00	\$28,832.00	\$32,214.00
Transportation Occupations	\$55,000.00	\$21,250.00	\$46,250.00
Material Moving Occupations	\$32,969.00	\$39,572.00	\$38,765.00

Source: Census 2020: ACS 5-Year Estimates

Major Elements

Background:

Franklin is at an inflection point - one not about attracting industrial and economic growth, but instead about how to respond to and embrace it - how to welcome the opportunities associated with industrial and economic growth while also ensuring that existing residents don't fall behind. This is no easy feat, but Franklin has already demonstrated that it has the leadership, the planning, and assets necessary to successfully navigate through and thrive with change. The CAC has determined that, what Franklin needs now is a modern approach to economic development that is appropriate for a City of its size and development stage and is capable of leveraging public and private resources to capitalize on the opportunities that lie ahead.



Vandalia Rental, located on Commerce Center Drive

Location-Based Opportunities:

Business development should be the cornerstone of Franklin's economic development strategy and is where the most resources should be directed. Business development includes three primary activities: Business Retention, Business Attraction, and Entrepreneurship Development. All are important to a healthy business climate and a continued diversified business base. It should be easier to attract new businesses if existing businesses are expanding and remaining in the City. Expanding and diversifying the types of businesses increases employment opportunities, generates additional tax revenues, diversifies the economic base, and improves the quality of life for residents. These goals can best be achieved by focusing and leveraging the City's location-based opportunities.

By focusing on specific economic development sectors (strong growth prospects and high-wage jobs) that can best utilize the locational-based opportunities (interstate access, available land, active rail, location within the region, art heritage, riverfront, parks, and a regional trail) of the city, Franklin can spur more jobs and continue its sustainable commercial and industrial base. Targeted approaches along State Route 123 and Commerce Center Drive area should result in densities of employment that require spin-off housing, retail, and other services. This further expands the economic importance of the City. The City could use tax incentive programs and investment of public funds in City amenities and infrastructure in those areas that are targeted for economic growth.

Several economic trends affect the City. These include the return of some manufacturing to the U.S. and higher fuel prices that make Franklin with convenient transportation and shipping networks attractive (active rail line and I-75). More than 162 acres of vacant industrial land exist in the City of Franklin that is primed for development. The investment in these sites represent an opportunity to capture regional economic growth within the City limits. However, such initiatives must be accompanied by complementary economic development strategies, including the following:

1. Develop, maintain, and publish a comprehensive list of available commercial/industrial development sites.
2. Maintain an inventory of “shovel ready” industrial land.
3. Regularly communicate with The Warren County Economic Development Department to understand current industry development location needs and keep suitable development sites on their radars.

Another location based economic development strategy is to recognize the arts, the river, the trail, parks, destination commercial and quality of life amenities as a part of the City’s economic development efforts. This should be used to increase tourism, attract the younger generation - who identify more strongly with their communities than with their employers, and to improve the portion of residents that live and work in Franklin.



Franklin Industrial Park

Arts & Culture:

Arts and culture generate economic activity - jobs and taxes and the City could maximize the potential economic value represented by the arts patrons who visit the City each year and transform Franklin into a vibrant entertainment and retail city. Arts can be used to boost the Franklin economy in a variety of ways, from incorporating the murals and public art into an economic development plan to supporting arts education and promoting arts assets as a boost to cultural tourism. Festivals are another way to showcase Franklin’s cultural amenities. Arts and cultural amenities such as the museums, festivals, and the library, could be used to improve Franklin’s competitive edge, create a sense of place, attract visitors, and integrate the visions of the City.

The City murals have encouraged visitors to tour outdoor art and has earned Franklin recognition as the “City of Murals”. Franklin has the opportunity to leverage these arts and cultural amenities for economic health and prosperity, to do so the City should conduct a comprehensive inventory of its arts and cultural assets and determine exactly which creative assets have the most potential for growth. After arts and cultural assets have been inventoried and mapped, this information can be used to guide investments and projects and to devise economic development strategies that leverage the arts to gain a competitive edge in business (create a sense of place). By investing in the arts and incorporating arts and culture into an economic development plan, Franklin can reap numerous benefits - economic, social, civic, and cultural - that help generate a more stable, creative workforce, new tourism, and a more livable city. In addition, the City should update the UDO to permit low impact arts industries as an allowed use within commercial zoning districts and mixed-use developments.

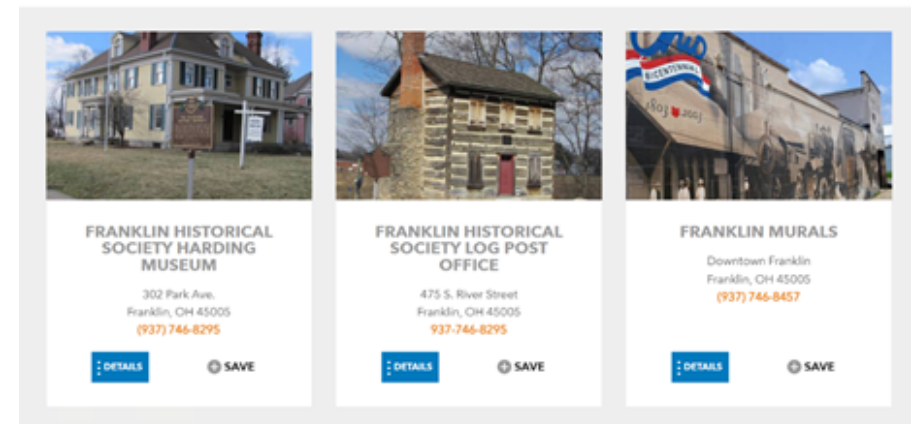
Tourism:

Tourism includes travelers who visit Franklin specifically to enjoy its unique food, the riverfront recreation, history, sports, art, or festivals. Jobs in this sector include food preparation and serving, waiters and waitresses, bartenders, cooks, dishwashers, maids and housekeeping cleaners, among others. Currently the Retail, Hospitality and Tourism sector in the City employs more than 750 employees. Annually, tourism in Warren County has grown to 12 million tourists, and visitors spent more than 1.3 billion in Warren County (Warren County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, 2021 Annual Report). The tourism industry provides jobs that cannot be outsourced. Tourism has the potential to offer numerous benefits to Franklin’s economy - an opportunity to create jobs and stimulate local economy through purchases. The most important economic feature of activities related to the tourism sector is that they contribute to three high-priority goals of Franklin: Support of commercial businesses, employment, and the vibrancy of the City. Also, given the complexity of tourism consumption, its economic impact is felt widely in other production sectors, contributing towards achieving the goals of the City. In this respect, tourism can play an important role as a driving force of economic development.



JD Legends, located on State Route 73

Different organizations have their own efforts and events aimed at attracting tourists to Franklin. One way to strengthen tourism is by coordinating these events. On the county level, the Warren County Visitors Bureau - should continue to be used as a central resource for information on tourism. ArtsinOhio.com is another comprehensive statewide calendar of cultural events. Managed by the Ohio Arts Council, in collaboration with local convention and visitors' bureaus, the online calendar provides free online information for Ohio residents and visitors. Users can search for events by city, date, organization, special accessibility, price, special discounts, and more.



Warren County - Ohio's Largest Playground, Franklin City Listings

More than 1,400 organizations and 1,800 venues list their information in ArtsinOhio.com, and more than 2,500 unique events are available at any time. Participating organizations include museums, symphonies, concert series, festivals, libraries, historical societies, zoos, and many other organizations with cultural programming.

Sports Tourism:

Sports tourism can be an integral part of Franklin's economy, with the improvements of tournament facilities at Dial Park. Travelers attending sports tournaments and other events – either as a participant or spectator – generate significant economic benefits to businesses, and the City and represent a critical driver of the overall Warren County economy (Ohio's Largest Playground). By monitoring the sports tourism economy, Franklin can make informed decisions regarding the funding and prioritization of tournament facilities and carefully monitor its successes and future needs. To fully capitalize on this opportunity, the City should first prioritize getting the City visitor ready for an authentic, high-quality experience they will remember and be able to report about the economic impact of tournament facilities. This includes the availability of quality overnight accommodations and exceptional dining experiences.



City of Franklin Wildcats Stadium

Workforce Development:

Workforce development continues to emerge as the key factor in site selection, business attraction, and business expansion. However, the educational attainment of Franklin's residents 25 years of age and older having attained at least a bachelor's degree (9.5 percent) was much lower than the County (26.63 percent) and the State (17.94 percent) in 2021 (Census). Nevertheless, Franklin's location gives it access to a wide labor pool, including a well-educated population in Warren County. Leveraging the skills of the surrounding workforce while providing training resources for City residents was deemed an important policy to continue the City's economic growth and improve the lives of current residents.

The economies of the City of Franklin and Warren County are interdependent and fundamentally intertwined. A robust County economy supports a healthy City economy and vice versa. Franklin is one of the County's main employment centers. Even though Franklin contributes substantially to the economic development powerhouse that Warren County has become, that does not guarantee that the City residents will thrive. Economic growth in the County does not guarantee similar prosperity for Franklin residents, particular residents without the education and skills - economic growth has not been enjoyed by all its residents and neighborhoods. The recently passed school levy is an effort to improve the quality of education. The CAC understands that there is no question that quality primary and secondary education is essential to the success of Franklin's residents and that quality education for the future workforce is critical to Franklin competing in an ever-evolving economy. Franklin needs a successful future workforce that is nimble and able to adapt to dynamic changes in the workplace.

Currently, 40.3 percent of Franklin’s workforce have achieved greater than a high school diploma. To improve the balance of residents that live and work in Franklin, quality K12 and higher education curriculum tied to workforce skills and economic needs should be emphasized. The CAC recognizes the need to improve educational levels. Without basic high school credentials and some post-secondary training, the employment outlook for these individuals is poor. In the past, a high school degree would have been a sufficient degree for employment, now it is just one phase on the path to job readiness. In addition, opportunities for workforce development - upgrading the skills of displaced workers so that they can secure new economy jobs and get back into the workforce is an important strategy.

Goal: Improve Franklin’s economy through a well-educated & qualified workforce that responds to the changing needs of the workplace.

Franklin’s unemployment rate of 4.5 percent (Census, 2019) was higher than the 4.0 percent reported by the County for September 2021 (Warren County Economic Development). Unemployment rates reflect the demand for highly educated workers. In 2019, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for City residents without a high school diploma was 16%, compared to 4.5% for individuals with some college experience, and 1.8% for those with a bachelor’s degree or higher (Census, 2019). Individuals with post-secondary education also earn significantly more than those with only a high school diploma. In 2019 median annual earnings for full-time workers (aged 25-32) with a college degree were \$19,948 higher on average than for those who had only finished high school.

The Warren County Career Center and regional colleges will play a major role in this effort, along with several other organizations, to help workers develop skills and to prepare for further education and future jobs, as well as translating existing skills to high-demand fields. The City should support continued efforts of the educational community to provide adult education, vocational education, job training, and higher education, within the region that meet the needs of businesses, employees, and residents. Encourage greater communication between the City, educational and training providers, businesses, employees, and residents to meet educational and job-training needs. Encourage employers to support continuing education and training for their employees. Support efforts to provide training and employment opportunities for special needs populations. Special needs populations include everyone from children and the elderly to persons with disabilities and persons of low-income. Local training and employment programs will help to ensure that all segments of the population can participate in and support the local economy.



Warren County Career Center



Franklin Public Library

There should be adequate accessibility to the Franklin-Springboro Public Library system to allow residents to improve their level of education. Increasing or maintaining adequate hours of operation and resources available at the library would provide more choices and opportunities for personal education. In addition to a vast array of digital and print materials that aid citizens in furthering their education, library computers provide those who do not own a computer the ability to access electronically delivered information, including training, classes, and employment opportunities. On-site library experts could help residents navigate the library’s vast entrepreneurial resources - assisting in areas such as market analysis, job application assistance, and digital skills training. Libraries can help residents upgrade their current skills or develop new ones to qualify for higher-paying jobs.

Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Small Business Support:

Although, established businesses are responsible for the bulk of Franklin’s employment, creating an entrepreneurial culture could also help to maintain Franklin’s industrial and economic prosperity. Entrepreneurs could contribute to the Franklin economy by the wealth and jobs they create from their entrepreneurial ventures - improving the economic prosperity of the City. Creating an entrepreneurial culture requires developing entrepreneurial qualities through the educational system, as well as attracting and nurturing people with a mindset that combines drive and creativity with unique business skills. Franklin should focus on encouraging startups by supporting small-scale manufacturing/businesses; allowing Live/Work/Sell land uses and home occupation, establishing a business incubator, and creating programs to help entrepreneurs thrive. Entrepreneurial ventures will also require resources, support services, and financing to promote business activity. By identifying areas where support is needed and working to build a system of resources and connections to help ideas thrive, Franklin can take a proactive approach to entrepreneur and innovation focused economic development.



The City in coordination with The Warren County Economic Development Department and with the assistance of an economic development consultant should:

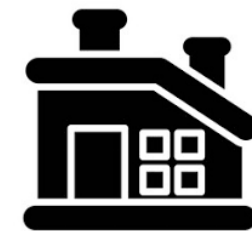
- Conduct Feasibility Studies to find what programs will work under the specific market conditions of Franklin.
- Develop an Implementation Plan to ensure progress.
- Compile Resource Mapping to find the support and resource connections that already exist in Franklin and Warren County and fill in the gaps with specific programs and projects.
- Support youth entrepreneurship programs to foster a culture of innovation and cultivate an entrepreneurial spirit. Entrepreneurship education is significant for helping youth to develop skills and knowledge that will support their future success and benefit the City.



Mom’s Restaurant

Small-Scale Manufacturing/Businesses:

Technological and economic changes (access to online marketplaces, the ability to process sales on mobile devices, and affordable access to tools for smaller production runs) have created new opportunities in small-scale manufacturing and the “maker” economy, presenting a chance for Franklin to diversify its economy. This new face of manufacturing allows many more people to produce and sell their own goods: costs of production are lower, tools are more accessible, space needs are smaller, production runs can be small and on-demand, and sales can start overnight.



Typically, small scale manufacturing such as micro-breweries and chocolate manufactures, have support for growing and launching these businesses. However, other small-scale manufacturing is often overlooked and prohibited by zoning - but can be an important piece of the City’s economic development strategy and redevelopment initiative. Production can be compatible with mixed uses developments; interesting to see; fits into small spaces; contributing to the character, appeal, and success of walkable commercial nodes. The typical practice of mixed-use development includes retail, office, and residential, but rarely considers small production businesses as a complementary use. For Franklin, this presents a dual opportunity to simultaneously grow businesses and contribute to revitalization efforts.

Currently, the Warren County zoning code allows

- **Retail Small Scale/Light Manufacturing use-** An accessory and associated light manufacturing use conducted in conjunction with the primary retail use. The manufacturing use is conducted within the building that the retail use is carried out, and the manufactured products are displayed and are available for sale on site.

The City could adopt similar regulations for small scale manufacturing.

Franklin’s identity is strongly associated with the arts and manufacturing; thus, the manufacture and sale of arts and craft should be more widely permitted. The entrepreneurs that start these businesses quite often become powerful brand ambassadors, highlighting the innovation and benefit of the City. Furthermore, this could provide an inclusive pathway and an opportunity for jobs for residents that may have difficulty finding them in other sectors. Supporting a diverse variety of small businesses, across industry sectors, creates jobs for a diverse range of skill sets and wages, and helps buffer the Franklin economy from fluctuations in any one individual industry

Artisan Industry - Small Scale: A business using small tools, light machinery, and hand tools. These businesses are most often consumer-facing and sell through a variety of channels, including online, at craft fairs or pop-up markets, and/or in a small storefront.

Manufacturing Companies By Number of Employees:

Manufacturing Company	Number of Employees
Faurecia Exhaust Systems, Inc	400
Valued Relationships, Inc.	331
Huhtamaki, Inc.	320
Ample Industries, Inc	210
Pfizer Inc.	146
Ferco Tech, LLC	120
General Engine Products LLC	80
R L Drake Company	79
Pharmacia Hepar LLC	72
Tech-Way Industries, Inc.	55
Walther Engineering And Manufacturing Company, Inc.	49
IKO Production, Inc.	47
Waytek Corporation	42
Rnm Holding, Inc.	41

Source: Warren County Economic Development

Live/Work/Sell:

Live/work/sell refers to the combination of residential and commercial uses that allows people to live and work in the same space with some special or limited use restrictions for parking, signage, hours, and activity. It can mean combining a residence with a studio, gallery, work or production space, or an office or shop that receives customers. Warren County has a few examples of zoning districts that support a live/work/sell style of business.



Home Businesses:

More people are working from their homes, a trend that results from shifts in the economy toward services, corporate downsizing, and improved telecommunications. Remote work and appropriate home-based businesses can produce many benefits and new business opportunities such as information technology development, reduced traffic congestion, and reduced air pollution. The UDO regulations should be updated, allowing for flexibility and a broader range of home-businesses that accommodate the new economy. Nevertheless, the UDO should minimize the potential for negative impacts from home businesses by limiting signs, maintaining the residential appearance of neighborhoods, requiring adequate parking while ensuring that parking and traffic generation fits into the neighborhood and is not excessive, limiting truck deliveries, and appropriately managing other potential adverse impacts.

Business Incubators:

Business incubators have become popular and useful tools to help startups navigate the tenuous early stages of business development. Business incubators nurture the development of entrepreneurial companies, helping them survive and grow during the start-up period, when they are most vulnerable. Such businesses often need affordable production space as well as investment capital. Reutilizing an unoccupied building can be a great space for business incubators. Incubators provide companies with business support services and resources tailored to young firms. The most common goals of incubation programs are creating jobs, supporting entrepreneurs, building or accelerating growth in a local industry sector, and diversifying the economy. Incubators can help ensure that start-up manufacturing firms “graduate” and are able to operate on their own. Retaining successfully incubated industrial firms in the Franklin economy that supported them can require a proactive approach. A food incubator program that supports entrepreneurs in launching their food business by providing affordable commercial kitchens, allowing food trucks or retail kiosk space, connections to market channels and the skills and experience to grow a stable business, as well as incorporating into a farmer’s market are all a part of Franklin’s revitalization efforts.



City of Franklin Farmer’s Market

Quality of Life and Sense of Place:

A desirable Franklin is essential in attracting new talent and keeping businesses. As jobs have increased in complexity and the amount of education and training required; competition has grown for talented workers. Talented workers are mobile and increasingly choose to live in locations with many amenities. Attractive locations for talented workers tend to have a wide range of arts, cultural, entertainment, and recreational options. They have unique physical characteristics and are built on local assets. The skills that talented workers possess make them valuable and therefore should be encouraged to live and work and raise a family in Franklin. The goal is to attract specific populations for their job-producing benefits, particularly: talented millennials, special skilled and educated workers needed by local businesses, institutions, entrepreneurs, and in some cases Baby Boomers, especially those who want to start businesses. The CAC understands that to attract and keep the most talented workers, and to reverse the live-work ratio, the quality of the City’s destinations and neighborhoods must improve. To do that, strong emphasis has been placed on the concepts of placemaking and creating a sense of place as a central mechanism to create higher quality places along key corridors (Chapter 7) and neighborhoods (Chapter 5). Placemaking is really a workforce development strategy to retain and attract the best talent by improving the quality of life of Franklin residents with vibrant commercial centers, desirable parks, attractive riverfront and green spaces, and a complete trail system.

Pockets of poverty, deferred investment & disinvestment exist - the best cure is the return of activity, population, & invigorating reinvestment.

As workplace dynamics shift and employees adapt to new work environments, where talent wants to live trumps where talent needs to live. On the heels of the COVID 19 pandemic, the importance of placemaking and quality of life factors in attracting talent is apparent. Successful placemaking is not the result of one public project but instead involves a commitment to the implementation of comprehensive and area plans using a wide range of economic development tools. Traditional economic development measures such as transportation access, low tax rates, proximity to markets, and available sites should be coupled with data that demonstrates that Franklin is a desirable place to live. This new frontier requires an:

- **Assessment of Quality-of-Life Attributes:** Placemaking and Quality of Life Index are playing a more dominant role in the business site selection process. Franklin should understand how it ranks against key competitors and define areas where to prioritize improvements.
- **Development of Placemaking Strategies:** Comprehensive Placemaking strategies combined with development incentives, are necessary to drive revitalization.
- **Improve Parks, Green Spaces & Trails Connections:** Parks, green spaces and trails enhance the health and wellbeing of residents and supports access to job centers, health care, education, and other City assets that attracts residents.
- **Attract Infill & Redeveloped Housing Opportunities:** Strong Placemaking efforts should attract housing developers that will bring diverse housing options by way of mixed-use development, and single-family homes that accesses City assets like the riverfront, parks, and the trail system.

Although, some areas of the City have experienced decades of disinvestment and any new development may seem desirable. The City should be very selective-unless new development has good form and is carefully sited and well-designed, it will under-perform in its ability to attract additional development and positive economic activity. New development should assist in creating quality places. In addition to successful placemaking improving the quality of life for residents, it may help stem the loss of local students after graduation from high school, trade school, or college/university, and will help attract new young workers from outside the area. Over time, average educational attainment and per capita incomes will rise.

Support mixed-use developments that include employment, shopping, & residential to stimulate economic development.

Basic infrastructure is necessary for Franklin to remain in the competitive arena for new investment. However, to create quality places requires placing priority on infrastructure projects that enhances the City's quality of life, business climate, and contributes to a Sense of Place. The City can focus redevelopment and revitalization by the discretionary use of funds in those areas targeted for increased economic vitality, such as designated commercial centers and corridors (State Route 73), and industrial areas (The 123 and 75 interchange). The City should continue to provide infrastructure improvements to these areas to induce private development and work cooperatively with the Warren County Economic Development Department to ensure that County economic development plans are consistent with achieving Franklin's goals.

Quality of Life Index:

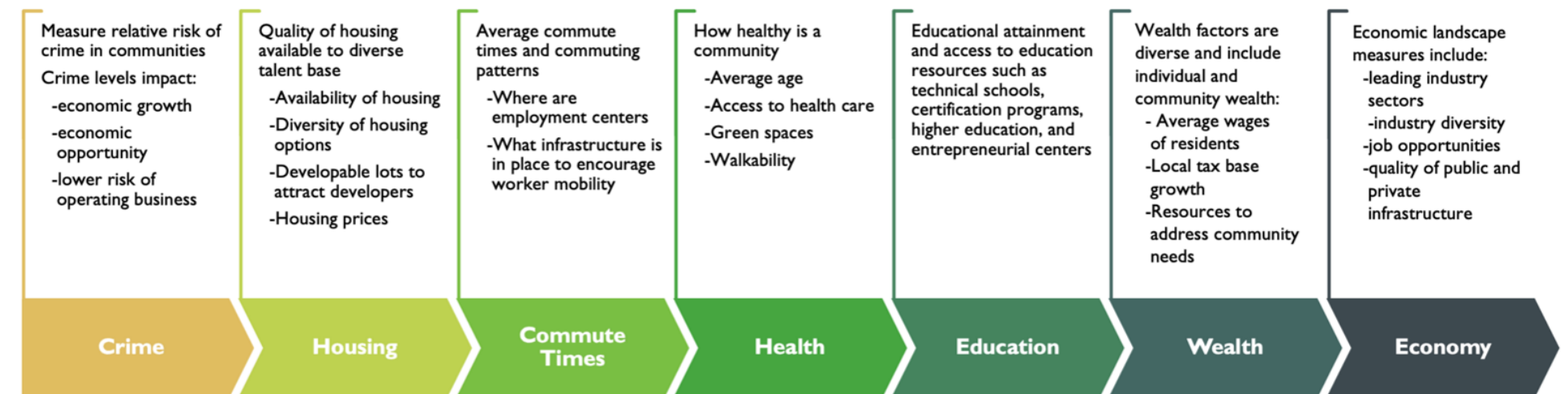
Finally, industrial land use need not detract from Franklin's efforts for livability. Many industrial businesses can coexist easily alongside commercial and residential neighborhoods. Modern processes, controls, buildings, and equipment can keep sounds, odors, and vibrations to a minimum. Appropriate design can provide attractive buffers as well as manage the traffic associated with industry. Furthermore, manufacturers should be encouraged to add retail space, which provides them with a convenient and interesting place to reach local consumers. Incorporating placemaking as an economic and workforce development priority will require innovative tactics and strong commitment, however, this will assist in the new world of economic development and business attraction. The City provides large amounts of space in business and industrial parks for new business and developers to invest in quality of life, and provide consumers with new retail space locations.

Shown below are quality of life indicators, identifying significant elements that influence the quality of life for residents and employers in the City .



City of Franklin aerial view

Quality of Life Indicators:



Source: The Montrose Group, LLC

Strategies:

This section outlines strategies that will build upon the City's many existing assets and help the City and its partners work toward economic prosperity for all residents. While many of the strategies in this section may seem small or incremental, combined they will make an impact on Franklin's economic landscape and poise the City and its residents for future success. To achieve these ends, it is critical that the City continue to support and participate in partnerships with the public; private sectors, Warren County Economic Development, and state and local partners to promote economic development.

Retention and expansion are standard goals in economic development, this means staying in regular contact with existing businesses, assessing their needs, and making every effort to accommodate those needs. In addition, it means anticipating the future trajectory of promising industry and businesses and being prepared to address their future site and infrastructure needs. The City of Franklin has done so successfully, thus its strong industrial and business base and the wide diversity of small to medium size business. The City should continue to use tax and development incentives and current policies to encourage revitalization, modernization, or rehabilitation of underused commercial properties and new industrial development. This current trajectory has worked for the City. In addition to current policies and programs the following is proposed:

1. Continue Dedication to Progress. Implementation and momentum is important. A successful, revitalized, redeveloped, and thriving Franklin needs to have leadership that is proactive and determined to move Franklin forward, no matter how small the steps. Progress may start with the small, simple, and short-term projects that can test concepts and build momentum for larger revitalization efforts.

2. Simplify the Path to Development. All levels of city government must simplify and expedite their processes, programs, and regulations to ease the path to investment and employment. The City can increase the value from the government as a partner by streamlining and enhancing permitting processes, simplifying zoning, and developing additional business incentives. The City should take a thoughtful approach to providing incentives, using the tools at its disposal to make sure incentivized projects are aligned with economic priorities.

3. Provide a Clear & Predictable Development Process. Simplifying the UDO and the review process so that they are easier to understand and to administer. This begins with a full review of the UDO and building permit review and approval processes to make sure that regulations are coordinated and clear. Periodically evaluate and improve development standards and permitting process to ensure that they are cost-effective, timely, and meet City needs and goals.



Franklin recent development, Middletown Bike Trail Connection

5. Produce a Quick-Reference UDO Handout. Make easy-to-understand zoning handouts available online. The UDO can be difficult to interpret. Providing a simple explanation of what is allowed and contact information for further questions can ease the burden of seeking development approval.



6. Develop Industrial District Design Guidelines. Be cognizant that industrial land can be a physical asset - not necessarily an eyesore - and design accordingly.

7. Build Upon the City's Livability & Create a Sense of Place. Quality of life matters to economic growth. Strengthen the City's livability through key development initiatives, neighborhood improvements to the safety, and environment, and by developing vibrant and attractive commercial nodes and corridor. In addition, quality of life can be improved by proactively developing amenities such as parks, streetscape improvements, bike lanes, and pedestrian-friendly streets, and by placing a strong emphasis on placemaking. The next generation identifies more with their communities than with their employers, which is why placemaking has become so essential. In addition, leaders need to constantly articulate a positive vision and spirit of optimism about what Franklin is becoming, building from assets, and promoting the City as a desirable place to live and work.

8. Support a High-Quality Franklin City School District. Recognize that the quality of Franklin City School District is related to economic development opportunities and the ability of the City to provide a positive employment base for its residents on an on-going basis. A high-quality Franklin City School District is an important component to building a skilled workforce. In addition to preparing local youth for success, a high-performing school district attracts young families and businesses that want to employ them and could therefore, help catalyze investment in the City. The City of Franklin should continue to work closely with The Franklin City School District to improve public education, support school programs, and build connections between the City and the school district. Strategies should include regular meetings with administrative staff and school board members or creating an education task force comprised of representatives from the education system, business community, and the City. Potential avenues of exploration might include improving science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curricula in K-12 schools or creating a mentorship program for high school students to teach them about different educational opportunities and professions and better prepare them to enter the workforce. The City could also offer internships.

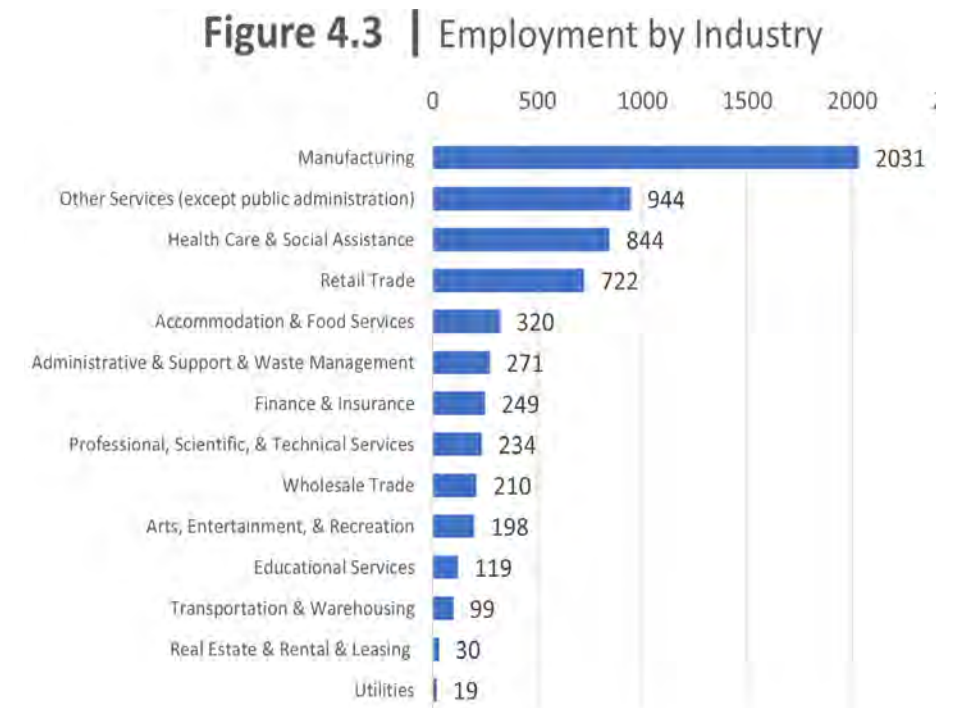
9. Increase Access to Advanced Education, Workforce Development, and Job Training Opportunities. Providing workers with an opportunity to educate themselves and train for more skilled jobs helps them compete for jobs now and in the future. A workforce with the right mix of skills and education is an important asset for attracting new industries. Offering residents, the opportunity to gain skills for a wider range of jobs can also reduce the need for residents to commute long distances to find appropriate employment, thereby improving quality of life for workers

and reducing traffic congestion. To tailor this goal to local conditions, City staff would need to know the education and skill levels of their local workforce and the skills that potential growth industries need. This analysis might result in goals tailored to different industries and types of advanced education and workforce training, including community and four-year colleges and job training programs that teach both job-specific technical skills and soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and time management. The Warren County Career Center and regional educational institutions and job training centers can be key partners in achieving these goals.

10. Support Small-Scale Manufacturing. The nature of manufacturing has changed in recent years. A new breed of small-scale manufacturers has grown up across the country, producing everything from food products to apparel, furniture, household goods, metal works, craft beer, and specialty items. These businesses tend to emphasize quality and design rather than mass production. Many craft-based manufacturers have developed national and even international markets for their products, which give them potential for growth and profitability. Support may be in the form of revised zoning that advances opportunities for home-based businesses or the development of a regional business incubator.

11. Establish a Food Focused Business Incubator. Create a food innovation district (site) or a community kitchen that serves as an incubator of restaurants.

12. Develop a 48-Hour City Guide & Itinerary. In cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, develop a 48-hour guide and itinerary that highlights the must do sites (museums, murals, restaurants), and experiences (the riverfront, trail, parks, entertainment, and festivals) and hotels in Franklin. Work with the Warren County Visitors Bureau to promote the guide.



Source: Census (2020)

13. Develop an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem. Create an environment where people want to do business and then identify and support entrepreneurs. Connect them to others in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

14. Promote Existing Businesses. Economic development often focuses on attracting new businesses to the neglect of retaining and growing existing ones. The City's approach must be balanced and give particular attention to supporting existing businesses.

15. Preserve Industrial Land & Attract New Development: To ensure that the Franklin economy can reasonably be sustained over the next 20 years, an adequate supply of industrial and commercial land must be available to attract new employers and to allow existing businesses to expand. Industrial land within the State Route 123 and State Route 73 interchange that is being used for industrial purposes or currently vacant and considered prime should be reserved for industrial use. This can be accomplished by discouraging uses incompatible with industry on land that is presently zoned industrial. Beyond the preservation of industrial land, the City should include strategies to enhance the City's ability to attract new industry including:

- Establish and maintain an inventory that identifies and contains information on available land that can be developed or redeveloped and that offers information on public/private development opportunities.
- Prepare and maintain a market analysis of available infill site, and identify available vacant or underutilized city land.
- Encourage aggregation of small industrial and commercial parcels to form larger sites.
- Align City investment with economic activity and opportunity.
- Amend the UDO (subdivision and minimum lot sizes) to suit the needs of modern industry and to encourage more efficient use of the limited industrial land resource, in harmony with the surrounding environment.
- Monitor how many acres of developable land are ready for redevelopment, and have been redeveloped.



Adesa, located on State Route 123



Commercial Contractor located on Shotwell Drive

16. Develop a Coordinated Approach to Economic Growth. Create and support a common strategy and coordinated private and public sector efforts around sustainable economic development. Coordinate with the Warren County Port Authority to improve the City's outreach to new businesses, its response to economic development leads, and support of existing businesses.

17. Real Estate Broker Outreach. Developing relationships with local and regional real estate brokers can help raise the City's visibility as a potential location for new businesses and development, as well as send a message that the City is business friendly. Assign a staff member to build relationships with local and regional real estate brokers and developers. The staff person could provide personalized, one-on-one assistance to brokers seeking to locate new tenants or developers considering a new project. The City could also host quarterly meetings or other events for the real estate community to alert them to opportunities for new activity in the City and to encourage investment. This strategy should be coordinated with the Realtor Ambassador strategy of Chapter 7.

18. Attract Commercial Lending. The Community Reinvestment Act of 1977 requires commercial lending institutions to invest, make loans, and provide community service in the communities they serve. Additionally, both Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac sponsor revitalization initiatives that assist local communities and community's institutions by providing financial incentives and assistance as well as technical assistance. The City should work to attract support from such commercial lending institutions and other organizations that can help match small businesses with lending partners and offers technical assistance in business formation and management.

- 19. Peer City Technical Assistance.** To help with economic development goals, work with a peer city in southwest Ohio to compare best practices in applying for grant money and developing programs that utilize state funding. Reaching out to another city's staff members could reveal how that city was successful in its application and lessons relevant to the local process.
- 20. Conduct a Market Analysis.** To become a marketable destination, job hub, and desirable place to live, Franklin must establish its role in the region by gaining a crucial understanding of its market reach. To achieve this, it is recommended that the City, in partnership with the Warren County Economic Development Department, gather comprehensive business and demographic data and conduct a thorough analysis of the real estate market to help determine its market competitiveness.
- 21. Local Business Purchasing.** Purchasing goods and services locally supports local businesses and workers. Help nearby institutions that have a vested interest in Franklin, such as the school district, and medical institutions, to acquire goods and services locally, such as food or laundry and janitorial services.
- 22. Designate Economic Development Staff Person.** An effective economic development strategy requires dedicated staff time to implement programs and build relationships. Assign one person to economic development activities, including operating programs, pursuing funding, and tracking results so the City can modify its activities and investments as business needs change. The designated staff person should also raise awareness of ED programs, services, and financial tools available and should understand how economic development financing programs and incentives are connected to supporting projects that generate desired

outcomes for the City. The designated staff person should also conduct outreach to owners of vacant or underused properties to determine why new or redevelopment is not occurring and how the City could encourage it. The staff person could connect the property owner with real estate brokers and developers, work with property owners to change permitted uses, or conduct a market study to help owners understand potential uses. The assigned economic development staff person should also have strong grant writing skills to aggressively pursue state and local grants.

- 23. Utilize TIFs & JEDDs.** The City has many different economic tools it can use to spur economic development and that could fill specific infrastructure funding gaps, these include Tax Increment Financing District, and a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD). The City should explore the possibility of a JEDD for non-residential development in select areas of Franklin Township and Consider TIF districts along SR 73 and around the two interchange areas. The development of a TIF district will require coordination with the School District.

Franklin has established four Community Reinvestment Tax Abatement Areas which provide real estate tax abatements in exchange for new construction and/or certain improvements. The City also offers other incentives including Rural Enterprise Zone Abatements.

- 24. Pursue State Funding.** Pursue state funding to install need infrastructure and to advance economic development goals. The City currently seeks various grant and funding opportunities, including OPWC and State Capital Budget Funds. The City should continue to pursue grant funds including the opportunities identified to the right.

STATE FUNDING


Ohio Enterprise Zone Program: Provides real and personal property tax exemptions to businesses making investments that are in conjunction with a project that includes job creation.

JobsOhio Revitalization Program: \$500,000 to \$5M in loans and \$1M in grants for redevelopment of sites that create or retain at least 20 jobs for public or private sector applicants for site demo, environmental remediation, building construction, infrastructure and environmental testing.

Ohio Brownfield Remediation Program: \$350M in Brownfield remediation funding awarded by the Ohio Department of Development.

Ohio Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program: \$150M in building demolition and site revitalization funding awarded by the Ohio Department of Development.

Ohio Water & Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Program: \$250M awarded by the Ohio Department of Development for helping Ohio communities make necessary water & wastewater infrastructure improvements.



Appropriate housing that meets residents' needs is an integral part of this Comprehensive Plan and directly impacts Franklin's future prosperity and its citizens' health and wellbeing. Issues regarding housing quality, a growing rental housing stock, and neighborhood appearance have been identified as the most significant. Strategies to address these issues are recommended and are intended to complement the current programs the City has implemented, including the Rental Inspection Program. In addition, the CAC, recognizing housing as an essential building block for a prosperous Franklin, has focused on strategies to assist with improving and diversifying the housing stock at the high end of the market, increasing home ownership rates, promoting residential infill development, upgrading streetscape and neighborhood infrastructure; and developing provisions for compatible land uses.



City of Franklin home within the Historic District

Background

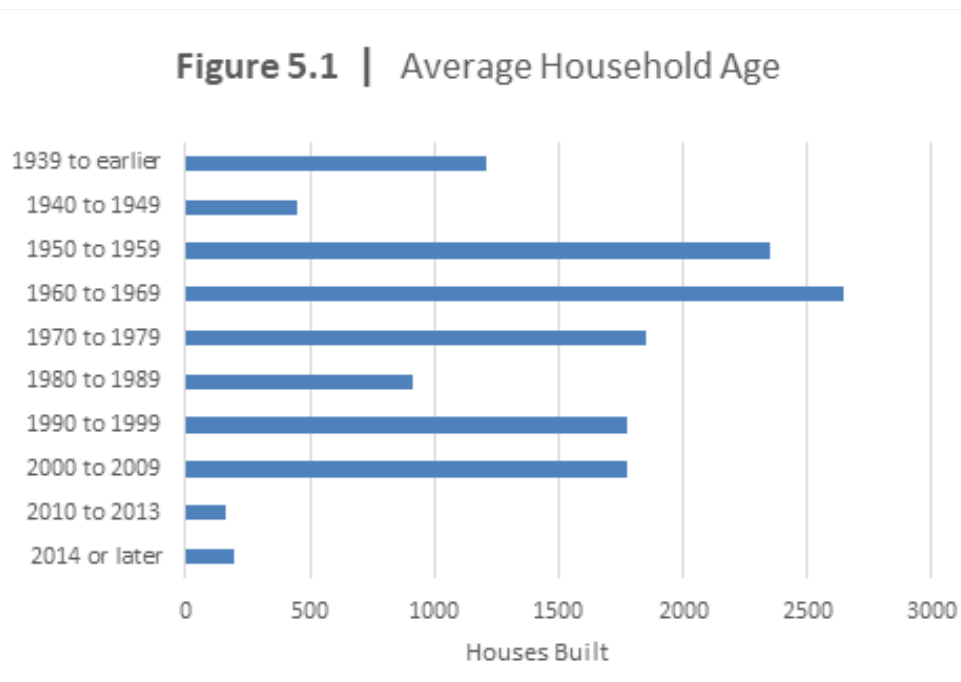
Overview:

The City recognizes the importance of neighborhoods and acknowledges neighborhoods as essential components to the physical and social character of Franklin. Franklin has an aging housing stock with over 63% percent of houses more than 60 years old.

with increased home ownership rates, improved quality of the housing stock, efficient residential land uses, a mix of housing types integrated with activity centers and diverse businesses (mixed-use), ensured safety, multiple modes of travel including vehicle, pedestrian, and bike, and improved efficiency of public utilities, facilities, and services.

This section reflects on what was heard during stakeholder interviews, CAC meetings, consultation with City staff, and residents' comments about many pressing issues affecting neighborhoods and the City - from the reduction in homeownership to the lack of diverse housing stock, from homelessness to the regulatory barriers impacting housing construction, and from an aging housing stock to concerns over the provision of housing for seniors. As vocalized very clearly during the public participation process, residents want revitalization of core neighborhoods to be a top priority. This reflects the desire to have quality housing choices that strengthen the fabric of all neighborhoods and in turn the City. Most importantly, improving the image of neighborhoods and the location of new multi-family housing, should be prioritized based on adjacency to existing City assets and strengths: commercial corridors, parks, the high school, the river, and stable residential blocks.

Currently, City policies such as the Rental Inspection Program, seeks to preserve and support neighborhood vibrancy while diligently enforcing property maintenance codes. Policies in this section continues these policies and expands upon them by addressing both the development standards for new mixed-use housing and the adaptation of existing housing to meet the needs and preferences of the current and expected residents of the City. These policies help to ensure that middle-income households continue to find opportunity for home ownership and continue to invest in housing.



This, coupled with areas of disinvestment, makes strong housing policies very important. There is an interest in upgrading the condition and quality of the existing housing stock in core neighborhoods and in creating attractive and livable neighborhoods - towards this goal programs are proposed to address neighborhood stability and improve neighborhood image. As the City grows and redevelops, the vision continues to be neighborhood revitalization and beautification, stability



Residential use in a core neighborhood



Residential use in a core neighborhood



In prioritizing housing, Franklin has an opportunity to improve people’s lives and advance a vision of prosperity.

Existing Conditions

Overview:

In 2020, the median household income in Franklin was \$48,018 and \$89,410 for Warren County. According to the U. S. Census Franklin’s 2020 median housing value for owner-occupied housing was \$108,400 and \$236,440 for Warren County. The City of Franklin when compared to Warren County has higher percentages of female-headed households, households with no spouse present, and non-family households, all of which are typically associated with higher poverty levels and lower levels of home ownership. The City’s poverty rate is 16.8% compared with a poverty rate of 5.2% for Warren County. The percentage of Franklin’s residents living below the poverty line grew from 14.3% percent to 16.8% percent since 2019 (City-Data).

An April 2022 analysis of the Greater Dayton Multiple Listing Service shows that single-family homes listed for sale in Franklin had list prices ranging from \$90,000 - \$230,00. The average list price for the core neighborhoods was \$110,000. These statistics indicate the need for higher end housing in Franklin. In addition, according to the American Community Survey (ACS), 2020 U.S. Census Bureau, 2,218 (43%) of the 5,071 occupied units in City were renter-occupied with a median gross rent of \$786 for a two-bedroom unit. These findings indicates that Franklin has a surplus of affordable rental housing. Thus, it is recommended that government supported housing programs should be encouraged to focus on maintaining and expanding home ownership and revitalizing existing homes versus building additional rental homes. Programs should be instituted to reverse this trend by providing residents the tools to become responsible homeowners.

With a low vacancy rate of 0.05% (288 vacant housing units of the 5,110 total housing units), the few numbers of housing available for sale (128) (realtor) and the decrease in days on the market for available homes, during April 2022, also supports the demand for more housing. This need should be met by providing a diverse range of housing units towards the higher end of the market.



Median Household Statistics

Selling Price by Sq. Ft: \$117.77

Number of Bedrooms: 3

Year Built: 1962

Days on Market: 4

Note -
In 2021, the median property sold higher than the listing price, at a difference of about 3.2%.

Source: Henkle Schueler

Unit Type	Married Family Couples Total Units=2,161	Male Family, No Spouse Total Units=287	Female Family, No Spouse Total Units=798	Non- Family Total Units=1,825
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	79%	21.6%	45.6%	39.4%
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	21%	78.4%	54.4%	60.6%

Source: 2020: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables

Age of Structures & Housing Conditions:

At least half of the housing units within the City of Franklin were built prior to 1966 and very few homes have been constructed since 2010. Major housing growth periods were from 1950 to 1969 when 35% of the City's existing housing stock was constructed (1,917 homes) and from 1990 to 2009 (1,439 homes). Overall, residential construction trends indicate limited growth since 2010. According to the City of Franklin Building Department data the number of residential units being built annually may be declining somewhat in recent years. Between 2010 and 2022, new residential building permit activity ranged between 91 in 2000, to 48 buildings in 2005. Every year, new housing construction permits have slowed down, with activity dropping to 2 permits in 2019 (City-Data).

Median Year Structure Built: 1966

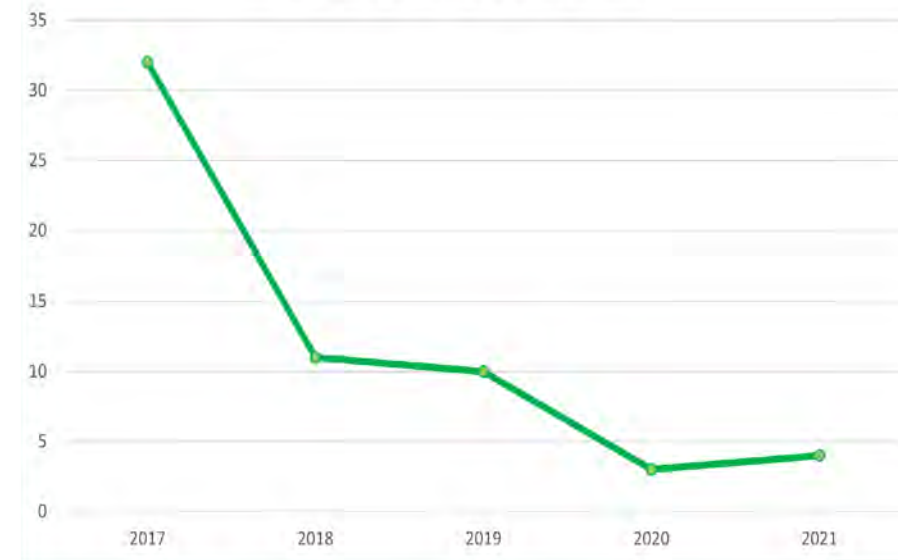
Figure 5.2 | Median Household Cost



Source: Henkle Schueler

With a high concentration of older housing stock and high poverty rates, housing conditions in Franklin's core neighborhoods have declined because of several factors including deferred maintenance. The city has had a Rental Inspection Program in place since 2021 (Dayton Daily News) and based on the increased calls for action from residents to address deferred maintenance of area homes, it is recommended that the city expand this program by developing a new landlord educational program and increase code enforcement.

Figure 5.3 | Days on Market



Source: Henkle Schueler

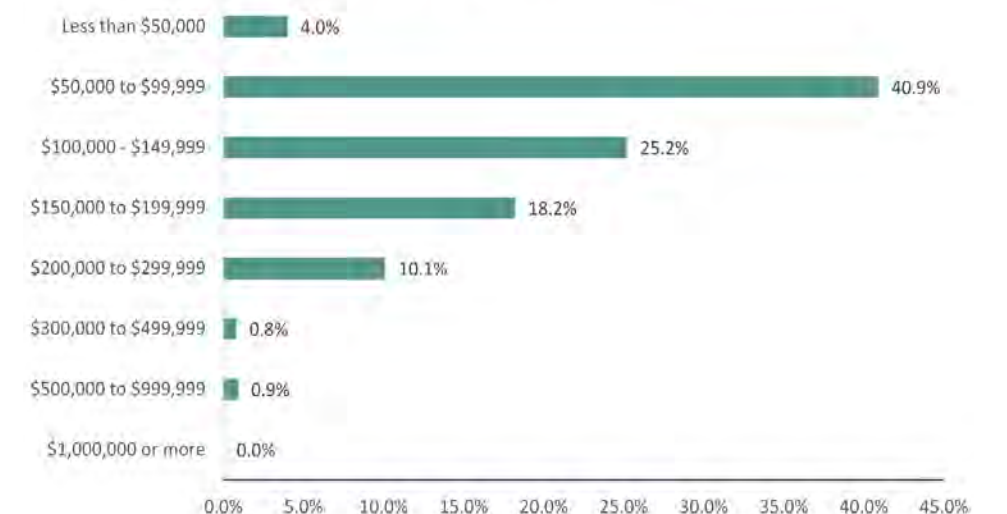


Number of Dwelling Units by Type:

Historically, Franklin neighborhoods were developed with a broad range of housing types to fulfill the needs of a diverse population seeking housing near areas of employment and activity. Over time, zoning has restricted housing choice, especially for townhouse, duplex, tri-plex, and other small multi-family buildings that are compatible with their neighborhood context. These forms of housing are attractive to seniors and young adults. To address this issue, larger areas of the City should permit "missing middle" housing types like townhouse, duplex, triplex, and small multi-family buildings.



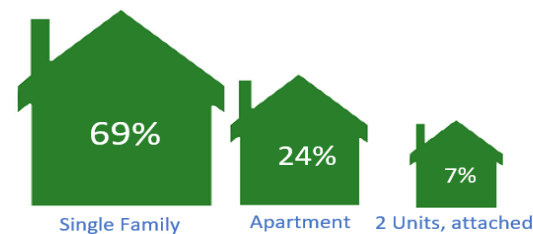
Figure 5.4 | Housing Values



Source: Henkle Schueler

Today, single-family homes are the predominant housing type in Franklin, with nearly 2 acres devoted to this specific land use. To truly diversify the City's housing stock there needs to be opportunities for different types of housing units, in particular, "the Missing Middle Housing" (townhouses, duplexes, fourplexes, live/work units and apartment houses). The housing stock should also offer various price ranges, targeted to the upper end of the market. In addition, emphasis should also be placed on offering housing to accommodate different life phases including first-time home buyers, young professionals, empty nesters, and seniors. The CAC has expressed a desire for residents to remain in the City as they age and raise families. Thus, a full array of lifecycle housing options should be allowed – notably multifamily living and preservation of older, existing homes and neighborhoods. This may take the form of compact development that integrates natural landscapes and well designed and useable open space, and that improving resident's mobility by connecting commercial, educational, and recreational amenities. The zoning code may need to be revised to facilitate the development of a more diverse housing stock in specific areas of the City.

City of Franklin Housing Choice



Nevertheless, today's residential development pressures and the City's location on the fringe of two metropolitan areas dictate continued single-family home construction. In addition, the continued growth of Franklin's employment base around manufacturing and distribution will continue to support a need for single-family workforce housing to support existing businesses that keeps employees and families living within the City.



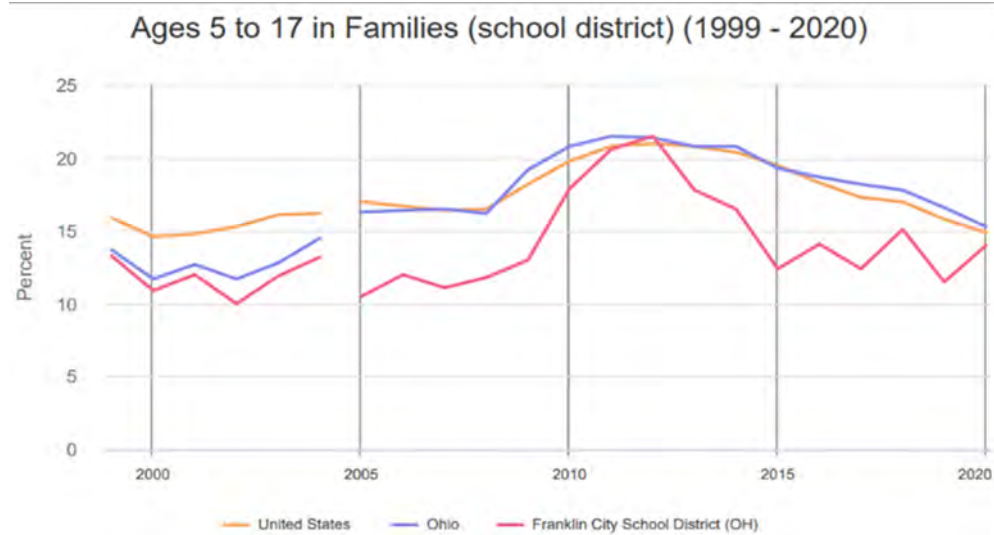
Downtown residential property

Neighborhood Image:

There is a distinct gap between the reality and the perception that residents have of Franklin and its neighborhoods. Generally, the image of Franklin neighborhoods is associated with its core neighborhoods and not to its newer and stable neighborhoods. As noted, the City is seen as undesirable, with too much crime and with an overwhelming number of houses that lack basic maintenance and repairs. Residents point to the decline of neighborhood access to healthy food and to an increase in drugs, crime, homelessness, and blight. Additionally, stakeholders are concerned that continued neighborhood decline will lead to modest-income homeowners losing home equity due to declining prices, housing abandonment, and an increase in crime. There is also a perception that Franklin is improving, yet slowly. These lingering negative perceptions about the City, if not addressed, can dampen Franklin's revitalization efforts. The CAC felt that public perceptions about the quality of life in the City's neighborhood impact both residents, businesses, and visitors. The highly visible core neighborhoods with higher perceptions of crime rates and vacancy rates than the remainder of the City are all factors that are considered by business owners when they decide where to locate. Businesses want to locate in areas where their employees and customers feel safe and welcome.

The goal is to improve the image, aesthetics, and condition of housing in Franklin's core neighborhoods while also addressing access to services (e.g., health, education, and job training programs), leverage existing institutions, networks, and capital, and engage residents. Implementation needs to take a multi-pronged approach, incentivizing real estate development projects to marshal additional resources, attract private investment, and catalyze other physical asset improvements and programming that help increase opportunities for neighborhood residents.

Figure 5.5 | Poverty Rates within Franklin SD



While some of Franklin’s core neighborhoods have suffered over years of economic and population change, and disinvestment, assets including location, access to services and parks, diversity of housing stock, and historic district designation are key to revitalization of these neighborhoods. Nevertheless, the revitalizing of Franklin’s core neighborhoods is a challenging endeavor that requires a combination of strong leadership, coordination among agencies, technical knowhow, unique programs, and multiple funding sources. Revitalization should be addressed in a comprehensive way because neighborhoods work holistically, and it is important to understand how the policies and strategies of other chapters of this comprehensive plan will impact neighborhoods. For example, while, a stable residential neighborhood is vital to the City’s efforts of commercial revitalization and development, the corollary principle also holds true: thriving commercial districts are attractive places for adjacent housing development and reinvestment in existing housing (State Route 73 commercial corridor could potentially provide residents with convenient access to a wide variety of goods and services).



Residential use in a core neighborhood



Residential use in a core neighborhood

Newly constructed or infill housing is more likely to attract homebuyers if the neighborhood is served by a nearby commercial district to provide residents with necessary goods and services, there are quality public schools district, and the crime rate is low. For improvements to the neighborhood to be sustained over time, however, the development will need to be undertaken in context with many other neighborhood improvement efforts.

Convenient access to schools, the library, parks, health centers, emergency services, and commercial nodes is a desirable feature for the revitalization of Franklin’s neighborhoods.



Issues regarding housing quality, a growing rental housing stock, and neighborhood appearance are most significant within Franklin’s core neighborhoods.

Aging in Place:

Franklin’s population greater than 65 years is expected to increase by 6% between 2022 and 2040 and demand for senior housing is growing. An increasing number of older residents are looking for housing options that will enable them to remain in Franklin and Franklin Township as they age. Residents have stated a need for senior friendly housing units and the CAC recognizes the importance of policies that allow senior residents to live with dignity, and age in place. Housing that accommodates the physical needs of seniors and proximity to basic goods, services, and transit is needed as an alternative to traditional housing. The City should assess opportunities to develop quality senior friendly housing in areas adjacent to commercial and business centers and healthcare facilities. These areas provide seniors with close access to transit, shopping, health care, and other day to day needs. As senior friendly housing is developed, special attention should be given to pedestrian infrastructure that includes ADA accessibility, high visibility crosswalks, and crosswalk signal timing that accommodates seniors. In addition to housing needs, seniors benefit from focused services, such as the services provided by the Deardoff Senior Center, that cater to their direct needs. The Deardoff Senior Center helps to maintain the social fabric of the City for seniors and provides education, recreational and wellness programs along with free transportation. The City should encourage the coordination of programming that assists with housing rehabilitation and upkeep, and other programs specific to the needs of the City’s aging population.

Core Neighborhoods: This category of neighborhoods is typically characterized by a weak housing real estate market, a decline in population, high poverty rates, high crime rates, and vacant housing and land.

Beyond seniors, persons with disabilities often face daily obstacles that can become insurmountable because of difficulties in easily locating or accessing appropriate housing and services. The difficulties that come with living with a physical or sensory disability may include locating an accessible housing unit. Both seniors and residents with disabilities could benefit from the provision of housing that meets visitability standards.

The City should peruse AARP Livable & Age-Friendly Communities designation. This may be done with funding from the DMH-Dayton Fund at The Dayton Foundation and the MVRPC Institute for Livable & Equitable Communities (available for MVRPC member organizations including the City of Franklin).



Residential use in a core neighborhood

Grocery Store:

Most residents desire a full-line grocery store – the traditional grocery stores with center aisles of packaged goods and specialty departments including produce, bakery, deli, dairy, and meat and seafood. These stores have always operated on thin margins (often one or two percent) even in the best markets. The changing competitive landscape makes it even more difficult to serve lower-income markets. A full-line grocery’s profitability is based primarily on sales within their specialty departments, where the products they stock tend to have higher price points but risk of loss through spoilage. In areas where most customers are low income, there can be weak demand for meats, vegetables, and other fresh items that often have a higher cost than other goods. Grocery stores can easily find itself in a catch-22 situation. If they do stock them, they run the risk of having slow sales and un-acceptably high losses. If they choose not to carry these items, they risk losing customers who will travel to shop stores with better selection.

In the short term, the difficulty of finding a profitable strategy may keep full-line grocers from opening stores in Franklin. Full-line grocery stores are also now facing growing problems even in better markets. Competition from new formats is taking market share from full-line grocers. Superstores and warehouse stores have captured sales with limited-assortment groceries (such as Aldi). Fresh format groceries (such as Dorothy Lane, Whole Foods, or Fresh Market), convenience stores, dollar stores, and pharmacies are all taking business that once belonged to grocery stores.



In this environment, most traditional grocery chains are reducing their store counts, more so than considering new locations. Successful full-service grocery stores depend on successful residential neighborhoods. It is difficult to attract a grocery store in the current environment, however, the City is working on reversing this environment, so the environment is right to attract a grocery store. Where residential growth and revitalization is occurring, a grocery store is primed to follow. In the interim, other access to healthy food should be investigated and incentivized. In the short term, access to food may manifest in the form of an enhanced Farmer’s Market or a mix of locally owned and operated vendors, especially specialty food stores (selling baked goods, meats) for example, Zink Meat Market.



Zink Meat Market



Residential use in the historic district

Neighborhood Connectivity:

Franklin’s core neighborhoods have a high level of connectivity with a compact, regular roadway network, however, the City’s newer subdivisions often include more organic layouts with cut-de-sacs and fewer access points to the major street network. This not only limits vehicular connectivity, but also safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between adjacent neighborhoods. As new subdivisions come online, the City should discourage residential developments with limited connectivity. The City should work with developers and builders to integrate trails within and among neighborhoods.



Historic District:

The Mackinaw Historic District is a historic residential area located on the western side of the Great Miami River that features homes built between 1825 and 1925 spanning numerous architectural styles, including Queen Anne and other Victorian styles. The most notable building is the Harding House (now Harding Museum), a Colonial Revival mansion in the heart of the district. The historic district was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 and is within the City’s Historic Overlay District that promotes development that is in character with the existing scale and architectural style. The objective is to protect the district from the loss of architecturally or historically important buildings and protect against additions to buildings that would lessen their architectural importance. The Historic Overlay District ensures that the height, scale, and setbacks of new construction respect the built form of existing structures.

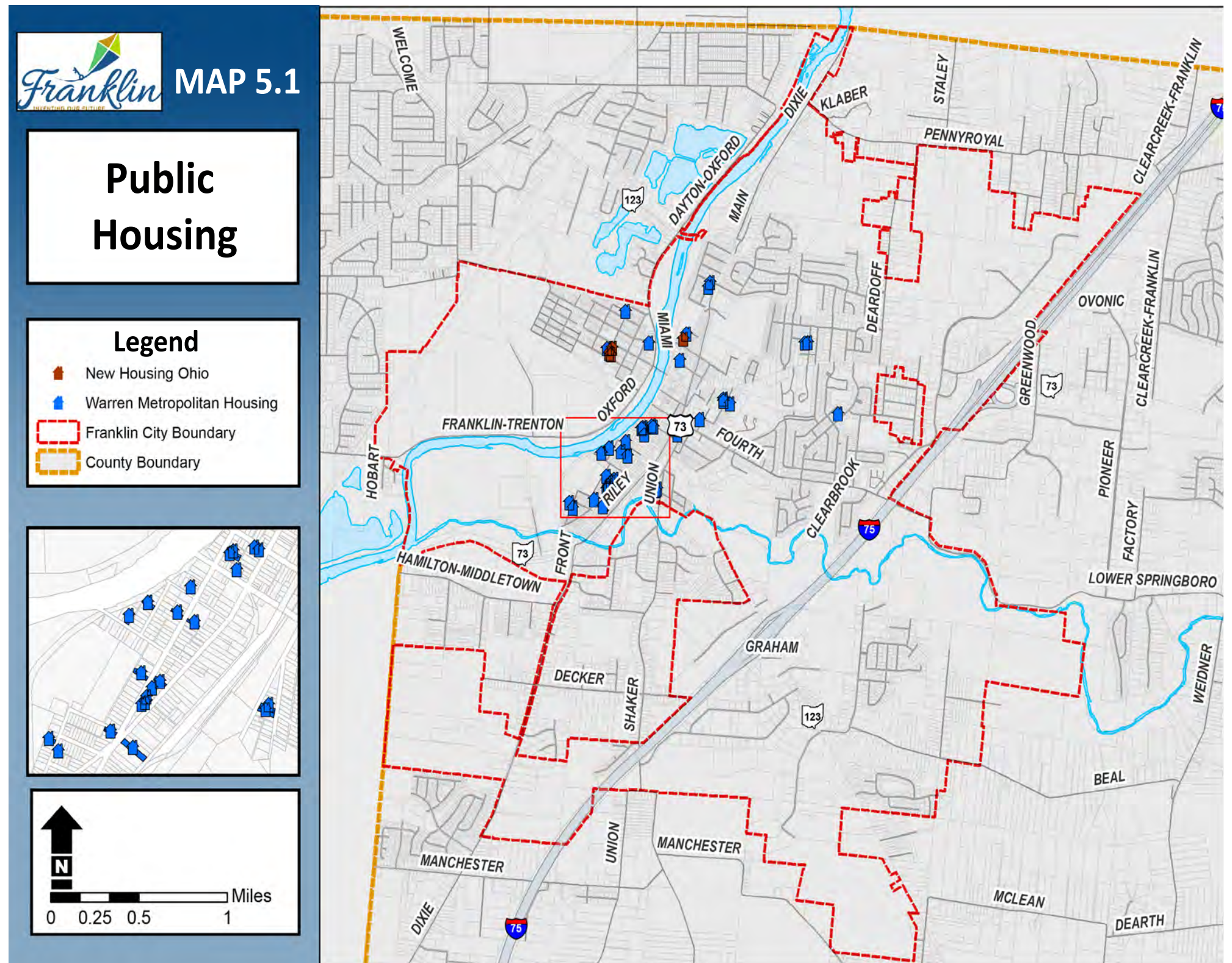


Residential use in the historic district

Public Housing:

The mission of the Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority (WMHA) is to provide safe, sanitary, decent, and affordable housing to low-income families, while at the same time providing its families the opportunity to grow socially, economically, and financially. Achieving this vision requires maintenance of all public housing units in a state of decent quality including living interiors and building systems as well as properly maintained building exteriors to ensure the properties are aesthetically pleasing and an asset to the surrounding neighborhood. It also requires adequate resources to provide supportive services to residents to help them return to a state of self-sufficiency. WMHA aims to improve quality of life and economic vitality by implementing measures that disperse poverty by bringing higher income public housing households into lower income developments, and by promoting self-sufficiency and asset development for families and individuals.

More generally, long term maintenance needs for public housing include general maintenance and rehabilitation of the grounds, building exteriors, building systems, and living space interiors. A well maintained and aesthetically pleasing public housing will have a positive psychological effect on residents and will ensure a more positive impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. Improvements that promote a well maintained and aesthetically pleasing public housing, including all strategies found in WMHA's 5-year plan, are also indicative of WMHA's long term public housing needs.



Source: Warren County Auditor's Office

Homelessness:

Warren County is home to three providers of services to the homeless: Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), New Housing Ohio (NHO), and the Abuse and Rape Crisis Shelter (ARCS). These organizations coordinate with out-of-county service providers, particularly Hope House in Butler County (Middletown). These service providers offer services for the homeless that complement (and do not duplicate) the services provided by mental health and substance abuse systems. The goal is to ensure there is coordination and collaboration among these systems so that homeless persons can easily access mainstream resources that will assist them in attaining stable employment, housing, and a state of self-sufficiency. IHN, NHO, and ARCS all require their consumers to participate in either: skill building classes, to actively seek employment, to be employed, and/or to be treated for AOD addictions (if applicable). All families under care are referred to and encouraged to participate as appropriate with the following agencies: Veterans' Administration (if they are a vet), Warren County Department of Job and Family Services, The Warren County Health Department, WIC, the Woman's Center, WIA, Aspire, Solutions, Talbert House (prior drug concerns), the Warren County One Stop, Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority, and others not listed.

The City should use the Warren County Coalition's Point-in-Time Survey to assess the extent and trends of homelessness in Franklin. The past Point-in-Time Survey indicated that most homeless individuals in Warren County, were low income but only temporarily homeless. Chronically homeless individuals usually suffered from underlying issues related to mental health or an alcohol or drug addiction. The most significant needs reported are for building basic job skills, access to employment opportunities, affordable and accessible transportation, and childcare services. Data shown is from the US Census and ESRI.

Public Housing Condition — Public Housing Development & Scattered Site Units

Location	Public Housing Development	Average Inspection Score
City of Franklin	Franklin Rehab	88
	Franklin Ridge	74
	Harding House	90
	Franklin Commons	93
	Franklin Court	82
	Sherman Glen	87

Location	Property Name	# of Units	Unit Type	# of Bedrooms	# of Units Accessible	Condition	Maintenance/Rehabilitation Need
City of Franklin	Scattered sites	46	22 duplexes; 8 single-family	Assortment of 1,2-, & 3-bedroom units	0	Good	HVAC

Warren County Consolidated Plan Priorities

- Home Repairs, Home Modifications, Home Weatherization & Homebuyer Counseling.
- Housing for special needs groups.
- Supportive Services for the Homeless.
- Public Facility & Infrastructure Improvements.
- Maintenance & Rehabilitation of Public Housing.



Median Household Income
\$54,834

Household Size
2.46

Poverty Rate
16.8%

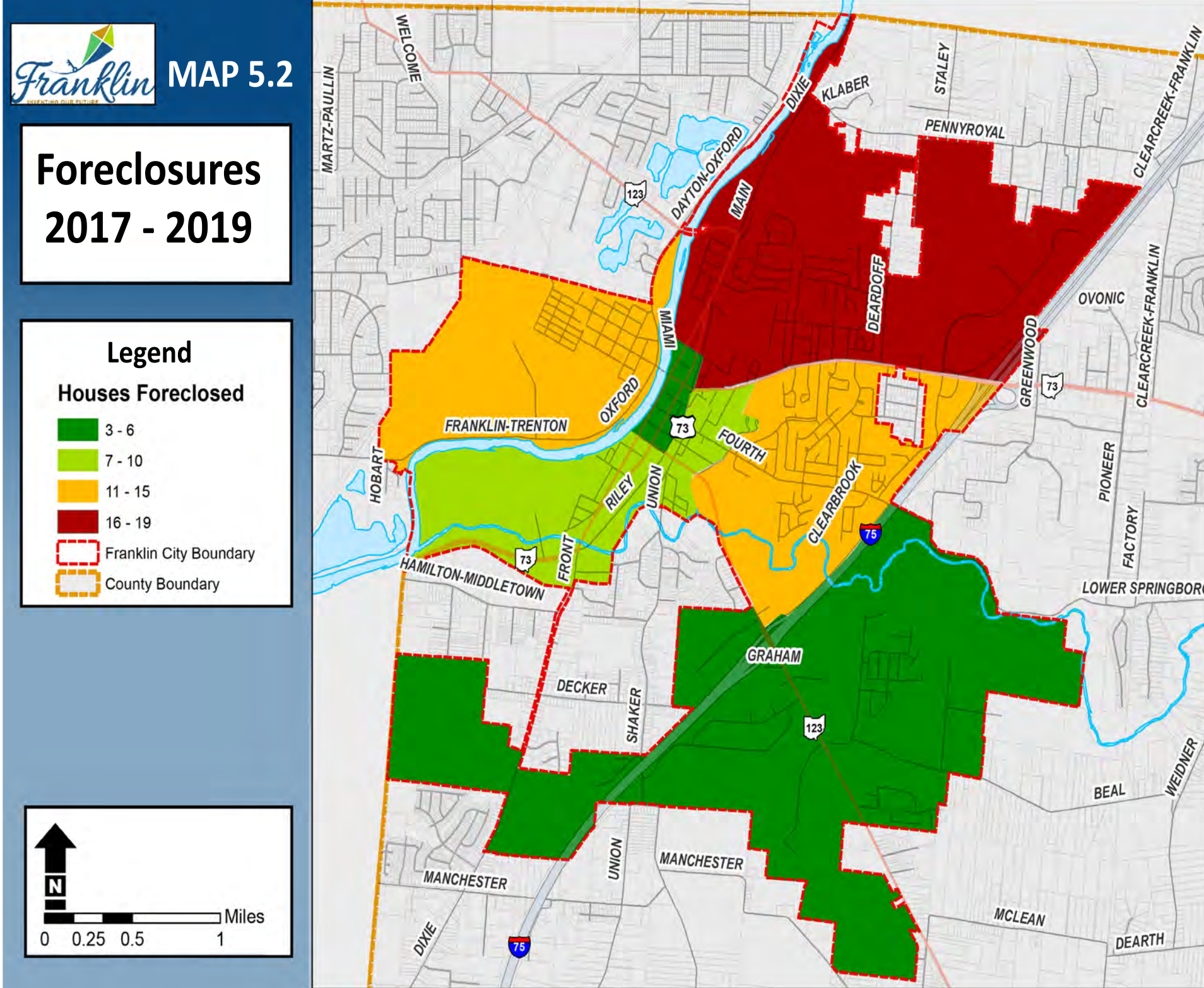
Vacancy Rate
0.05%

Median Year Structure Built
1962

Median Housing Value
\$108,400

Percent Owner Occupied
56.3%

Median Gross Rent
\$797



Foreclosures:

The City of Franklin Housing Market has experienced higher levels of foreclosures throughout the City, with ranging amounts based on location. As shown in Map 5.2, downtown and area south of Interstate 75 had the lowest range of foreclosed homes; while the highest ranged districts of foreclosed homes in the City existed along the Great Miami Riverway, specifically north along Main Street and Dixie Highway. The greatest number of foreclosures were in more non-core residential areas.



In total, between 2017 to 2019, there was a total of 92 foreclosures throughout the entire city. Within these, 6 of these properties foreclosed twice within this timeframe.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goals & Objectives:

The main goal is to create the conditions that will spur improvement of homes and create choice neighborhoods. As a result, the City, its neighborhoods, and the homes within those neighborhoods will become desirable and attractive in the Miami Valley housing market. The benefits of a strong housing market will enhance the City's image and will restore Franklin as a truly exciting city. To this end, one of the highest priority recommendations from the CAC is stabilization of the City's housing stock, offer a variety of housing options for people in all life phases, and facilitation of home ownership. Increasing homeownership will aid Franklin in creating a stable and attractive city. This goal is based on the belief that quality housing and homeownership promotes family stability, creates positive environments for children, and contributes to success in the job market. In addition, the goal is to also ensure that residents have access to a range of city amenities, such as health care and supportive services, commercial services, quality schools, parks and recreational facilities, civic amenities, grocery stores, and entertainment, in short, enabling residents to be a part of a complete city.

The core and newer neighborhoods of Franklin are considerably different and pose a new set of challenges. The newer neighborhoods of Franklin are mainly developed with much of its housing stock geared towards ownership of single family, detached homes and were developed in the form of planned subdivisions, characterized by larger lots and limited points of access to adjacent neighborhoods and commercial districts. As with the core neighborhoods, the quality of these single-family neighborhoods should be maintained through active code enforcement, property maintenance, and context-sensitive infill development and reinvestment.



Stable, thriving, & connected neighborhoods are essential to a safe, economically strong, and resilient Franklin. As we Reinvent Franklin, investing in housing and neighborhood is imperative to achieving the progress we envision for our families and the City.

The newer neighborhoods are stable and require less public investment and are not the primary focus of this chapter. However, the objective for these stable neighborhoods is to preserve, protect, and enhance them by providing sensitive transitions between these and new commercial, industrial, or multi-family development. This is achieved by requiring new development to respect and respond to the existing physical characteristics that contribute to the overall character and livability of these neighborhoods. In addition, where possible and appropriate, new pedestrian infrastructure and roadway extensions should be installed to improve connections to nearby community facilities and commercial areas and decrease resident reliance on automobiles for making short trips.

While infill development and issues associated with the core neighborhoods should be a priority, there will be ample opportunity for residential development within Franklin's outer areas over the life of the Comprehensive Plan. Residential development within these areas should predominantly consist of single-family neighborhoods with a complement of strategically located multi-family housing. These neighborhoods should have access to commercial districts with an emphasis on access to retail, services, and employment opportunities. The use of Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) principles should be encouraged throughout Franklin's outer growth areas. In areas where significant natural areas and sensitive environmental features such as wetlands are present, Low Impact Design (LID) principles should be used to maintain traditional neighborhood densities while preserving areas of open space.

The core neighborhoods that impact the City's image, safety, and implementation of its vision is where the policy priority belongs. The goal is also to enhance the well-being of the families and children that live within these core neighborhoods. To accomplish such a comprehensive and ambitious goal will require partnership between the City, Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority, Warren County Housing Coalition, private sector developers, individual homeowners, neighborhood leaders, and banks.

The City offers the services and the expertise of all the City departments including zoning, code enforcement, and public works and should establish clear funding priorities in support of neighborhood improvements. Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority and Warren County Housing Coalition offers decades of expertise in dealing with housing and neighborhood issues and have an enviable record of accomplishments. The private sector offers expertise, entrepreneurial skills, and funds. Property owners, homebuilders and developers can become directly involved in the redevelopment process by investing in the rehabilitation or construction of homes. Banks and financial institutions can provide non-governmental sources of funding to the process, possible through the Community Reinvestment Act. These programs are interdependent and should be addressed at the same time.

We must - in large and small ways - shift our mindsets and adjust protocols to enact this vision.



Public Sentiment

Housing Choices: Provide opportunities for a full range of housing types, densities, and locations, to provide a strong customer base sustaining the economic vitality of Franklin's commercial land uses. The types, densities, and location of housing should be determined by the FLUM.

Land Use Diversity: A mix of land uses meeting the diverse needs of Franklin's residents and businesses, fostering improved housing conditions, offering a variety of employment and recreation opportunities.

Senior Housing: Encourage the development of senior housing that has access to commercial services, health care facilities, community facilities, and public transit.

Healthy Foods: Promote the development of uses providing healthy and locally grown food choices for Franklin's residents (i.e., community gardens, farmers markets and specialty food stores).

Development that is Compatible: Require that development demonstrates a contextual relationship with neighboring structures and sites addressing such elements as building scale, massing, orientation, setbacks, buffering, the arrangement of shared and private open spaces, visibility, privacy, automobile and truck access, impacts of noise and lighting, landscape quality, infrastructure, and aesthetics.

Transitions in Scale: Require that the scale and massing of new development in higher-density centers and corridors provide appropriate transitions in building height and bulk and are sensitive to the physical and visual character of adjoining lower-density neighborhoods.

Strategies:

Single-family housing will remain in high demand as the City grows. However, the cost burden resulting from rising home values and sales prices plus changing community demographics is driving the need for greater housing variety. Housing needs to include diverse owner-occupied units at varying price points along with the amenities necessary to satisfy the needs of residents in different stages of life and earning potential. The City can provide those options through new construction and preservation of older, existing homes and core neighborhoods. As a complement to the single-family homes of the newer neighborhoods, a mix of single-family attached and multi-family development (fourplexes, apartment houses, mixed-use development) is appropriate within the core neighborhoods, however development should be limited in scale and concentrated in areas with proximity to amenities such as shopping, and assets like the Great Miami River.

Opportunity for Infill

Some of Franklin's neighborhoods fared better than others during the past decade of population loss and disinvestment, those that currently have vacancy and underutilized property offer great opportunities for infill development.

Much of the City's residential identity is defined by its core neighborhoods. The core neighborhoods include the City's oldest and most varied housing stock but are also areas that are in the most need of reinvestment. These neighborhoods primarily consist of small lot single-family detached homes. Within these neighborhoods with low home ownership rates and disinvestment, it may be difficult for private developers to generate adequate returns on investment to justify the investment risk. Development within these areas may require public incentives and investment to make a project attractive. If developers are willing to take the risk of an infill development project, they often face difficulty securing financing because lenders see these projects as risky. To rebuild stable neighborhoods, Franklin requires strong tools, below are short- and long-term strategies focused on revitalization and supporting stable and strong neighborhoods.

This section describes strategies for improving the image, quality, and diversity of housing within the City's Core neighborhoods, increasing homeownership, and strengthening neighborhood physical and civic infrastructure, providing connections between neighborhoods and commercial nodes and public services and facilities, how to expand access to neighborhood parks and open space, and a framework for implementing priority projects. These strategies will be implemented incrementally over the 20-year time frame of Reinvent Franklin. All strategies are designed for the efficient use of limited resources, reducing costs, and strengthening neighborhoods to improve the City's economic and physical health.



In addition to encouraging reinvestment in the existing housing stock, the City should focus on improving quality of life within the core neighborhoods including enhanced code enforcement, pedestrian connectivity and safety, and neighborhood beautification.



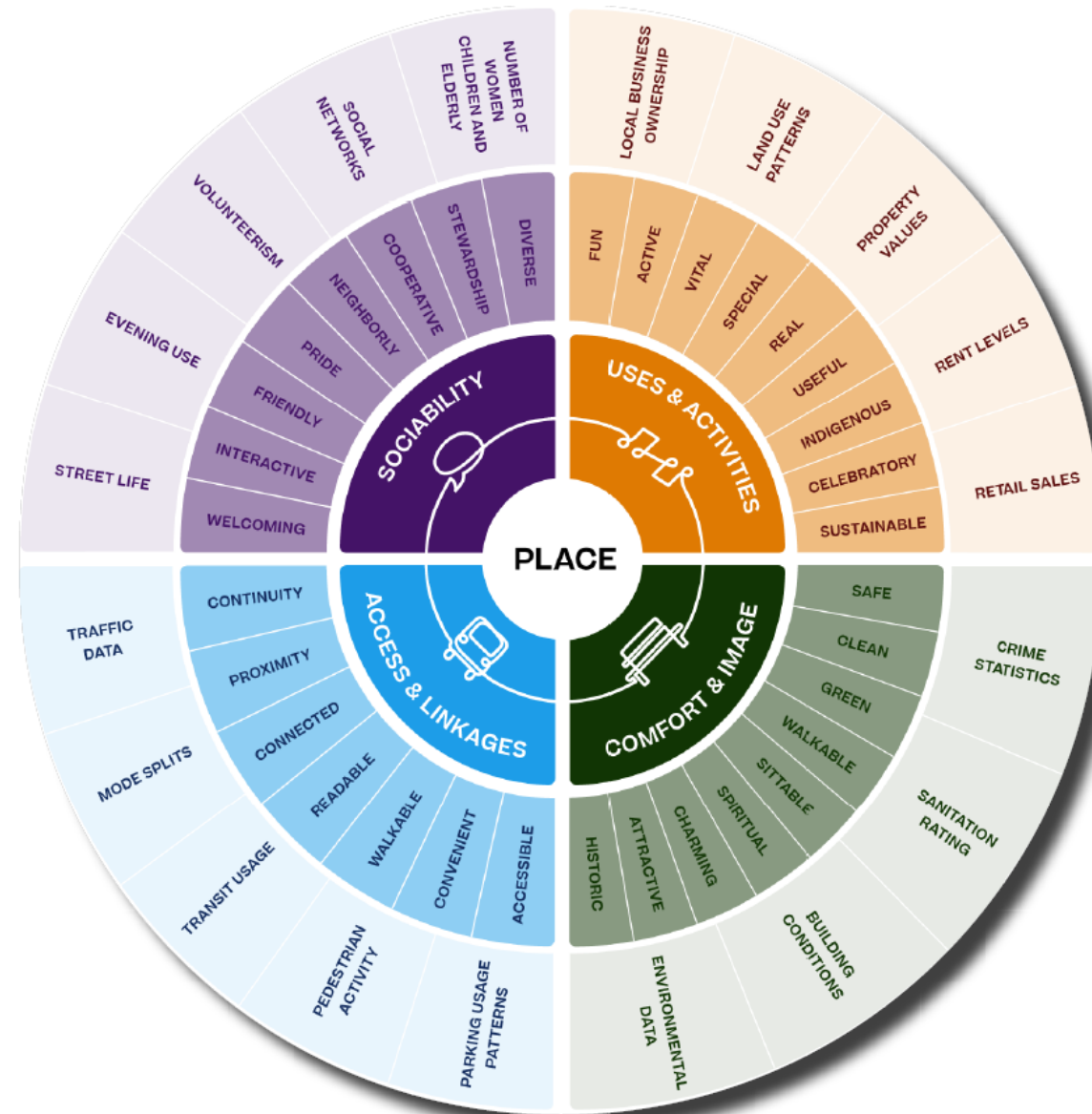
Residential use in the historic district, and core neighborhoods

Implementation Approach

Franklin’s neighborhood revitalization needs have been years in the making. Progress to strengthen the social fabric and economic competitiveness of the City- demands big thinking and bold action. That means a major commitment to bring greater awareness of the housing challenges and to create the necessary tools and resources to make meaningful headway. Efforts should be targeted to specific neighborhoods that are highly visible, have convenient access to community and civic services or are near areas of strengths (riverfront area). Efforts should be targeted towards a place, where resources are limited, and targeting is necessary. The areas of a neighborhood selected will need to be large enough that improving it will affect market values, but not so large that impact is lost in a larger area of decline. In addition, the following guidelines are offered:

1. The neighborhood improvement should be multidimensional. There are many players: city government departments, real estate developers, neighborhood leaders, lenders, social service providers, pastors, business owners, school principals and teachers, and many others. The orchestrator needs to get these players working in harmony, both in content and timing.
2. Neighborhood strategies should be based and prioritized on improving those elements of the neighborhood that are most visible and most likely to hold existing residents, businesses, institutions, and to attract homeowners. A sound understanding of the marketability of the neighborhood is key. The strategies should focus on investment psychology, which means it must produce visible results in timely fashion. Changes must be obvious, even if they are small and momentum is essential - uninterrupted momentum is crucial and should build credibility about the process and hope for change.

What Makes a Great Place?



What Does Success Look Like?

In creating a vision for the future of Franklin’s neighborhoods the CAC and stakeholders considered what a revitalized neighborhood might look like:

- A place where neighbors & visitors feel safe.
- Greater number of homeowners.
- Greater diversity of housing types.
- Restored & well-maintained homes.
- Compatible infilled homes.
- Beautiful and preserved historic homes.
- Easy walks to commercial services, schools, parks, civic amenities, and a mix of uses.
- Trees, flowers, & beautiful streetscape.
- Convenient access to bike & pedestrian facilities.
- Upgraded public infrastructure.
- A place to show visitors what Franklin is really like.



3. The improvements should work from whatever strengths that can be found in the core neighborhoods. Improvements should address both housing and infrastructure needs to ensure that neither form of demand eclipses the other. Both technical resources and public and private investments should be redirected to core neighborhoods. To choose core neighborhoods potential residents must perceive attractive compensating qualities. For example, distinctive neighborhood character, cost, safety, attractive streetscapes, inviting gathering places and open spaces, and proximity to a variety of public services and cultural social, recreational, and entertainment opportunities can enhance their quality of life.
4. Goals and resources need to be aligned.
5. Improving the appearance of neighborhoods is a precondition to the effort to revitalize Franklin. With exceptions in more affluent and new neighborhoods, the value, and the desirability of an individual property are unlikely to increase unless the neighborhood in which that property is located is also improved. The City should focus resources to make Franklin's housing stock more attractive-rehabilitated and updated to add modern conveniences and amenities that support today's lifestyles.
6. Neighborhood revitalization is good for business. Businesses want to be adjacent to neighborhoods where they will be able to generate a return on their initial investment and remain profitable. When the residential community supports them by purchasing their goods and services, businesses become profitable. If the residential community is attractive and vital, residents are more likely to stay and invest their time, money, and resources in the neighborhood and its businesses. A solid customer basis ensures long-term profitability.



Franklin Sidewalk / Bike Route



Franklin Sidewalk / Bike Route

Strategies:

1. **Create a Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force.** A range of City and County departments, nonprofit organizations, and private companies are already committed to addressing housing needs in Warren County. However, a cohesive strategy is necessary to coordinate these efforts. Members should include representatives from various government departments involved in implementing housing and community development activities. The Task Force should include residents and institutions within Franklin's core neighborhoods that could play a meaningful role in setting priorities and assisting with issue identification and that have a clear vision for core neighborhoods.

The objective of the Task Force is to provide a structured forum to examine and agree on principles, strategies, policies, programmatic and zoning code changes that guide Franklin's housing revitalization. The Task Force should identify redevelopment areas and conservation areas. The focus for redevelopment areas is blight removal and new development, typically accomplished through acquisition, demolition, and new construction. The focus of conservation areas is rehabilitation, facilitated by home improvement loans and grants and home buyer assistance. The Task Force should also focus on issues affecting the quality of life including rental conversions, neighborhood safety, access to parks and open space, multi-modal mobility, and many other factors. In addition to discussing a wide array of topics impacting quality of life, the Revitalization Task Force should be used to vet neighborhood revitalization strategies/projects and to verify the status and efficacy of initiatives and recommend modifications accordingly. The Task Force work should include a Citywide Housing Market Study.

2. **Develop Homeowners.** Work with bankers, real estate professionals, non-profit housing providers, counseling agencies, and developers to identify significant market niches, and to develop a pipeline of purchase ready buyers.
3. **Increase Home Ownership.** Nurture partnerships with New Housing Ohio and Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority to identify how the City may assist in their efforts to address housing conditions, meet relevant building and zoning code standards, equip new buyers to purchase and maintain their home, and implement designs that reflect modern housing standards and the use of building materials that reflect stability and durability. The City should also encourage these agencies to aggressively apply these programs to Franklin residents - strengthen programs that address life skills, credit counseling, and sponsoring financial literacy classes. The City should establish a partnership with the Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority to facilitate reinvestment in core neighborhoods. The housing authority provides several deferred loan programs targeted at home repair and homeownership assistance.
4. **Reduce Concentrations of Poverty.** Encourage public assistance housing agencies and developers utilizing housing tax credits, to consider existing poverty levels when siting new affordable housing developments. Encourage these providers to shift public investments towards housing reuse and rehabilitation in core neighborhoods. Entities such as Warren Metropolitan Housing should be assisted with housing rehabilitation versus the construction of new housing. Assist the providers with housing preservation and rehabilitation incentive programs as well as a program to retrofit housing to improve energy efficiency.

Public Subsidized Housing Units:

Public subsidized housing refers to housing units that were constructed through public subsidy as well as households which utilize the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8). A benefit of the housing voucher program is it gives recipients greater freedom of housing choice. The program provides rental assistance to low-income households, capping their rental payments at 30 to 40 percent of their incomes.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC), also known as Section 42, is the federal government's primary means of producing affordable rental housing. Banks buy the credits for a tax benefit, passing the savings on to developers to incentivize the construction of below-market rate housing. To utilize this program, property owners must keep the units affordable for an established period. This program reduces the cost of rent for private developments, helping eligible households live in better-quality units than they would otherwise be able to afford.



Historic District from Lion's Bridge

5. **Explore the Development of a Home Ownership Program.** Core neighborhoods contain a significant number of rental housing units. While rental units can provide an affordable housing option for lower income residents, the proliferation of rental units can destabilize neighborhoods due to the transient nature of the occupants. Work with Warren County to develop programs that provide affordable capital for home improvement and home purchase loans. The City should work with Warren County and Warren County agencies to evaluate the potential for a Homebuyer Program. This program could be modeled after the previous Homebuyer Assistance Program, known as Balanced Housing, which provided participants a broad spectrum of homeownership opportunities. Services typically included homebuyer counseling and education classes, loan packaging, down-payment or loan subsidy assistance, credit repair/building, foreclosure prevention, home repair/rehab, etc. Identify potential modifications to make the new program more attractive to potential property owners. This may require increasing the incentive and increasing awareness of the program through targeted marketing.

In addition, encourage the use of Warren County's deferred, interest-free loans to residents for home repair or rehabilitation projects. Qualifying candidates for this program must fall in the low-to-moderate income range, based on US Department of HUD's guidelines.
6. **Revise Zoning.** Revise land use and zoning regulations to improve the availability, accessibility, and diversity of housing and develop an efficient process for approving development. This may be done by providing an expedited or by-right approval process for select uses. In addition, the City should remove zoning barriers to mixed-use development.

7. Identify Areas Appropriate of Missing Middle Housing.

With limited high end multi-family options available, the City should focus on identifying areas for expanding Missing Middle housing for young professionals and older residents. Three goals related to diversifying the housing stock were outlined during stakeholder interviews:

- a. Attract and retain younger families and professionals capable of supporting restaurants and local businesses while adding to the vitality and liveness of the City.
- b. Provide an adequate pool of housing to allow growing young families and professionals to transition to a second-tier home and stay within the City, and
- c. Retain seniors. The City of Franklin has a sizable population of age 65 that are composed of smaller household size (more people are living alone or in two person families). Often these families move out of Franklin because they cannot find appropriate housing. Within Warren County, there is strong interest for “empty nester” housing such as townhomes or patio homes suitable for seniors to still live independently but not be responsible for certain maintenance.



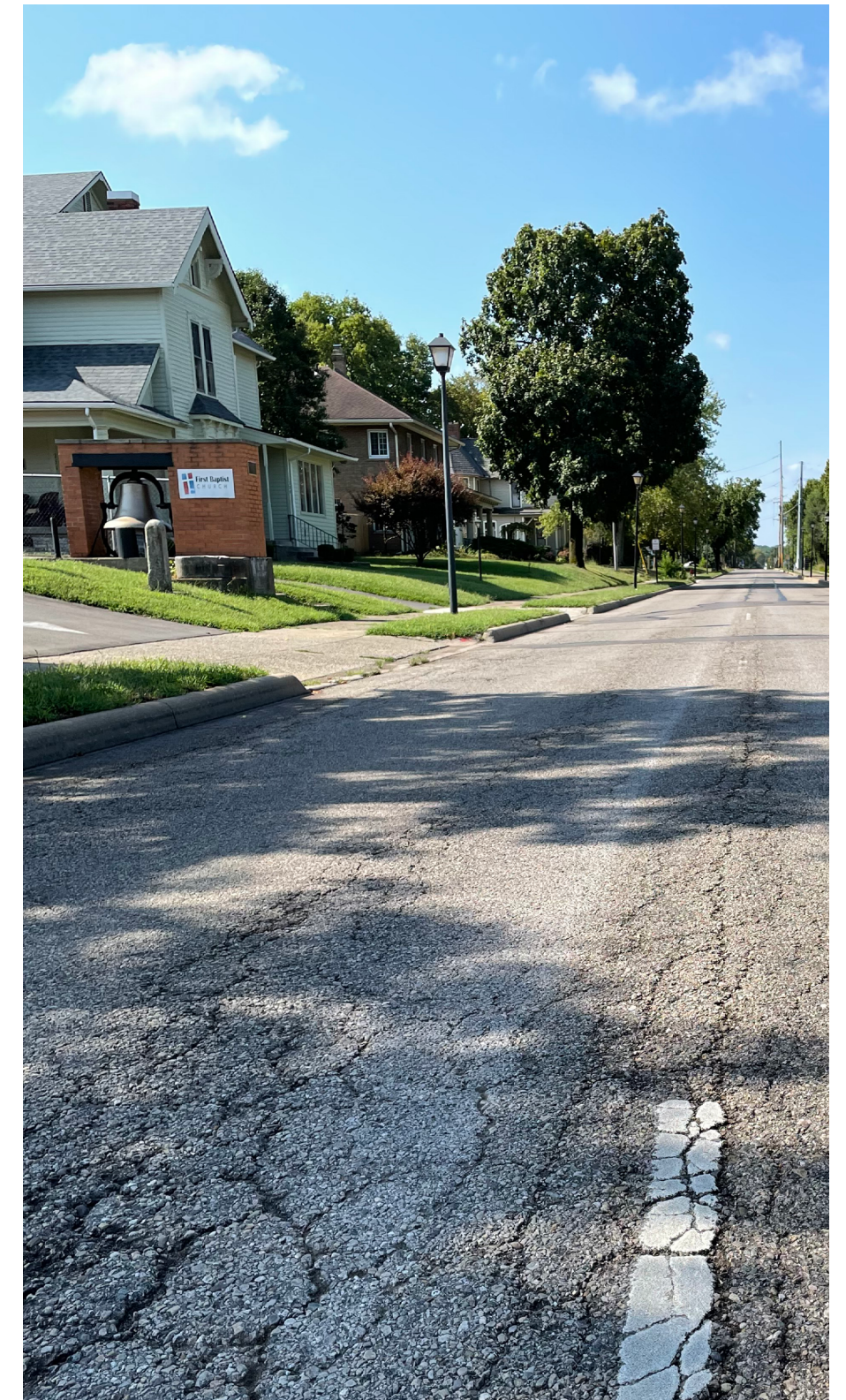
State Route 73
Small lot single-family detached housing that could serve as a transition to higher density residential or commercial uses.

8. Allow a Broader Range of Housing Types to Proceed “By-Right,” or Without the Need For Additional Zoning Approvals.

Recent housing development in Franklin is less diverse than the housing inventory overall, in part because restrictions on housing typologies have resulted in a divergence of the housing market, wherein larger lot single-family detached homes now account for the bulk of new product. The recommendation is to allow a broader range of housing types, such as townhomes, duplex, live/work units, apartment houses, and other “missing middle” typologies, to proceed by-right, to facilitate their production. Encourage these uses in select locations to diversify the housing stock at the high end of the market.

9. Allow Well-Designed, Well-Located Multi-family Housing By Right.

Multi-family development offers the opportunity for higher densities and potentially greater profits for infill developers. Developers may shy away from multi-family development if a rezone or conditional use approval is required, or if a discretionary review process without specific standards is required. The zoning code should be updated to address concerns over multi-family development by soliciting residents’ comments when developing standards and to develop good design and siting criteria to minimize impacts. Design standards should be created to apply to new multi-family development as well as renovated properties. These standards should ensure that new investment in multi-family development improves the quality and livability of the neighborhood while providing housing opportunities for a wider array of lifestyles. This task would also likely require modifications to regulations in the R-3 and R-4 zoning districts.



Streetscape of S River Street

10. Require Design Review for New and Redeveloped Projects. To assure compatibility with the neighborhood character, while promoting creativity, innovation, and design quality. The goal is architecturally distinguished neighborhoods with a diversity of home styles, including traditional and some innovative and creative architecture. New development recognizes this by supporting a variety of building styles, materials, and construction techniques while demonstrating contextual relationship to its surroundings through traditional physical concepts (orientation, scale, materials).

- a. Design each building as a high-quality, long-term addition to the City’s fabric, exterior design and buildings material shall exhibit permanence and quality, minimize maintenance concerns, and extend the life of the building.
- a. Allow for the development of diverse building styles. Support innovative and creative design solutions to issues related to context.
- a. Compatibility- Require that new and adaptively re-used buildings are designed to respect and complement the defining built form, massing, scale, modulation, and architectural detailing of their contextual setting.
- a. Exempt detached single-family residential uses from design review.

11. Increase the Ability of Homeowners to Add Accessory Dwelling Units and Upper Story Residential. Successfully designed and managed accessory dwelling units and upper story residential units can subsidize the cost of operating a downstairs business or a home loan and provide eyes on the street to increase safety, all in addition to providing critically needed rental and targeted market housing opportunities. While current zoning regulations allowed ADUs (In-Law Suites) in the City of Franklin, they are only allowed as a conditional use which may prevent them from improving housing opportunities. With zoning flexibility and added design standards, ADUs have the potential to serve as an important housing option for households that require more budget, age, and lifestyle-appropriate alternatives. Improving the appearance of neighborhoods is a precondition.

12. Encourage Single Family House In-Fill Development. Ensure that these new developments are well-integrated in style and scale with established patterns.

13. Incentivize the Provision of “Visitable” Housing Units. Provide a wider variety of housing options for an aging population. Incentivize visitable units, which allow for barrier-free access into the first floor and to a first-floor bathroom. Includes density bonuses for the provision of dwelling units that meet visitability standards.



- 14. Waive Permit Fees and Simplify the Development Review Process.** For infill single-family, renovation projects, new multi-family, and mixed-use developments within targeted core neighborhoods, the City could choose to waive City permit and board fees including building permits and board of zoning appeals permits (for variances if required).
- 15. Support Adaptive Reuse of Historic Homes.** Revise the zoning code to simplify and encourage the sensitive adaptive and compatible re-use of historic homes to achieve their preservation, sensitive rehabilitation, and continued economic value. Use the Warren County Rural Zoning Code adaptive reuse process as a model.
- 16. Develop Flexible Zoning Standards for Core Neighborhoods.** Historic lots with existing buildings may have been made non-conforming through zoning. Adopt language to bring existing lots with structures into conformance with zoning and permit new buildings to either meet the minimum setback or align with neighboring buildings. To fully protect the historic pattern that originally established the neighborhoods they are in, lot size and setback standards should be modified to reflect existing lots and structures in the neighborhood. Include standards for small single-family lots, particularly in the historic areas, that mimics the current development patterns.
- 17. Encourage Proactive Outreach and Counseling to Low and Moderate-Income Households Experiencing Housing Vulnerability and Housing Cost Burden.** This encompasses several challenges, such as having trouble paying rent, overcrowding, moving frequently, staying with relatives, or spending the bulk of household income on housing. Certain populations may be more affected by housing instability, such as children who move frequently. One of the best ways to increase housing stability among

homeowners is to ensure that potential buyers are prepared for and able to manage the costs and responsibilities of homeownership before buying a home. Housing counseling and education help individuals and families to evaluate their readiness for homeownership and identify safe and sustainable mortgage products that will reduce their vulnerability to housing instability due to delinquency. Warren County Community Services and Warren County Metropolitan Housing provide counseling to individuals about purchasing and financing a home. These agencies are also active in trying to identify various sources of transportation which aids in long-term employment, which ultimately provides income for homeownership.



Residential use in the historic district

- 18. Supporting Housing Stability Through the Improvement of Existing Policies & Programs and the Creation of New Ones.** The City should develop programs and incentives that can stimulate individual property owners, homebuilders, and developers to invest in retrofitting existing homes. For example, a Paint and Porch program that is designed to paint homes for qualified low-income residents and assist in funding the addition of useable porches. Volunteers could assist with this program by painting the exterior of homes and providing additional external beautification (such as raking or cleaning windows) as needed.
- 19. Retrofit Existing Housing Stock.** Target Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds through programs that literally get the exterior of houses in core neighborhoods looking better to change the investment psychology in these neighborhoods. Warren County receives federal funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Annual funding is allocated to jurisdictions, with consideration given to projects that will serve the greatest needs. CDBG funds may be used to invest in rehabilitation of existing housing stock, provide direct assistance to homeowners, improve public facilities, or remove blighted properties.

Faith Based Organizations

Churches have helped to improve neighborhoods & the lives of Warren County residents. Groups like the Warren County Ministerial Association has been successful in addressing homelessness & hunger. An additional role that churches could play is to deploy volunteers to help maintain & rehabilitate housing for low-income homeowners & the elderly.



Residential use in the historic district, and core neighborhoods

- 20. Involve Local Churches.** Local churches and the Warren County Ministerial Association could play an important role in assisting elderly residents with clean up, painting, and landscaping. The City should investigate partnering with other organizations that are committed to promoting home ownership and strong neighborhoods.
- 21. Create a Homeowners Resource Link with Resources for Existing and Future Residents.** Warren County, Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority, Warren County Ministerial Association, and nonprofit organizations offers a range of programs, subsidies, deferrals, and home retrofit supports that improve the quality and stability of housing for homeowners. However, the identification of available resources and the management of the process can be difficult for persons in need of support. Improvements to such resources can help ensure ongoing housing stability, improve independent living opportunities for seniors and persons with disabilities, and strengthen the quality of housing in Franklin.
- 22. Create a Vetted Contractor and Vendor List for Community Usage.** Assist households in navigating the rehab and retrofit processes.
- 23. Develop a Neighborhood Award Program.** Whereby the City recognizes individual property owners for maintaining their properties and enhancing their neighborhoods.



Future Land Use Housing Designation

The housing Future Land Use categories are intended to provide a diversity of living environments and choices, both ownership and rental, for Franklin’s residents. These categories are correlated with the goals and policies for a diverse housing stock and neighborhood revitalization.

Low Density Residential. 0-6 dwelling units per acre. Characterized by single-family residential development with lots ranging in size and one to two story buildings. These lots are characterized by a variety of single-family dwellings, ample open space, extensive landscaping, and separations between single-family dwellings and/or accessory buildings. Single-family dwellings are typically some distance from the street, with large front, side, and rear yard setbacks.

High Density Residential. 0-12 dwelling units per acre. Characterized by a mixture of single-family residential, duplexes/triplexes, mansion apartments, townhomes, pocket/courtyard housing (the main feature is a centrally located courtyard or garden court), and upper story residential. These lots are characterized by open space, extensive landscaping, one to three story buildings, and are encouraged to have an entrance toward the street. Parking is not visible from the street and driveways are minimized. There are minimal setbacks at the rear and front of the property.

- 24. Continue & Upgrade Code Enforcement Strategies.** Enhance the existing single family housing stock through code compliance. Systematic code enforcement makes sense in the City’s strong and stable newer neighborhoods, where owners can make necessary repairs and recoup the cost of the improvements through the sale of the property or increased rents. Within core neighborhoods, where significant properties are renter-occupied and are real estate investments (not occupied by a cost-burdened homeowner) and are associated with elevated rates of code violations (sometimes combined with tax delinquency), code enforcement should be coupled with landlord education and directions to resources. In addition, the City should track costs associated with mitigating code violations (ex: cutting overgrown grass) and place liens for costs-due on extremely problematic properties. These problem properties are usually eyesores that undermine confidence in the housing market.
- 25. Provide Convenient Access to Healthy Food.** In the short term, identify strategies to support the Farmer’s Market and attract specialty and small-scale food providers. In addition:
 - a. Support agriculture and food distribution programs at churches, schools, and recreational or public facilities.
 - b. Increase local food production through zoning that permits limited agriculture as-of right in strategic locations and that allow for foodscapes.
 - c. Develop standards and guidelines for community gardens and agriculture sites on public lands and parks.

In the long-term, work with supermarket developers on site designs that respond to neighborhood context and allow access for seniors, children, and mobility-limited populations.

- 26. Identify Parcels for Land Assemble.** Assembling small, individual parcels into larger blocks under common ownership can greatly enhance their development potential. The City should investigate the process of assembling and improving land, (and even removing encumbrances), in an organized manner which supports the Comprehensive Plan before specific demand arises. With this approach, the City of Franklin can better control development and assure that the proposed development is consistent with City goals.
- 27. Improve and Enhance Public Facilities.** Infrastructure, and Parks which are well-maintained, staffed, and programmed to offer a variety of activities to engage youth.
- 28. Create a Realtor Ambassador Program.** The program should be organized to acquaint realtors with new and exciting developments within the City as well as the City's core neighborhood (housing opportunities, education improvements, cultural amenities, business, and development opportunities). Ambassadors should receive information about special programs available for the financing and renovating of homes in core neighborhoods. With this information, an ambassador would be able to promote the City and have a better understanding of why Franklin is a choice city of residents. Highlights the ways in which the City has become developer friendly and the opportunities that exist for profitable development.
- 29. Investigate the Use of a Land Bank.** where the County or City acquires properties to control the final development product and require projects to meet various housing goals. The Hamilton County Land Bank has had great success in accelerating market revival through their "Rehab Across Cincinnati & Hamilton County" (REACH) program. Through their REACH Evanston

program, the land bank acquired more than 40 vacant homes through foreclosure, rehabbed 19 properties, built 4 new homes on vacant lots, and established a revolving loan fund for additional housing stabilization in the target areas.

- 30. Create a Permanent Dedicated Revenue Source.** With federal funds declining and state resources limited, Franklin should create a "housing trust fund" to receive and allocate new sources of revenue for neighborhood revitalization, housing rehabilitation and used for planning, designing, and constructing streets, utilities, and other necessary infrastructure, land acquisition, and demolition.
- 31. Investigate the Use of a Residential Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.** TIF is an important public finance tool used for the development of infrastructure in neighborhoods. TIFs are an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation by capturing the growth of future taxes, usually property taxes, to fund infrastructure at a specific site.
- 32. Continuously Request OPWC and Ohio Capital Budget Funds of Neighborhood Amenities and Revitalization.** Ohio provides funding for community projects every two years through the state of Ohio Capital Budget. In even numbered years, the Ohio General Assembly enacts a state of Ohio Capital Budget bill that provides for state funding for agencies, schools, and community projects tied to the arts and economic development. Capital budget community projects are often tied to the redevelopment of historic structures in Ohio such as community centers, museums, schools, and parks.



Residential use in core neighborhoods

33. Residential Tax Abatement. The Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA) Program provides local real property tax incentives for homeowners undertaking new construction or rehabilitation in an area that the City has designated for reinvestment. Up to 100% exemption of the improved real property tax valuation for up to 15 years can be offered depending on the project.

34. Assist with Neighborhood Beautification. In addition to housing quality, public realm improvements and on-site improvements to beautify a neighborhood can have significant positive impacts on property values and quality of life. In addition to improved code enforcement, the City should work with property owners and local neighborhood groups to identify local neighborhood beautification initiatives.

35. Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Standards. In addition to ensuring a good fit within the single-family character of established neighborhoods, design standards could also address safety in transitional areas from commercial and non-residential uses. The incorporation of standards related to CPTED can be used to create a physical environment that defines public and private space, creates opportunities for natural surveillance, and guides pedestrian and vehicular traffic in manners that discourages crime. These CPTED measures would foster an environment in which both residents and visitors can feel safe.



36. Investigate the Feasibility of a City Employee Residency Incentive Program. To encourage full-time city employees to reside in the City of Franklin, the City could authorize a one-time taxable incentive payment for employees who do not currently own or reside within the City. This incentive payment is to be utilized to assist in the purchase of a primary home located within the City. The home is to serve as the employee's primary residence for a specified time from date of purchase. Also, the City could provide a onetime taxable incentive payment to enter into a lease agreement for a single-family or multi-family rental unit located in the City. The lease should be for a specified minimum time.

37. Discuss Strategies to Address Homelessness, on a County Level. Communicate with Warren County, the Warren County Housing Coalition and Housing providers.

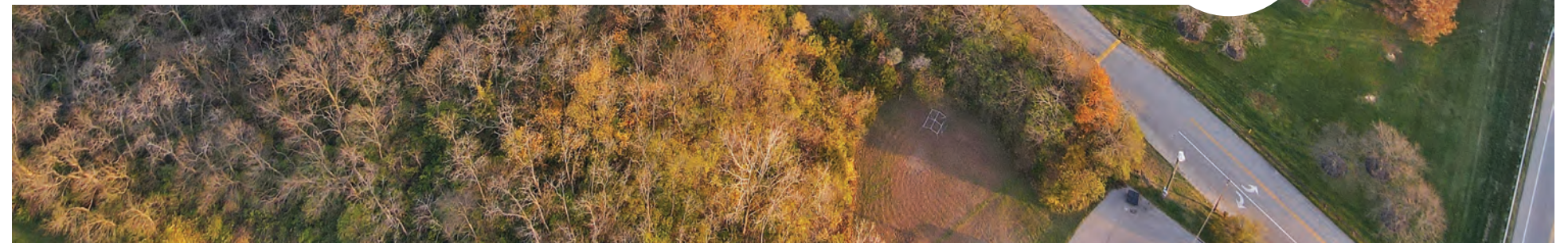


Residential use in the historic district, and core neighborhoods

This chapter illustrates positive elements of the Franklin park and recreation system, including the Great Miami Trail, and clarifies areas that need to be addressed to help make Franklin an even greater city for all its residents. For this to occur, strategies are provided that are based on a park system that is viewed as a quality of life and economic tool to attract residents, visitors, and businesses and improve recreational services for existing residents.



PARKS & RECREATION 6



Community Park

Background

Overview:

The City of Franklin benefits from a handfull of parks, recreation, and open space facilities. These amenities represent a wide range of activities suitable to meet residents needs. One can experience a peaceful walk along the Great Miami River Trail or enjoy a day at Community Park to play basketball or have a family picnic. The City also is home to public golf facilities, including the Franklin Golf Course and Clearcreek Golf Center. One can also enjoy many private and public amenities that are offered by the school district and private/public organizations. The Great Miami River is an asset to the City that provides access to the river for canoeing, fishing, and scenic views for a memorable nature experience.

In short, a good foundation has been established. This Chapter represents an overview of the existing conditions for parks and offers recommendations for improvements. Recommendations were generated based off feedback from stakeholders interviewed and the Citizens Advisory Committee. As with any plan, periodic amendments are both desirable and necessary.



City of Franklin playset

Park Benefits:

Parks and recreation are beneficial for:

1. Economic value,
2. Health and Environmental benefits, and
3. Social importance.

Similar to water, sewer and public safety, parks are considered essential public services, and are vital to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in Franklin.

Parks and recreation are essential infrastructure for a healthy, vibrant, and resilient Franklin. The City of Franklin’s recreational amenities and programming are diverse; they range from little to no-cost opportunities (such as walking along the Great Miami River Trail and summer programs at Community Park). During stakeholder’s interviews, residents stated several goals and direction for Franklin’s parks. In summary, residents felt that city parks should have a positive impact on the lives of residents and visitors. Goals includes a robust and active system of parks and recreation programs for public use and enjoyment, a park system that instills civic pride, improves residents’ quality of life, and can be used to promote the City as a desirable location for businesses.



Economic Value:

- Increases property values. Homes and properties located near parklands have higher values than those located farther away. Residents consider high-quality parks and recreation amenities when choosing a place to live.
- Attracts business and customers. Parks and recreation improves the quality of life and benefits economic development. Quality-of-life features have been noted as important factors when choosing a location for a headquarters, factory or other company facility and retail/restaurants. Several Warren County communities have leveraged their proximity to regional trails for economic development.
- Visitor spending. Much of this economic activity comes from residents who spend when they gather. Restaurants and businesses located near parks frequently report an increase in customers when games or events are held at the park. Also, out-of-town guests also generate economic activity near parks and recreation space.

Health, Environmental, & Social Value:

- Parks help provide places for community members and families to get outside and be active, encouraging a healthier lifestyle, and to improve cohesiveness and happiness.
- Sports programming and services contribute to the health of children, youth, adults, and seniors.
- Cleans the environment for better air quality.
- Provides an identity for the City, and a safe place for people to interact with one another.

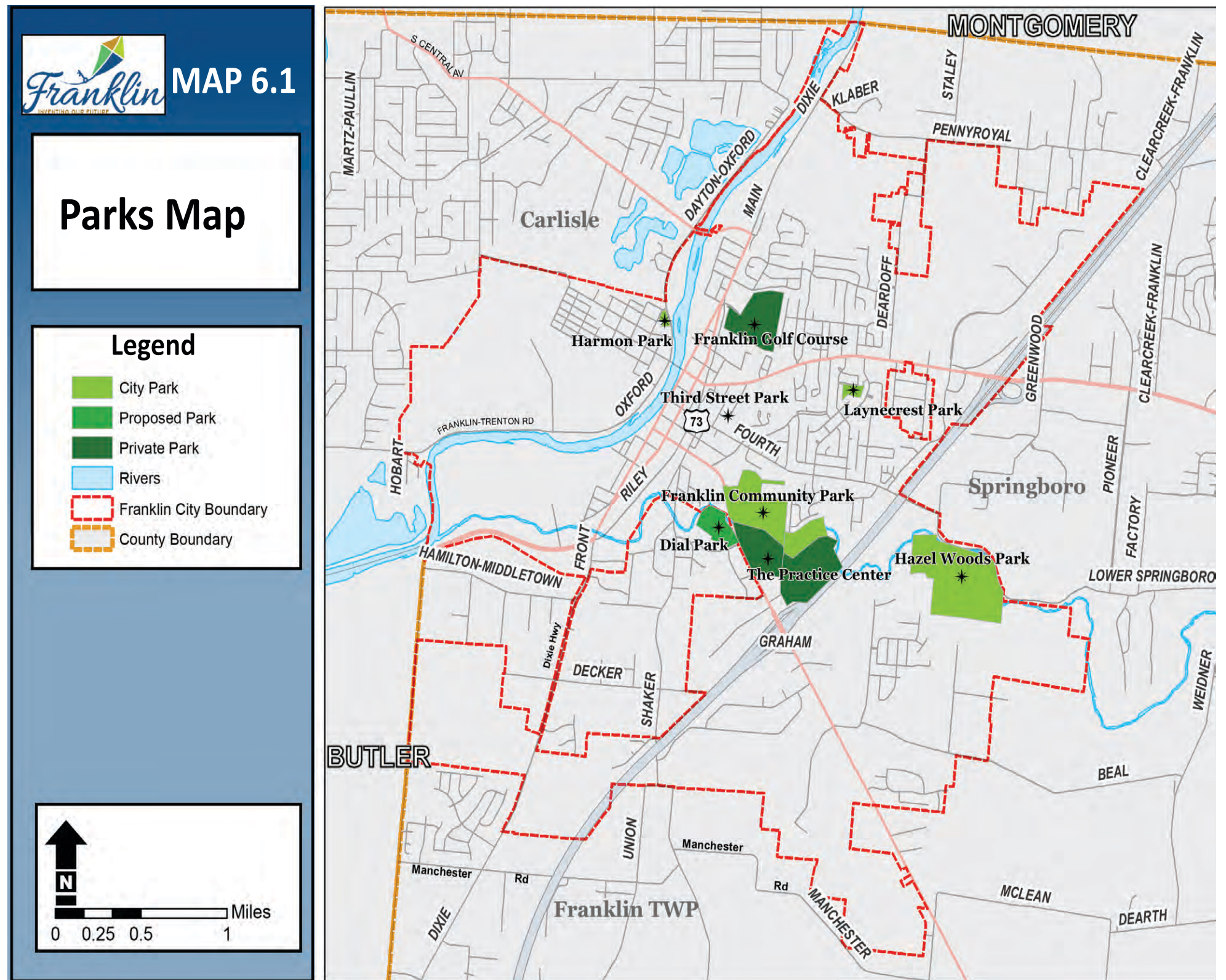
City of Franklin Parks:

Franklin’s seven public parks comprise of 164 acres, with Community Park being the largest at approximately 68 acres. Additionally, Laynecrest, Harmon, and Third Street Parks are in the City, as well as Dial Park currently in development. The Great Miami River bikeway serves as a linear park that connects Franklin to Dayton and several other Miami Valley communities. Efforts are in place to extend the bikeway south to downtown Hamilton and north to Piqua.

The City of Franklin shares a border with the Cities of Middletown, Springboro, and Carlisle, as well as Franklin Township. These communities have their own extensive park systems that are accessible to residents of Franklin within reasonable distance. This includes Dixie Heights Park in Middletown, featuring baseball fields, and Clearcreek Park in Springboro featuring various sports fields and trails. Soon the communities of Franklin and Springboro will be connected by bikeway with the Franklin to Springboro Connector (pg. 14).



Community Park shelter



Parks Inventory and Amenities

Park Name	Address	Park Type	Active/Passive	Acreage	Amenities																		
					Baseball/Softball	Fishing	Trails	Tennis	Soccer Fields	Playgrounds	Gazebo/Shelter	Basketball	Picnic Tables	Grills	Restrooms	Swings	Football Field	Benches	Natural Areas	Swimming Pool	Horseshoes		
Franklin Community Park	301 E. 6th Street	Community	Active	68.00	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Laynecrest Park	100 Beam Drive	Neighborhood	Active	4.66				■			■	■				■			■				
Harmon Park	Miami Avenue	Neighborhood	Active	2.10				■		■		■	■	■					■				
Third Street Park	214 E. Third Street	Mini	Active	0.28						■													
Great Miami River Gateway	Access along River Street	Regional/ Trail	Active/Passive	-			■												■	■			
River Street Park	River Street	Mini	Active	1.23			■												■	■			
Dial Park	Tama Lane	Community	Active	19.18			■		■	■	■		■		■		■		■	■	■		

Existing Parks
 Trail
 Planned Parks/Expansions



Community Park playground



Great Miami River



Community Park shelter

Franklin Community Park:

Community Park is located at 205 East 6th Street, and also referred to as Franklin Lions Club Municipal Park. This is the largest park out of all seven in the City, and offers a variety of amenities suitable for families. It is a beautiful scenic park that abuts a natural stream, Clear Creek. The park is beloved by the community and serves as a local icon in its own right. Due to the existing amenities, the park is the de facto gathering place for many in the City. Not only is the Franklin High School Football Stadium, Soccer and Lacrosse Stadium located within the Franklin Community Park, but so are all other outdoor sporting events of Franklin High School, including baseball, tennis, softball and cross country.

Shown below is an aerial view of Community Park, with its amenities and relation to Highway 123 and Clear Creek. Additionally, Community Park is located near Joint Emergency Medical Services, and across the street from the new Franklin High School. (currently in development and expected to open in 2023).



Community Park aerial view

Existing Amenities:

1. Partial walking path.
2. Two (2) paved parking lots
3. Six (6) tennis courts
4. Two (2) basketball courts
5. Full softball field
6. Full baseball field
7. Three minor baseball/softball fields
8. Horseshoes.
9. Four (4) shelters
10. Playground
11. Access to Clear Creek
12. Swimming pool
 - a) Season pass system
 - b) Changing and restrooms
13. Wildcat Football Stadium
 - a) Rubberized track.
 - b) Artificial turf field
 - c) Locker rooms
 - d) Home and away stands
 - e) Concessions
 - f) Storage



Community Park swimming pool



Community Park mural

Community Comments:

In addition to overall comments made by community stakeholders for Franklin Community Park, members also stated that safety is a potential issue, especially with non-permitted nighttime uses. CAC members felt there is a perceived lack of branding, showcasing community park as a larger facility with desirable amenities.

Shown below is a concept plan for improved field in Franklin Community Park.



Concept drawing of Franklin Community Park

Recommendations:

1. Refurbish and add additional shelters,
2. Parking upgrades, particularly near the stadium,
3. Permanent restrooms in the west,
4. Refurbish and/or replace playground equipment,
5. Wayfinding signage within the park,
6. Upgrade signage entering the park,
7. Upgrade entrance, wider, more lanes, more visible from St Rt 123, and
8. Integrate connectivity to adjacent facilities including the new High School and Dial Park, potentially using bridges, underpasses and crosswalks. A future roundabout as part of this plan.



Computer generated aerial profile of Community Park



Community Park aerial view

9. A walking and multipurpose trail encircling the park, potentially using the northern and western wooded buffer and the future Springboro to Franklin Connector.
10. Add an Experience Center with a focus on ecological education along Clear Creek.
11. Install a new 40-foot by 60-foot picnic shelter near the existing swimming pool, a re-oriented ball diamond that would coincide with a natural amphitheater/sledding hill, an extension of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail bike path, and the possible relocation of the park's maintenance building, and building a rock climbing play area.

Harmon Park:

Harmon Park is located at 398 Home Avenue and is in the primarily residential and uniquely beautiful Mackinac Historic District of Franklin that lends itself to a hometown feel. Downtown Franklin is within 1 mile of the Park. The Park is known locally for its iconic, sturdy and visually striking wooden playground equipment. Visitors can experience a scenic view of the Great Miami River and walk down river to the historic Lions Bridge. There are plans for improvements to the Bridge that includes adding colorful lights to heighten the experience during the evenings. Downtown improvements will certainly draw in additional visitors not only to downtown, but also neighboring parks, including Harmon. While the park is certainly a local favorite, more can be done to increase its city-wide appeal.

Existing Amenities:

1. Basketball court
2. Playground
3. Parking lot
4. Tennis court
5. Charcoal grill
6. Signage for safety and information
7. Sidewalk to neighborhood, bridge, trail and downtown
8. Ample foliage
9. Grass field
10. Benches

Recommendations:

1. Provide a restroom. At a minimum have access to a portable restroom
2. Replace basketball court backboards, and netting
3. Re-pave the basketball court and paint the surface
4. Restore tennis court with paint
5. Inspect playground equipment for safety. Replace amenities as needed
6. Replace picnic benches
7. install wayfinding signage and upgrade existing signage,
8. Add drinking fountain,
9. Add more branding consistent signage, possibly from downtown as well
10. Add a bike path extension across the bridge to the park, wayfinding signage needed as well,
11. Encircling and connecting walking paths,
12. Sidewalk improvements to and from park,
13. Disc golf course.
14. Softball field,
15. Restore baseball diamond,
16. Emphasize Pickleball availability at tennis court, and
17. Add bollards at parking lot and Miami Avenue confluence to reduce "Rat Running".



Harmon Park aerial view



Harmon Park playground

Laynecrest Park:

Laynecrest Park, also known as Beam Circle Park, is located at 100 Beam Drive and sits behind single family homes and an apartment complex.

Existing Amenities:

1. Shelter
2. Basketball court with additional blacktop
3. Monkey bars
4. Swingset
5. Charcoal grill
6. Open field
7. Small unnamed stream along the boundary of the site
8. Open field suitable for a wide range of family activities

Recommendations:

Most if not all assets in the Park are considered of poor quality and the consensus is to focus on repurposing the land. (multi-family housing, parking, and open space). As a result, the future land use for the site will be re-designated as residential.



Laynecrest Park



3rd Street Park

3rd Street Park:

Third Street Park is located near 298 East 3rd Street, it is seldom used and is located adjacent to the soon to be raised water tower and storage building. It is relatively unknown outside of the immediate neighborhood and is not perceived highly amongst those in the area.

Existing Amenities:

1. Playground
2. Safety signage
3. Green space

Recommendations:

Similar to Laynecrest Park, 3rd Street Park is located on what should be repurposed for residential use, in conjunction with the removal of the adjacent water tower and service building. Single family residential is recommended as the future land use. The recommendation to reduce parks aligns with the CAC's commitment to quality over quantity & the need for infill housing in Franklin's urban core.



Third Street Park and Laynecrest Park map relation

Dial Park:

The City of Franklin has identified twenty (20) acres west of Highway 123 as a good opportunity for a new park. This new park - Dial Park - will be a central amenity driving and supporting, recreation, growth and providing a catalyst for economic development and will complement the existing park system by providing needed and desired amenities. Dial Park is named for the Dial Family, who's contributions made the continuing development of the park possible. Turning this formerly unused space into a park offers both challenges and unbelievably satisfying rewards. The concept plan envisions unique amenities for residents and students, and a foundation for sports tourism, surrounded by passive elements and a multi-use trail connection. The design is driven by residents' feedback and is framed in the context of the new high school campus and close by Community Park. The core neighborhood to the east, and the location of a commercial node to the south, combined with the potential redevelopment of downtown, will position this new park to be a significant destination within the City of Franklin.

Transforming Dial Park into a place of recreation will be something truly special— a site that will include amenities to be utilized by both City and the school, creating a unique opportunity to collaborate and create a space for students and residents to enjoy. As design and development plans continue to progress, including the grading of the site, the City and School District continues collaboration. Collaboration have explored opportunities for educational curriculum and athletic programming; shared parking and stormwater management; and trail connections and pedestrian bridge. As the new park and new school district campus continues to advance, Dial Park will become a destination.

Dial Park is located at 5134 Tama Lane. This new 20-acre park is planned to have the following amenities:

- Five new soccer fields;
- Practice field;
- Open fields suitable for a wide range of family activities;
- Parking;
- Entrance off Tama Lane;
- Multi-use trail, that connects Community Park, Franklin Junior High School, and multi-use practice field;
- Pedestrian footbridge over Clear Creek, near Hampton Bennett School; and
- Concession stand/restroom facility.

Recommendations:

Continue to expand the trail network linking neighboring parks and facilities.



Aerial view of Dial Park land

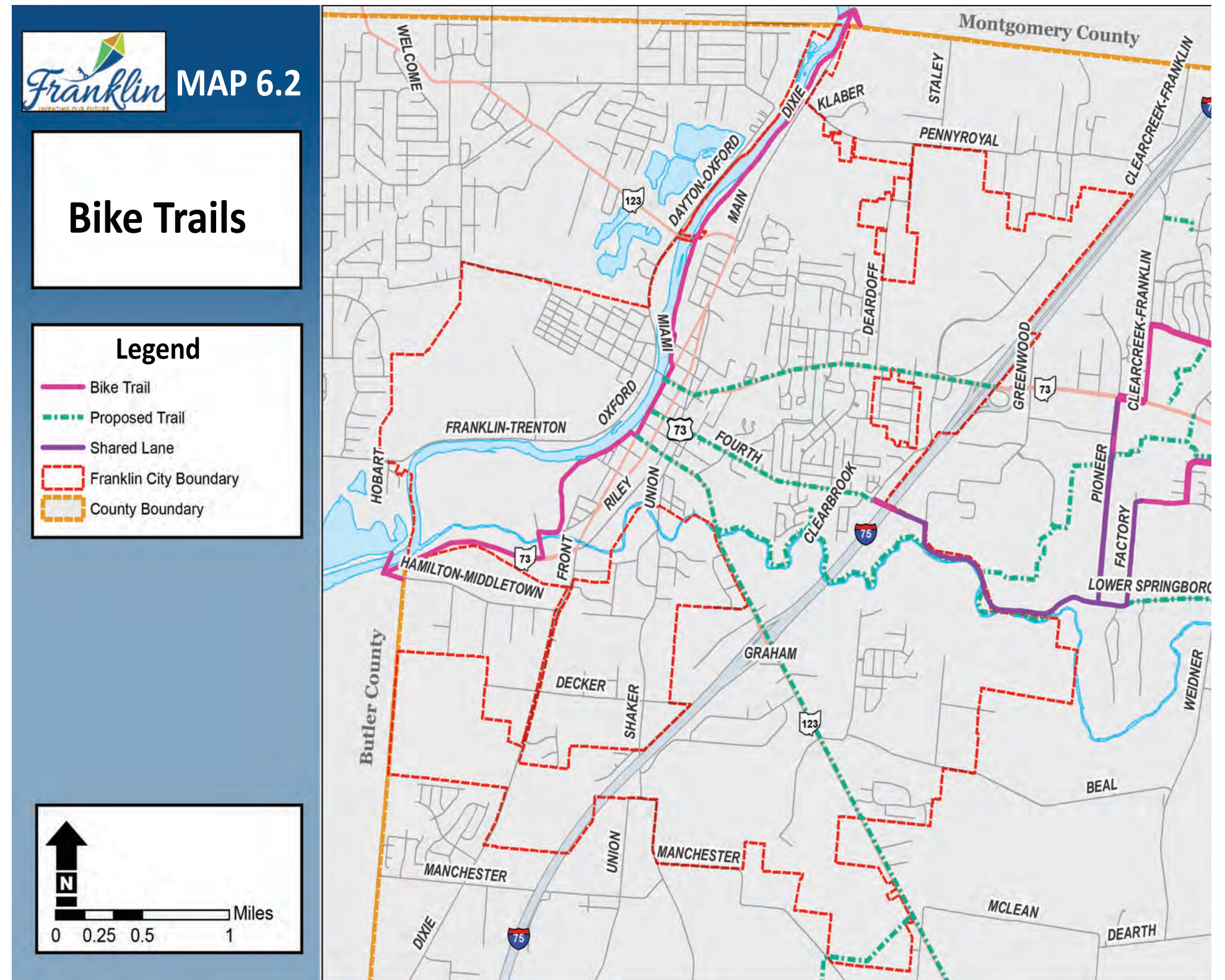


Concept drawing of Dial Park

City of Franklin Trails:

Shown on Map 6.2 are the proposed, shared and dedicated bike trails within the City of Franklin. These include the connections to the City of Springboro, and the City of Middletown. This trail along the Great Miami River, connects various communities between Butler County, Warren County, and Montgomery County.

As noted on the map, the bike trails are only shown within the City boundary. The direction of the Great Miami River Trail goes west towards City of Middletown and north towards the City of Miamisburg. The proposed trail shows the bike trail expansion that would connect the City of Franklin downtown with Franklin Community Park, Hazel Woods Park, and Clear Creek Park in the City of Springboro.



Source: MVRPC

Trails

Introductions and Benefits:

As advancements with technology continue to make our lives easier and more convenient, so is the risk of having more sedentary lifestyles; which can result in a rise in health issues including mental and physical wellness. Trails and greenways have benefits to the city that are often undervalued but can have a significant impact. These include public health, economic, and transportation benefits, and even the effect on city pride and identity.

The City of Franklin has multiple trails and proposed trails that can and will provide many benefits not only to the City but neighboring cities and tourists in the region. The largest trail network, and most well known is the iconic Great Miami River Trail. Recently established trails include the Clearcreek Bike Path Connector and the Middletown to Franklin Connection.



Health:

1. Promotes exercise,
2. Reduces cardiovascular disease, and
3. Often associated with cleaner air, and good for the lungs.

Transportation & Livability:

1. Serves as viable transportation corridors,
2. Provides safe and efficient transportation, and
3. Encourages livability for enhanced quality of life.



Conservation & Environment:

1. Trails preserve greenspace,
2. Provides links to fragmented wildlife habitats,
3. Protects plant and animal species, and
4. Improves air and water quality.

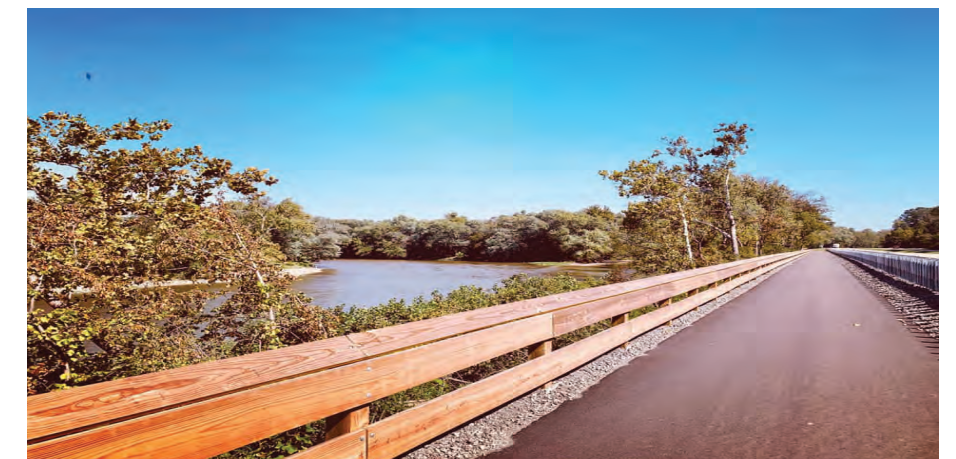
Conservation & Environment:

1. Draws in local business, and
2. Raises property values,

Connector Trails:

Connector trails are used by residents to access neighborhood and community parks; amenities and services throughout the City. They are typically located within utility easements; existing road rights-of-way; and old railroad rights-of-way. Connector trails focus on safe transportation and access to recreation and services. Similar to regional trails, local trails provide residents with multiple options to traverse, including biking and by foot on a City level. Although, these connections should be locally focused, they should be planned to also provide regional connections. There are numerous proposed trail connections throughout the City that will provide access to Franklin Community Park, Dial Park, River Street, the Great Miami River, and Twin Creek. The CAC recommends implementation of these connections by either of the following two types of connector trails:

- Type 1 Connector Trails: Separate paved paths for pedestrians and cyclists, typically located along the roadway.
- Type 2 Connector Trails: One (shared) paved path for pedestrians and cyclists and are located along parkways or residential streets.



Great Miami Trail south of Franklin

The Plan (Figure 6.2) illustrates existing regional trails, as well as planned local and regional trails that meander throughout the City and adjacent communities. A summary of the type of connections is indicated below:

1. **Regional Shared Path:** Shared paths are areas open to the public that are designated for use by both pedestrians and bike riders. This type of path services the region to capture more visitors. As indicated in there is currently one regional shared path, “The Great Miami River Trail”, that runs along the Great Miami River providing connections to many cities and towns throughout the Region.
2. **Regional Shared Proposed Path:** This proposed path would also be accessible to both pedestrians and bike riders on a regional scale. There is currently one planned regional shared path, that provides connections between Twin Creek Metropark and Carmody Park on the northwestern region of Franklin. The trail would run along Twin Creek connecting Franklin to Miamisburg and Middletown.
3. **Local Separate Proposed Path:** Separate local paths are not multipurpose, rather they serve a single user, either traversing by bike or on foot. There are multiple proposed separate paths, throughout the City. The paths would provide connections from Franklin Community Park to the Great Miami River, and downtown area.
4. **Local Shared Proposed Path:** Similar to regional shared paths, local shared paths provide users with multiple options to traverse, including biking and by foot on a local level. There are numerous proposed shared paths throughout the City.

Trail Design Concepts:

- **Multipurpose Trails:** Trails that are designed for multiple un-powered or low-powered uses such as walking, jogging and dog walking. Often in residential areas and incorporate slight turns and park assets (benches and receptacles) to discourage high speeds often seen on dedicated bike trails.
- **Dedicated Bike Trails:** This trail type is primarily (albeit not exclusively) meant for bicycle traffic. They are often paved, have striped lane lines, grade separation and navigational signage. The pathways are often straight to allow for high speeds between settlements for competitive use. This is often because they are repurposed rail lines in rural areas.
- **Dedicated Bike Lanes:** Bike lanes on the road parallel to automobile lanes. An affordable way to create bike infrastructure and has the added benefit of often indirectly reducing car speeds.
- **Grade-Separated Bike Lanes:** Bike lanes That share the same right-of-way as automobile road but includes physical barriers for pedestrian safety and more efficient multi-modal movement.



Dedicated bike trail between Franklin to Middletown connection



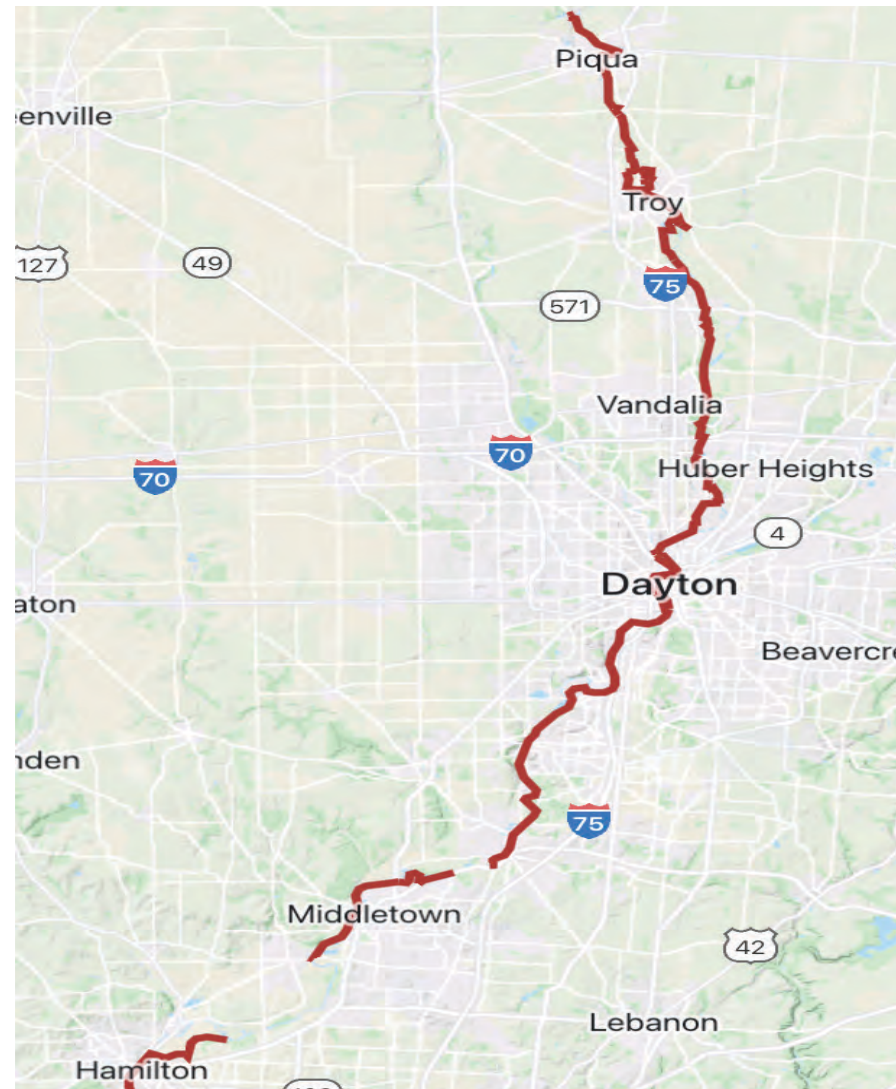
Great Miami River Recreation Trail Signage

Great Miami River Trail:

The Great Miami River Trail is the backbone of one of the nation’s longest paved trail networks, covering 340 miles throughout Ohio’s Miami Valley. At over 86 miles, The corridor connects beautiful natural areas, small towns, and large cities across four counties in southwestern Ohio. The trail begins in Piqua and has a well maintained

asphalt surface throughout its entire course. The majority of the trail keeps you close to the river, creating a prime opportunity to observe wildlife along the way. Riding along the river, you quickly see the impressive levee system built to keep the river out of town which has allowed the space for a trail to be built. The Great Miami River Trail continues to small towns and cities including Dayton, Tipp City, Miamisburg, Franklin, and Middletown. There are many trail-friendly places to visit and helpful signage telling you how to get to them.

The trail travels to the City to its terminus at Waterworks Park just south of Hamilton. The segment running through Franklin begins at the northern City boundary, directly adjacent to the river and meanders south along the water. During its course, users can experience many scenic views and prized landmarks in the City. River Steet Park is within a block from the iconic Lions Bridge that is adjacent to River Street. Visitors in the City. River Steet Park is within a block from the iconic Lions Bridge that is adjacent to River Street. Visitors can experience the Lions Bridge and rest at River Street Park. Further south of River Street Park there is a Historic Post Office that was built in 1805. The building is surrounded by picnic benches and park benches, perfect for a family pit stop to enjoy lunch by the river. The City should continue to capitalize from the Great Miami River and provide as many linking trail networks as possible when opportunities arise along the Great Miami River Trail.



Entire Great Miami River Trail

Franklin to Middletown Connection:

A gap in the trail outside of Franklin was eliminated in 2021, allowing trail users to continue along the edge of the state highway and proceed uninterrupted through the City of Middletown. After about a 5-mile gap, the final completed section of the path begins at Rentschler Forest MetroPark north of Hamilton. For the first time ever, you'll be able to start from a bike in Middletown and have access to 340 miles of paved trails.

This was made possible with the recently constructed 1.4-mile connection that connects Middletown to Franklin, and ultimately, the Miami Valley trail network.

Middletown City Council approved its section of the \$2.48 million bike trail along the north side of Ohio 73. Franklin's estimated share in local costs was approximately \$249,319. Of that amount, Franklin received a Clean Ohio Trails grant for \$175,037 to further offset the City's share of the project costs.

The gap that has been filled between Middletown and Franklin is important for the two economies of these cities, but it also means that every mile of new trail that is built really makes the investment in all of the 340 miles of paved trail that much more valuable.



Map of Franklin to Middletown connection

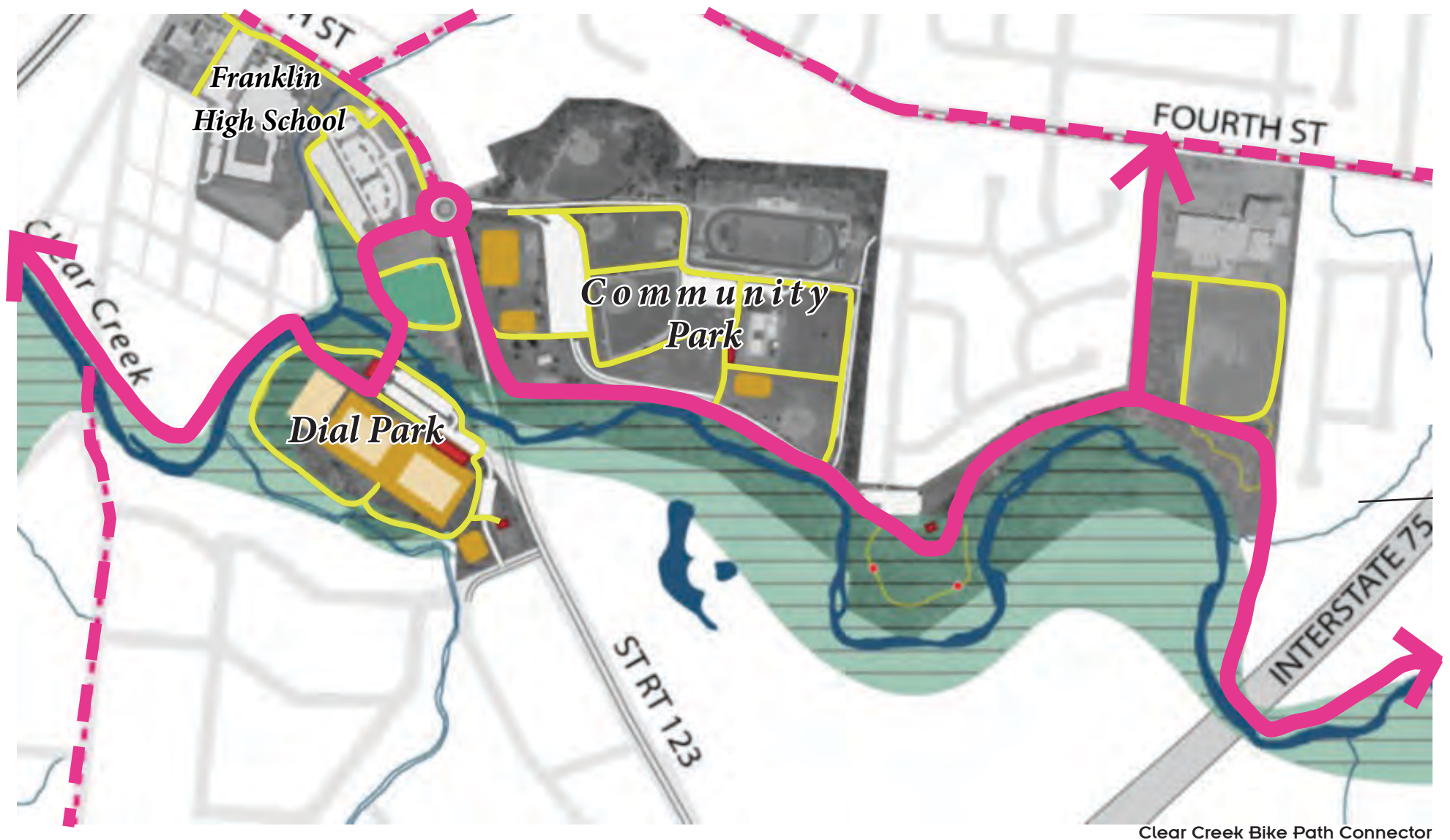
Franklin to Springboro Connection:

Currently, there is no connection from Franklin's Community Park to adjacent parks or the trail system. However, efforts are in place to implement the Clearcreek Bike Path Connector which is also an important segment in the larger long-term plan to connect the Little Miami and Great Miami Trail network. As a long term goal, this project (Clear Creek Bike Path Connector) is an important segment of the overall Great Miami-Little Miami Connector Trail. The project will provide a 10-foot-wide 8,800-foot shared-use path and includes a pedestrian / shared-use bridge to connect to Hazel Woods Park. It will run under I-75 and has received \$3 million in federal funding. The Project is expected to begin in July 2022 and be completed in July 2023. Immediately upon its completion, this project will provide a safe link for both pedestrians and bicyclists to travel between the City of Springboro, Hazelwood Park, and the City of Franklin Community Park, and ultimately to the Great Miami Trail. The opportunities to create community connections via shared-use path are limited and this project has been identified by the Cities of Franklin and Springboro, as well as the MVRPC, as a key opportunity to provide a shared-use path connector between two of the region's most utilized bikepaths; the Little Miami Trail and Great Miami Trail. The Great Miami-Little Miami Connector Trail is listed on the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. The Clear Creek Bike Path Connector project is a segment of this overall connection to the trail system. The Clear Creek Bike Path Connector is also included in the City of Franklin Comprehensive Plan, Franklin Community Park Expansion Plan, and the Springboro Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Goals and Objectives:

Complete a priority segment of this connector listed on the Long Range Regional Bikeway and Pedestrian Projects noted in the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan,

1. Improve pedestrian connectivity between Franklin Community Park and Hazel Woods Park,
2. Improve non-vehicular transportation with pedestrian and bicycle access without using the local roadway,
3. Improved safety of pedestrian and bicycle traffic with a dedicated facility separate from the roadway system, and
4. Provide a recreational amenity and non-motorized alternative. The Bike Path will connect the Franklin Community Park, Great Miami River Bikeway, several schools, neighborhoods, and potentially areas east of Franklin.



Clear Creek Bike Path Connector

Potential Park Technology Upgrades

Wi-Fi Hubs:

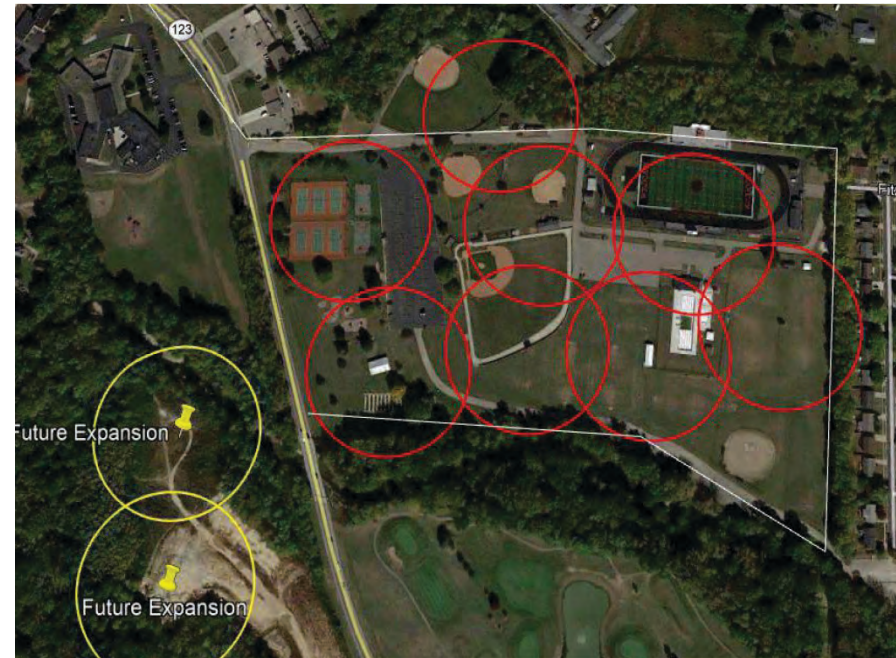
The City of Franklin is proposing a Wi-Fi and Smart City zone for downtown and at Community Park. The access costs would be paid by sponsored advertisers that would see an ad before connecting to the Wi-Fi system. The system would also promote city events and programs such as the Farmers Market, and public events in the park and throughout the City.

The figure on the right illustrates where all of the Wi-Fi hubs are planned to be installed. Eight (8) stations are proposed in Franklin Community Park. The future expansion of Dial Park would provide an opportunity to install additional hubs, directly southwest of Community Park. Providing free Wi-Fi to the community would draw in more visitors and promote local business near or within the park itself. Utilizing Wi-Fi upgrades, the City of Franklin can leverage technology to be safer, healthier, and a better place to work.



Potential Park Logo Concept

Proposed Wi-Fi Hub Stations and Coverage:



- Engage and inform visitors of relevant information while in the municipality. Provide an interactive map, and inform visitors of nearby restaurants, bars, shopping, and attractions.
- Increase event attendance by sending event invites (previous event attendees sent email or optional text invites to future events).
- Engage and inform attendees of event information while in the city - schedules, first aid, food, restroom locations- and maps.
- Survey visitors to ensure satisfaction, gain invaluable feedback, and insight.

Stakeholder Recommendations:

During the initial phase of the comprehensive planning process, more than a dozen stakeholder interviews were conducted to gather feedback and generate ideas for how the City needs to improve and where the focus should be in the next 15 to 20 years.

The list below summarizes key recommendations moving forward for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space in the City:

1. Work on efforts to prevent drug use at local parks.
2. Enforcement plan to reduce and eliminate homeless people loitering at parks.
3. Install family friendly restrooms in parks where they are not provided.
4. Upgrade existing public restroom facilities.
5. Enhance existing concession stands at Franklin Community Park.
6. Improve general landscape and maintain lawns.
7. Resurface existing parking lots.
8. Provide additional park benches.
9. Continue to make future trail connections which utilize branding that links the park and trail system to downtown and the river.
10. Designate and establish entry points along the Great Miami River for canoeing and recreation.
11. Promote parks through marketing strategies to draw in more visitors and enhance local business.
12. Upgrade damaged and unsafe playground equipment and amenities.



3rd Street Park playground

- 13. Apply for grants for Park improvements
- 14. Develop a plan for strategies to finance park improvements
- 15. Potentially add cameras to trails



Community Park playground

Branding:

Stakeholders have indicated that the park system needs a universal branding system parkwide that unifies all the parks as well as a symbol for the community as a whole. Shown on the previous page is a concept for a type of logo that can be used for the Parks as an example for Franklin Community Park. With color coding for branding and visual clarity (for example: “meet at the park with the red box”).

Activating City Parks:

As electronic communication makes it possible to work anywhere, the freedom to work and live apart has increased the sense of isolation and there is a need for new ways of interacting socially and meeting informally. Franklin parks are positioned to fulfill that burgeoning need. Being geographically positioned within walking distance to the new high school, core neighborhoods, the Great Miami River Trail, and Downtown, City parks such as Dial Park and Community Park are suited perfectly to evolve into better destinations, via programming and placemaking. The more uses these parks can accommodate, the more successful they will become as gathering places attracting a wider variety of users, including seniors. The key to increasing park usage is better programming of well-planned, supervised activities that attract residents and help them feel comfortable in using the park. Franklin has assets that can be used to showcase and increase utilization of its parks, whether that’s through art, performance, amenities, or special sports events or programs. Not only will these activities create more vibrant and social parks, but they also help to make the City feel unique and unlike anywhere else - giving it a feeling of authenticity, which is a crucial ingredient for building resident’s attachment to the City.

The City could also partner with the school district, senior center, or civic organizations to organize programs. Effectively activating Franklin parks may also require an assigned position that is responsible for coordinating, planning, promotion, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of parks and recreation programs and events.

General Park Recommendations:

While each of Franklin’s parks need to see individual analysis, stakeholders have recommended that some overall improvements be made to the park system, both in person and online.

- 1. A community consensus that better, larger, and more well maintained parks are more desirable than a series of smaller, neighborhood and poorly maintained parks
- 2. Continue to connect parks to each other and the regional park network
- 3. Exercise stations throughout the park and trail system
- 4. QR codes on the signs indicating park information
- 5. Add EMS info to signage
- 6. A master plan that integrates the park system to the school district’s sports and recreation system
- 7. Community Branding for the overall park system (see left)
- 8. An emergency call system
- 9. Changing the Future Land Use Map for Laynecrest Park and 3rd Street Park to residential use
- 10. An easy to use online service to reserve fields and shelters

Quality of life is central to Franklin's identity. Franklin is a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family. Building on these assets to strengthen quality of life will continue to make Franklin a great city. For this reason, quality of life is a major theme throughout this Comprehensive Plan and relates to nearly every aspect of the plan. While the City has seen many improvements over the last decade, including the continued improvements in the delivery of public service and the quality of educational services, it is important that the plan put quality of life at the forefront.



Kettering Health Network, located near I-75

Background

Quality of Life:

Quality of life can be described as how satisfied an individual is with the City, and how well it fits their needs. Cities perceived to have a good quality of life are typically safe, have available jobs and good schools, plenty of access to parks and trails, a clean environment, abundant cultural and entertainment opportunities, quaint shopping and dining, and good public services. These types of quality of life indicators are important to the future and stability of Franklin. A high quality of life in Franklin will help attract businesses and potential residents to sustain the vitality and diversity of its economy.

Quality of Life elements such as parks and recreation, entertainment and events, neighborhood revitalization, the quality of development, and development aesthetics and streetscapes are discussed in detail in other chapters. The Housing chapter emphasizes the importance of choice neighborhoods with safe, affordable, and attractive housing. The Land Use chapter focuses on promoting infill development that is complementary to existing land uses. The Economic Development chapter calls for continued efforts to diversify the local economy, while supporting existing businesses, nurturing small businesses, and fostering entrepreneurship. The Parks and Recreation chapter outlines goals for the maintenance/expansion of parks and recreational opportunities. Finally, the goals in the Transportation chapter aim to improve health and safety, protect the environment, and strengthen the local economy by providing Franklin residents with a variety of transportation choices.

This chapter focuses on enhancing a sense of place and improving the experience of living in Franklin. Four topic areas are addressed: The State Route 73 corridor, gateways, wayfinding and signage, and community facilities. Each topic was identified by stakeholders and addressed during the Citizens Advisory Committee meetings as important elements to the City. These topics are featured on the following pages.

How can the State Route 73 commercial corridor become more attractive to investors, competitive for new businesses, livable for residents, and exciting to visitors?



Franklin historical sign along Franklin Lebanon Road

State Route 73 Commercial Corridor:

The retail and commercial industry has evolved. Today, more chain stores have closed than have been opened. A few forces - demographics, competition, changing preferences, and the rise of Internet sales - have brought about the changes being seen nationally and within Warren County. Within the City of Franklin, it is the State Route 73 corridor that will be most impacted by the industry's restructuring. In response to the change, there is growing interest in establishing retail, dining, and entertainment businesses (experience commercial) in walkable settings and offering unique businesses. When households are shopping, they are indicating a growing interest in the quality of the experience. In place of the typical strip shopping center, people are looking to locations that have unique shops, dining, and settings that are walkable, stimulating, and aesthetically pleasing.

State Route 73 represents an important primary route into Downtown Franklin, connecting it with highway-oriented commercial uses and residential neighborhoods. The corridor is well positioned for revitalization and growth and the City's policy and investment can help to reposition the corridor to capture new customers and business development opportunities from an evolving commercial sector.

According to a traffic count report published by the Warren County Engineer's Office on August 2021, the State Route 73 corridor has the highest daily traffic count in the City- over 20,000 trips daily (OKI). Given the healthy traffic counts and easy access to I-75, it is reasonable to assume that the corridor will continue to experience commercial development. This will likely be in the form of redeveloped sites, additional out lots, the conversion of isolated single-family housing to professional offices, and the assemblage of individual properties for mid to large scale retail, and mixed-use developments.

Existing Conditions:

Today the State Route 73 corridor (below) tends to be characterized by segregated land uses, many curb cuts, inconsistent signage, and expanses of impervious surfaces, including large parking lots in front of commercial structures. With a wide cross-section of underutilized properties, the State Route 73 corridor provides a good opportunity for new development that is cohesive and that provides a strong, pedestrian-oriented transitional link to the City’s Downtown core. Improvements to the State Route 73 corridor can encourage a continuous pedestrian-oriented environment between Interstate 75 and Downtown and provide a fitting entry into Downtown.

First Impressions:

As visitors and residents approach Franklin, there is an opportunity to build anticipation and community pride along the corridor. Today, this approach from the east and I-75 interchange is characterized by predominantly auto-oriented development - wide driveways, parking lots, and minimal landscaping creating a generally gray first impression. The Comprehensive Plan recommends enhancement - both public and private to address the first impression.



Vision:

Encouraging new investment to develop a mix of land uses in an environment that promotes pedestrian activity and that creates a unique sense of place has been identified as a goal in the renaissance of the State Route 73 corridor. The vision is to transform the State Route 73 corridor into a “place” by creating a walkable, bikeable, and attractive streetscape and through the design and development standards that creates attractive development sites. The design of surrounding buildings and sites play a leading role in creating and supporting this vision. If streets are designed as public spaces, those spaces are inherently connected to the fabric of the adjacent neighborhoods, and the buildings lining them must be planned accordingly. Structures that are designed and programmed as an extension of the streetscape are the most likely to succeed in creating an aesthetically pleasing and vibrant corridor.

New, mixed-use development along the State Route 73 corridor should be developed with high-quality walkable frontage, carefully crafted to enhance the pedestrian experience, and provide new opportunities for higher density residential, and commercial uses.

Improvements should include:

1. Widened sidewalks.
2. Pedestrian connections to neighborhoods.
3. Added tree canopy.
4. A landscaped gateway at 73 and I75 intersection.
5. Bike path/Sharrow to Springboro.
6. Wayfinding Signage.

Guiding Principles:

The corridor should be reconceived as a shared pedestrian-oriented public space with street trees, pocket parks, etc., that are used to create a continuous greenspace parallel to State Route 73 (within the public right-of way and incentivized greenspace on redeveloped sites). While even a well-designed commercial corridor will not be a true main street, a pedestrian environment is created. There should be uniform streetscape standards for lighting, paving, and landscaping, and a complete network of wide sidewalks. The guiding principles listed on the following page should be utilized towards the realization of the vision for the corridor:



Commercial corridors such as State Route 73 can attract fast food restaurants that pick-up traffic passing through but have the potential to be destination districts if they can deliver unique & high-quality experiences.

1. **Strengthening Physical Character:** Support the development of a distinct and desirable State Route 73 corridor in which to live, work, and play. Through progressive redevelopment, buildings should be sited in a manner that is complementary to the street.
2. **Advancing Prosperity:** Build economic value and foster a robust and resilient corridor that creates a supportive climate for business and investment. Zoning should allow a diverse mix of uses and flexible standards. Attract new businesses and high-quality restaurants and prioritize mixed-use developments to create an environment that is attractive to millennials.
3. **Enhancing Quality of Life:** Provide choice and opportunity along the corridor for social interaction, health, and recreation.

State Route 73 will continue to be the principal corridor into and out of the Downtown, but it will have a noticeably different feel. The pedestrian environment established in the Downtown will extend along this corridor. Pedestrians will be able to move around more easily and in greater safety due to new bike lanes and widened sidewalks along State Route 73 and the streetscape will be more attractive with trees, improved lighting, wayfinding, and open space.

GOAL: Promote an architecturally appealing and walkable State Route 73 commercial/mixed-use corridor to improve economic viability and to improve the quality of life for those visiting, working, and living in the City. This should be achieved while also respecting the stability and integrity of adjacent residential neighborhoods.

4. **Improving Infrastructure:** Support pedestrian and bicyclist improvements that complement business development priorities and community well-being.
5. **Implement Desirable Connections:** Commercial corridors are not usually thought of as pedestrian environments, but pedestrian traffic is evolving into an important tool to add to the attractiveness and economic vitality of commercial development. Pedestrian connections should be prioritized within the commercial nodes of intense activity (the node immediately adjacent to I-75), and along areas of the corridors that are designated for future retail, mixed-use, and multi-family growth. Advocate for connections between parcels to minimize traffic on State Route 73 and support a complete and coherent network for bicyclists and pedestrians including connections to existing neighborhoods. Improve the connections to parks and identify and address pedestrian safety concerns.



Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal:

Residents expressed a desire for the State Route 73 corridor to be more aesthetically pleasing. A street that would serve as an attractive entry to Downtown Franklin. In addition to aesthetic considerations, goals also include a better environment for walking and biking and to provide a catalyst for private sector development adjacent to the corridor. The goal is also to create a place with the amenities and assets that attract and retain a young, educated work force (walkable street with strong connections to neighborhoods and a vibrant commercial service, restaurants, coffee shops, bookstores, bakeries, bars, music venues, indoor and outdoor recreation, and brew pubs).

When architecture is bland, an upgraded streetscape may be needed to give the district personality. A strong pattern of pavers, flower boxes or planters, street trees, or street furniture can distract the eye from inconsistent architecture or building materials. Inconsistent architecture is also a good reason for strong, tasteful sign regulations allowing a tight palette of acceptable options. The resulting goals, objectives, and strategies are intended to help signal arrival to a special area, and orientation, and improve the economic stability of the corridor. Enhancement to the State Route 73 corridor is a key intervention point that can catalyze further positive change in the social and economic life in Franklin.

Increase economic value by creating social value

There are several factors to consider in retrofitting the State Route 73 corridor that can achieve greater levels of vitality. Most relate in some way to creating an engaging and stimulating environment that draws customers for the experience of the place.

1. Attractions & Unique Businesses. Entertainment or recreational venues that are programmed with continuous events. The corridor currently includes an entertainment venue that attracts customers on a regional basis. Entertainment uses should be permitted within the corridor overlay district.

The State Route 73 corridor may offer the same businesses as other commercial districts and still be successful. However, the corridor rises above other districts if it is supplemented by several unique and good quality shops or restaurants that attract people from further away. These businesses may be related to activities in which people engage (e.g., beer and winemaking supply stores or fabric shops) or more general in nature (e.g., bakeries, or furniture stores). Thus, the City should carefully revise the zoning code to permit and encourage uses that complements this goal. Likewise, the City should prohibit commercial uses that detract from this vision. Residents have identified uses of concern such as pawn shops, check cashing stores, car lots, storage warehouses, dollar stores, and gas stations that should receive careful consideration on whether they are allowed. The City has limited areas for new or redeveloped commercial and residential opportunities, thus, extra parking and redeveloped sites should be utilized for their most beneficial use. Developments/uses that are land intensive, or impactful on public services but provide low employment opportunities or that do not add to the vitality of the corridor should be carefully considered.

2. Design Character. Commercial corridors that take design to a higher level will usually find that customers react positively, staying longer, shopping more stores, and returning more frequently. The corridor’s architecture can be one distinguishing factor. The public (and private) streetscape is another factor. Many of the best places combine public investment in the sidewalk and landscaping with private investment in sidewalk seating and other personalization of the space in front of their business.

However, creating a functional and attractive commercial corridor must balance several elements of design, for both the people walking and for people driving. Wide sidewalks, street-facing buildings, retail entrances are very important to people on foot. For people driving, adequate and convenient parking and car-oriented signage can be important. Attracting car-oriented businesses may also mean accommodating drive-through operation or curb side pickup. Balancing the different design preferences of different users may vary site by site within the corridor, depending upon context and market. However, even a more car-oriented corridor will benefit people traveling to the corridor by car who want to stay and walk around to other nearby businesses or destinations once they arrive, thus elements of walkable, pedestrian-scale design should be integrated into all types of commercial development. To achieve this balance, it is recommended that the City establish a corridor overlay district (zoning overlay) where certain uses (commercial, multifamily, and institutional uses) are subject to design review.

Complete, Context-Sensitive & Green Streets

COMPLETE STREETS are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are traveling as drivers, pedestrians, or bicyclists. Complete Streets are streets for everyone, they are designed to make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, jobs, and schools, and bicycle to work. They are designed and operated to prioritize safety, comfort, and access to destinations for all people who use the street.

GREEN STREETS are stormwater management approaches that incorporates vegetation (perennials, shrubs, trees), soil, and engineered systems to slow, filter, and cleanse stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces (e.g., streets, sidewalks). Green streets are designed to capture rainwater at its source, where rain falls.

CONTEXT SENSITIVE STREETS are streets that are designed to fit their surroundings while effectively serving transportation needs.

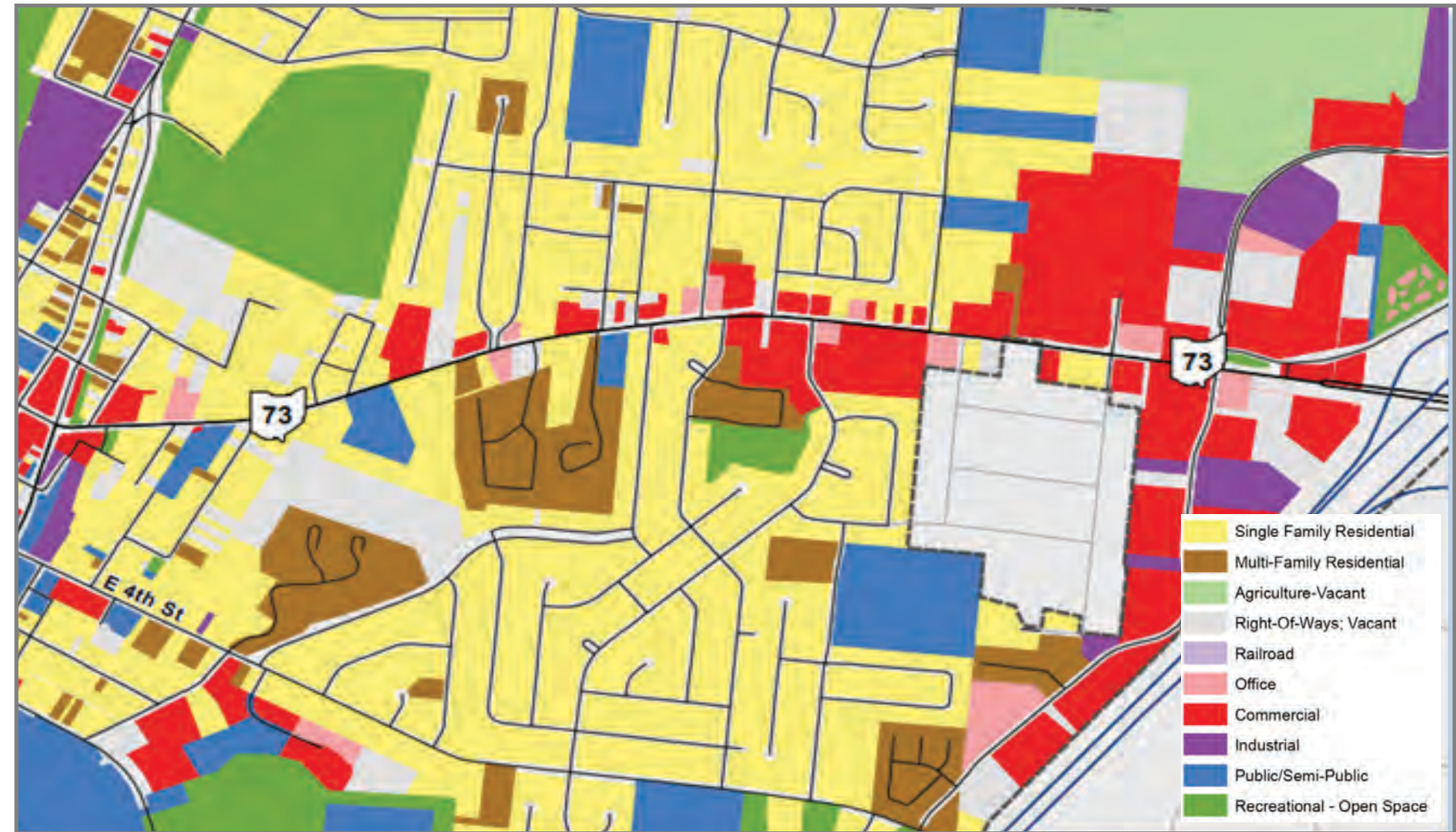
3. Neighborhood Stability. The neighborhoods adjoining the State Route 73 corridor must remain stable for the corridor to be stable. Businesses “count rooftops” when they consider where to locate, and beyond that, they seek to be in places that present an image of success. Neighborhoods that are losing population (beyond minor variations) offer a shrinking market to any new business, as well as those already in the area. In addition to population, the neighborhood needs to present a physical appearance that suggests stability. Poorly maintained buildings, and vacant lots send a signal of decline that discourages businesses and deters customers from coming into the area. To this end the development and redevelopment along the corridor should be designed and operated to ensure compatibility with the adjoining neighborhoods. Improved connectivity (neighborhoods to the corridor) in the form of sidewalk and roadway improvements that are developed following the principles of Complete Streets, Context Sensitive Streets and Green Streets are recommended for arterial and collector streets within the adjacent neighborhoods.

4. Product (Business) Mix. Simply put, are the market’s needs being met? Most people have options in where they can shop. Regardless of what level a district may be functioning, it has competition. Especially at the neighborhood level, people will generally choose to shop at the nearest commercial district, provided it meets their needs. When it is lacking critical stores, customers will shop elsewhere.

“...how do we transform the State Route 73 corridor into a place that is attractive, a destination, economically stable and frankly - generates more revenue for the City.”

5. Social Interaction. The most successful commercial areas are also characterized by serving as a social gathering place. This may occur through businesses such as coffee shops and restaurants where people get together, or in public spaces such as pocket parks, plazas, sidewalks where people gather, sit, or walk.

6. Safety & the Perception of Safety. For most people to shop an area, it must be perceived as safe. The perception is more important than the reality, and many places that are safe are held back by a poor reputation. Addressing pedestrian safety - is only part of the challenge when confronted by a longstanding reputation.



Map of Existing Land Use along State Route 73

Objectives:

1. New development and redevelopment should include:
 - a. Pedestrian-friendly designed roads,
 - b. Connectivity of road and pedestrian networks,
 - c. A reduction of parking requirements or flexible parking requirements, and
 - d. Reduced front yard/building setbacks.
2. Guide the physical form of development along State Route 73 by utilizing a combination of standards and guidelines to ensure that all new development is of a high quality regardless of use.
3. Provide incentives for private development to incorporate well designed and usable commercial green space parallel to the road right-of-way.
4. Incentivize the construction of compact, new mixed-use projects as a viable use of underutilized commercial properties.
5. Facilitate the development of new housing units along the corridor, to attract higher income residents and professionals.

The City should encourage use of build-to lot lines, decorative signage, landscaping, awnings, and parking orientation that can be used to reinforce the overall corridor character.

Strategies:

Use the range of public development implementation tools such as business improvement districts, tax abatement policies, design guidelines, zoning, and accelerated approval of development projects to achieve the vision.

1. **Develop Unique But Coordinated Corridor Identity and Signage.** The City should develop a program to create and project a new and strong image for the State Route 73 corridor. Central to this strategy is an increase in economic development performance and enhanced quality of life. This brand strategy should ultimately be incorporated into streetscaping, signage, economic development, and marketing/advertising programs to produce a reputation that is positively memorable, attractive, unique, sustainable, and reinforced and enriched by communication from the City.
2. **Revised Zoning Code.** Towards this goal, the State Route 73-corridor zoning overlay should be established where mixed-use development is encouraged, and commercial, institutional, and multi-family buildings require design review. Standards for the corridor should also recognize the different nature along the corridor -commercial and residential and apply appropriate design, streetscape, signage, and use standards. The transformed corridor should be surrounded by a true mix of uses - from professional office, shopping, dining, entertainment options, and hotel to apartments, condos, and single-family residential. The zoning code should also be revised to allow higher densities in select areas of the corridor to facilitate vertical mixed-use and to achieve pedestrian concentrations that create a lively, safe, attractive, and entertaining streetscape. Upper story residential should be allowed as a “permitted use” subject to design review.

3. In addition, the overlay should address the following:

- a. Appropriate Signage
- b. Permitted Uses (incentivize the review and approval process for desired uses and development forms) including the review process for upper story residential and accessory dwelling units
- c. Prohibited Uses
- d. Commercial Open Space Design
- e. Building Orientation, Fenestration, and Design
- f. Encourage parking that is located behind or to the side of buildings. Assess and amend parking requirements to ensure required capacity is in-line with the goals of each commercial area, and that appropriate landscaped islands are required
- g. Landscaping and buffer standards that provide for a suitable transition from commercial districts to neighborhoods. Align landscaping and signage requirements to ensure that investment in the corridor results in a positive image and character
- h. Create more efficient and predictable review and approval processes and expedited review for projects that meet development objectives beyond the base zoning requirements
- i. Amend residential and commercial standards so that they reflect the intended character of the corridor in different areas
- j. Consistently enforce maintenance and appearance standards, especially for vacant properties that are most at risk to deterioration

- 3. **Establish Corridor Design Review.** The City should work to ensure that commercial and multi-family developments along the corridor are carefully designed, compact, and pedestrian oriented. Off-street parking should be guided to the rear of buildings to allow maximum frontage on State Route 73. Parking requirements should be kept to a minimum to avoid unnecessary surface lot size and associated development costs and to ensure a project that is in keeping with the quality of a walkable corridor. The overlay district should include incentives for development that define the street and include guidelines when parking is directed to the sides or behind buildings.
- 4. **Incentivize the Addition of New Liner Buildings and the Development of Out-lots.** Liner buildings can create more walkable frontages for buildings with large blank walls. The development of out-lots can help to create a more walkable, fine-grained corridor. This should be done through both revisions to the zoning code and development incentives offered to development that enhances the goals for the corridor.

WALKABLE ENVIRONMENT

An area that feels safe because the sidewalk is wide enough and slightly offset from traffic, is reasonably level, and has high quality curb cuts that are easy for people using wheelchairs and walkers to navigate. Traffic signals are programed to minimize pedestrian-car conflicts.



- 5. **Add Safe Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections.** New pedestrian connections and crosswalks are made between the corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods. Streets should be walkable - safe, attractive, and convenient for pedestrians, including people walking, strolling, and exercising for utilitarian purposes. Pedestrian facilities should be designed to be convenient and safe for a wide variety of people, including persons with disabilities, elderly people and children, people pushing strollers, and strong, fit pedestrians walking quickly. In cooperation with ODOT, determine appropriate location and design for crosswalks-conceivable along Charles Street, Millard Drive, Deardoff Road, Wells Bridge Drive, or Commerce Center Drive.
- 6. **Install Gateway.** A well-designed gateway should be established at the State Route 73 and I-75 interchange.
- 7. **Pedestrian Plazas.** Where possible, new developments should include small pedestrian plazas along the sidewalks of the State Route 73 corridor that includes brick pavers, landscaping, and hardscape (benches, etc.). These plazas will encourage sidewalk usage and add to the sense of this area as a civic center. A positive consequence of the pandemic has been the cordoning-off of sections of parking lots for outdoor dining and recreation. Here, residents can enjoy amenities, meet with friends, and walk between establishments.
- 8. **Improve the Intersection of Riley Boulevard and East 2nd Street:** The existing intersection at Riley Boulevard and East 2nd Street provides a difficult transition into downtown and remains generally automobile-dominated and inhospitable to pedestrians. The City should explore a roundabout in this location to calm traffic.

Pedestrian Amenities
 Provision should be made in the design of all developments for non-vehicular circulation systems, including but not limited to sidewalks, pathways, and bikeways. A green strip should be provided along State Route 73 for any new development, with a minimum depth of 20 feet. The green strip should be made up of existing vegetation, planted vegetation, or a combination of the two. The green strip should be located between the front property line and the building or parking area, whichever is closest to the street (within the front setback).

Such a roundabout could provide safer and more efficient traffic flow and provide a location for a special marker informing one's sense of arrival, such as a fountain or vertical element. Riley Boulevard currently carries the State Route 73 designation which may limit potential changes to this intersection. Whether or not it is ultimately redesigned with a roundabout, intersection improvements, at a minimum, should include widened sidewalks, landscaped pedestrian refuge islands, signature crosswalks, and other possible traffic calming measures.

- 9. **Apply Context Sensitive, Complete and Green Streets Policies to Roadway Improvements Along State Route 73.** Work with ODOT to install street improvements that allies with the policy recommendations for Context Sensitive, Complete and Green Streets. Create a barrier-free walkable environment.
- 10. **Flexible Streetscapes.** The City of Franklin should consider an approach that creates a "blank canvas" that encourages personalization by the businesses, and property owners. Rather than investing in decorative

elements (benches, trash cans, flowerpots and hanging baskets, and banners) that remain static and unchanging. The City should build infrastructure that is adaptable and will support the design elements that the local businesses provide. This will result in unique, personalized, and evolving spaces along the corridor. There are other benefits to this approach including lower construction and maintenance costs for the City.

11. Land Assemblage and Request for Development Proposals. With the appropriate zoning in place the City should explore land assemblage (the development of smaller lots as a unified development) and actively seek developers or development proposals that supports the vision for the corridor, creates a sense of place, and improves conditions for walking.



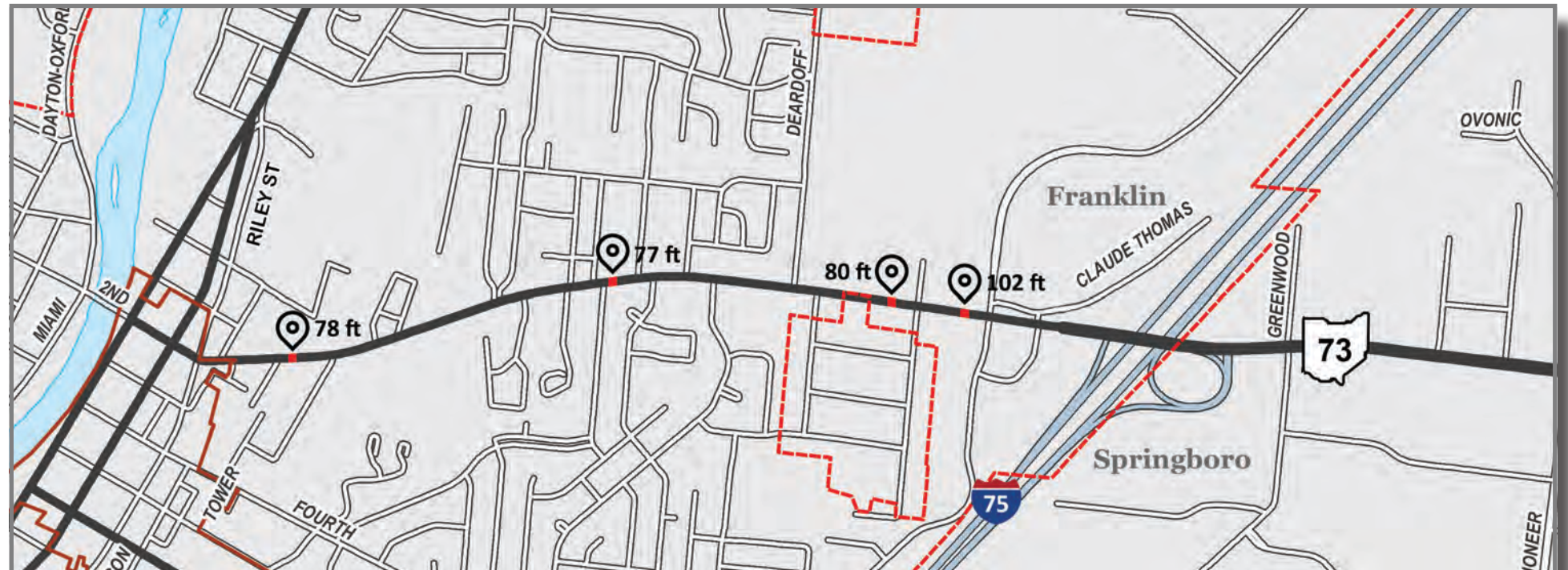
City of Franklin Division of Fire



City of Franklin Fire Engine 17 and Police Cruiser

12. Coordination with Commercial Brokerage Community. To attract retail and restaurants to the corridor the City of Franklin should identify available and desirable sites where these businesses can locate (existing buildings or on out-lots). In capitalizing on these opportunities, the City should work with its commercial brokerage community, tapping their knowledge and industry contacts to reach decision-makers within the targeted businesses. The City should be prepared with detailed information on available sites, demographic data, and information concerning potential incentives for development project.

13. Enforcement. The condition of some private property continues to be an impediment to its use, and to the vitality of the corridor. The City may consider targeting the State Route 73 corridor for stepped up enforcement as one possible approach to the issue. Enforcement can target specific issues that are either very visible or present the greatest threats to safety.



Street Dimensions along State Route 73, showing the right-of-way width of certain sections of the road.

Street Design:

The roughly 80 feet of road right-of-way along the State Route 73 corridor could be designed as a Complete Street, meeting the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Drive lanes should be no more than 12 feet wide, corner radii should be minimized to encourage slow speed turns, and sidewalks should be generous in width. Landscaping should emphasize the use of native trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses. Streetscape elements should include pedestrian lights, bike racks, benches, and trash receptacles. Green infrastructure, including stormwater planters should be encouraged.

The dimensions of State Route 73 change along the corridor, between Riley Street to Interstate 75. A specific intersection along State Route 73 and Eastlawn Drive is the distinction between this right-of-way differential. East of this intersection, the road right-of-way is 100 feet, and already has accessibility to a sidewalk for pedestrians; West of this intersection, the right-of-way stays around 80 feet towards Downtown.

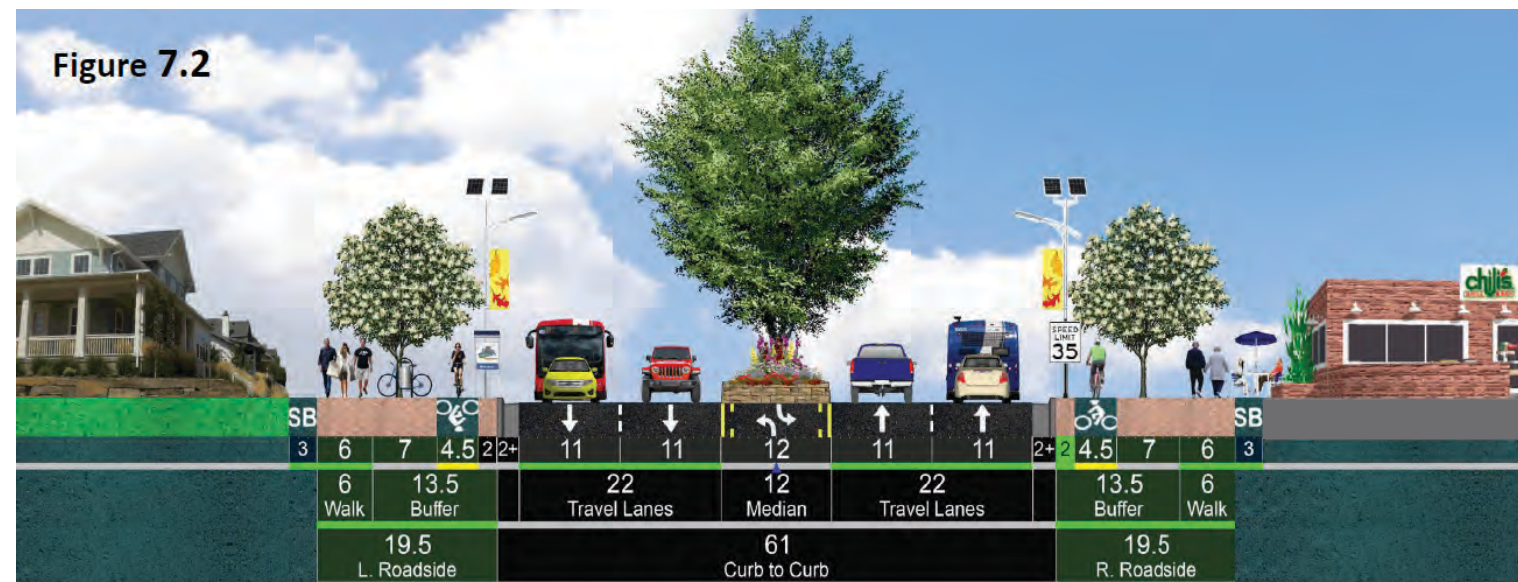
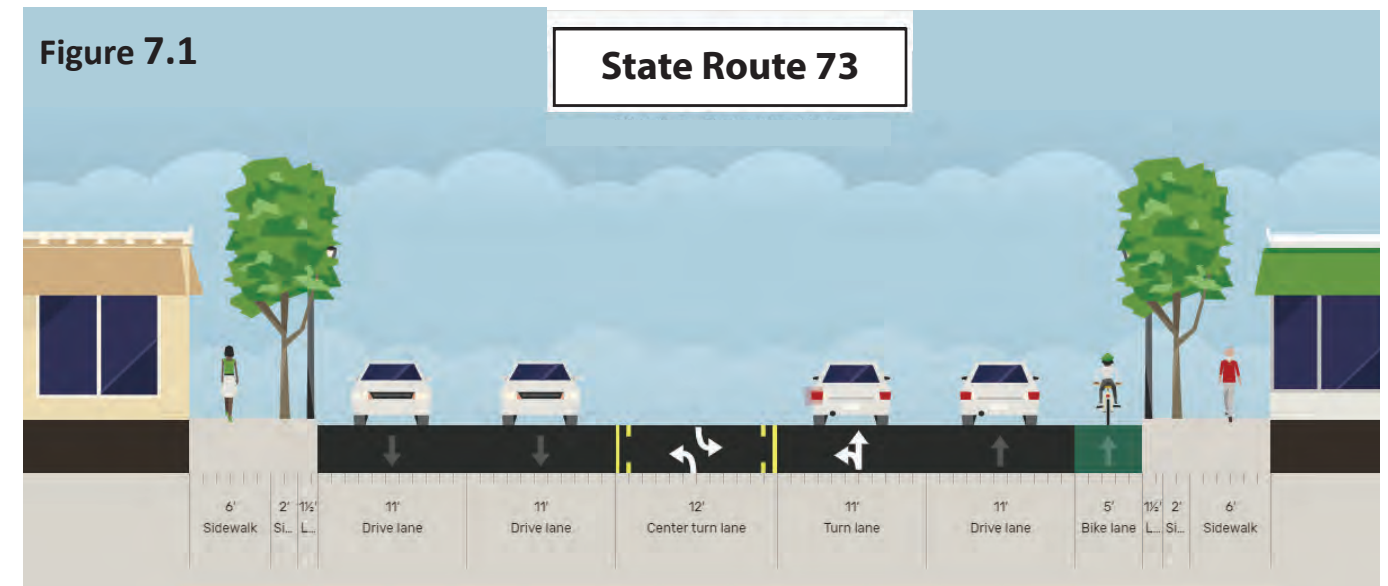
What Does Success Look Like?

- Vibrant and aesthetically pleasing retail environment.
- Market rate mixed-use development (residential and commercial).
- Quality architecture with a defined identity for the corridor.
- Buildings adjacent or proximate to sidewalks.
- Numerous high-quality parklets or plazas.
- Improved parking strategies and shared parking.
- Bike infrastructure adjacent to the roadway.
- Complete system of sidewalks that link adjacent neighborhoods to the corridor.
- Frequent, safe, and well-marked pedestrian crossings.
- ADA features that improve accessibility for all users.
- Lighting that improves visibility and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Streetscapes that include amenities for visual interest and safety, (seating, trees for shade & buffers).

Figure 7.1 on the right shows a street view, showing dimensions of an 80ft right-of-way.

Figure 7.2 below shows an example of a "Complete Street", with street dimensions at 100ft. This meets the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

These show the difference in dimensions that both streets have, and potential for a "Complete Street" on both figures.



Both Examples show:

- Sidewalk: 6 ft
- Drive Lanes: 11ft
- Center Turn Lanes: 12ft
- Bike Lane: 4.5 - 5ft

Recommendations - Public Realm

State Route 73 Corridor - Character Images:

Plaza and Streetscape:

The images on these next pages express the general character, or potential inspiration for plaza and streetscape along the State Route 73 corridor.



Landscape beautification



Landscape beautification with access to public utility, street and sidewalk lighting, and seating areas



Widened sidewalks with shrubbery



Landscape beautification with access to public utility, street and sidewalk lighting, and seating areas

Recommendations - Public Realm

State Route 73 Corridor - Character Images:

Continued:



Established crosswalk for pedestrians



Widened sidewalks, with tree canopy



Garden common area



"Complete Street" design showing access for pedestrian, bicyclists and motorists



"Complete Street" design

Gateways

Introduction:

To strengthen the unique image, identity, and character of Franklin, this Plan directs that design standards and guidelines be developed for key “Gateways” to the City. Gateways are areas that serve as entrances, they provide a snapshot of Franklin that leaves a lasting impression on visitors. The goal is to improve the City’s identity and improve the pedestrian and motorist experience through carefully designed signage, landscaping, and special design features. Ideally, gateways should be designed to establish a “sense of place” and provide a welcoming introduction to Franklin. The gateway should receive special priority and include signs inviting people to stop and shop at the City’s retail businesses, Downtown, and restaurants. This section identifies the location, purpose, and general design characteristics of gateways and where applicable, recommends policies and implementation actions. Design decisions in terms of color choices, materials, and vegetation should strive to maintain consistency for all gateways.

Through dialogue with the CAC, two general types of gateways have been identified: Primary Gateways, which are proposed along well traveled roadways and Secondary Gateways which serve as an entrance to the City along a lower order or less developed roadway. For both types of gateways, visitors should immediately be greeted with a welcoming sense of entry to the City, marking the “edge of the City” entry points from the surrounding communities. The design should be in coordination with streetscape improvement whenever possible. Primary Gateways, in addition to being clean, welcoming, and well landscaped, should provide visitors with way finding signs to help guide them easily to their destinations whether it be shopping or attending cultural events. Secondary Gateways should include more subtle signage.

Interstate 75 Gateway:

For many visitors, Interstate 75 provides the first and often only view of Franklin. Most people coming to and from Franklin do so via State Route 73 and I-75. Coordinated, attractive signage is important because it is often the only opportunity to get the attention of the passersby and encourage them to visit the City. The interstate gateway along with the State Route 73 corridor needs to be visually appealing to attract shoppers who have many regional shopping areas to choose from in the Miami Valley region. CAC members found the existing primary gateway along State Route 73 to be too busy, and easily lost. A city partnership with the State Route 73 business community to provide the landscaping and streetscape beautification along this corridor and signage directing visitors to shopping destinations should be considered as part of a long-term economic development strategy for the City. The design should be similar to what is already implemented at the Interstate 75 and State Route 123 interchange.

Landscape improvements to the ramps provide an opportunity to enhance the transition from I-75 to State Route 73 and there is a need for a unified signage system to announce the entrance into Franklin, orient visitors, and direct them to the Downtown and other destinations within the City.

As a major entry to Franklin, this gateway plays a unique role in directing visitors Downtown and warrants future study.



Franklin Historic Marker: Lewis Davis Campbell



Franklin Historical Marker: The Old Log Post Office

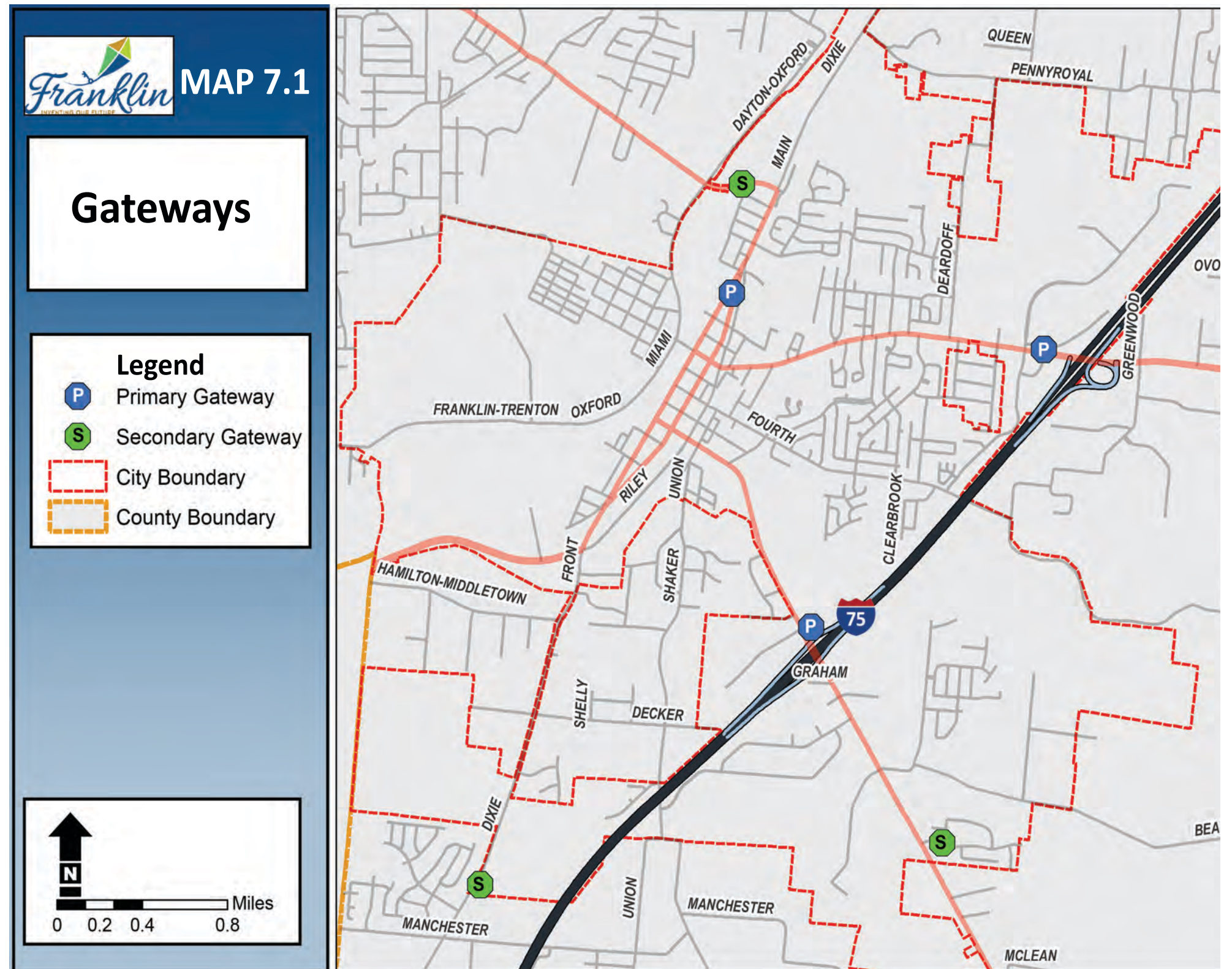
1. Gateway Location and Priority Map.

Map 7.1 on the right shows the locations of gateways throughout the City, based on primary and secondary level. Shown below are photos of the current primary and secondary gateways that are currently in Franklin.

Primary Gateway



Secondary Gateway



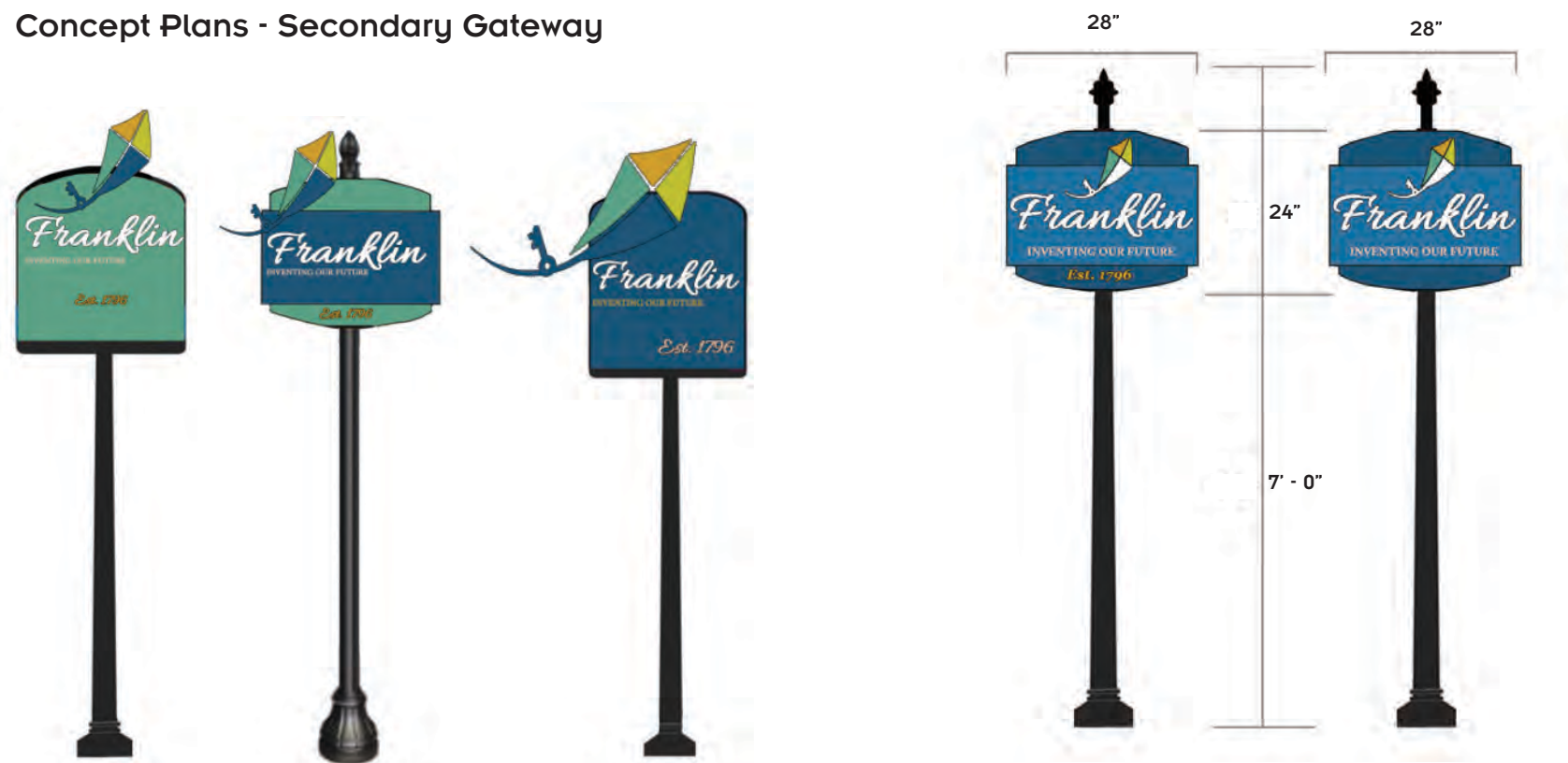
Strategies:

2. Concept Plan - Primary Gateway

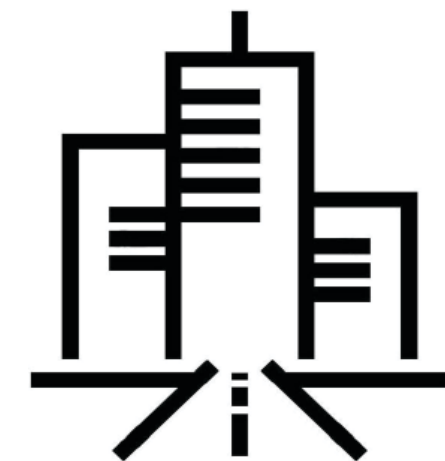


Listed to the left are concept plans that update the City's existing primary gateways to strengthen the City's image. The existing primary gateway can be expanded to utilize more land, providing for a broader signage with greater presence, as both gateways exist on City property (Claude-Thomas Road and North Main Street) that has available space. Improvements can be made to the gateway through added frontage and side landscaping. Additional lighting improvements can help refine the visibility of each gateway throughout the day. Emphasis from CAC members showed interest in a message on the back of the Primary Gateway, conveying a message to residents and visitors as they leave the City. The secondary gateway can be improved through the usage of color and utilization of Franklin's kite as a signal into entering the city. Shown on the left are five example concepts for color alterations and usage of the kite.

3. Concept Plans - Secondary Gateway



As these are concept drawings, each do not reflect the final product to any new change towards city signage. The exact graphic design of the signs and the color or graphic coding should be developed by a signage design specialist, and should be reflected in primary and secondary gateways in addition to wayfinding signage.



4. The immediate vicinity of the Interstate 75 access ramps would benefit from landscape improvements and improved signage directing visitors downtown. A gateway with signs should be located on City property. Improvements to signage may be in the form of an upgrade to the existing site. In addition, installing a unified, streetscape from the banks of the access ramp to Claude-Thomas Road could be significantly strengthened by additional tree row plantings. It is recommended that the City work with the State to prepare a joint master plan for this gateway.



Primary gateway at intersection of Claude-Thomas Road and State Route 73

Branding and Wayfinding



Branding:

All portions of the City-commercial areas, schools, neighborhoods, etc. - could benefit from a multi-media marketing campaign that paints a picture of all the amenities that make Franklin a great place to raise a family or operate a business. In order to implement this type of campaign, the City should:

- Work with the entire Franklin community, including residents, business owners, service providers, etc., to define an image for Franklin that can be advertised to the Miami Valley Region and effectively convey what Franklin would like to become.
- Establish a campaign leveraging a menu of multi-media tools, including print and web materials, advertising, press releases, speaking engagements, and social media to promote Franklin.
- Work with the Chamber of Commerce, ODOT, the Warren County Visitors Bureau, to brand Franklin through signage, gateways, and advertising that would capitalize on the City's location along the Great Miami River and along I-75.
- Incorporate wayfinding as an important part of the City's branding efforts.



Wayfinding:

The wayfinding system is intended to help establish a desired aesthetic appearance that complements the City's heritage as well as its vision for the future. This plan identifies potential locations for these signs and includes recommendations for incremental implementation to guide the City's improvement efforts over the next several years. The recommendation in this section is informed by the results of the public survey, stakeholder input, the CAC comments and identified best practices, and a visual preference survey. A unified signage system should be developed to address the need for directional information at key gateway locations, at key decision locations along primary roadways. The proposed wayfinding system should be:

- Flexible and modular to evolve over time as additional directional needs develop. Simple directional signage system, with arrow-shaped signs printed with large and easy-to-read names of destinations.
- Appropriate for installation in both primary and secondary gateways. As well as additional signage between City Parks.
- Unique with a distinctive "local theme" to convey the City's identity and incorporates graphic themes established in the branding strategy developed by the City's marketing consultant.
- Include vehicular and pedestrian signs and business directory kiosks and incorporate features to facilitate the location of parking, efficient vehicle circulation, and pedestrian orientation.
- Unified by way of a distinctive and unique pole system.



Primary gateway at intersection of Riley Street and North Main Street

Existing Conditions:

The City has a collection of existing signs in various locations—including an existing gateway sign on the north side of State Route 73 near the Commerce Center Drive intersection (on City owned property). The appearance, logo, materials, and colors used in this sign contributes to the City’s image. Nevertheless, this location could be improved with additional landscaping and additional wayfinding signage elements. Other existing signs have been in place for some time and need to be updated.

Historic signs documenting a brief history of Franklin should additionally be paired with the appearance and colors used in the City’s gateway signage.

Goals and Strategies

Goals:

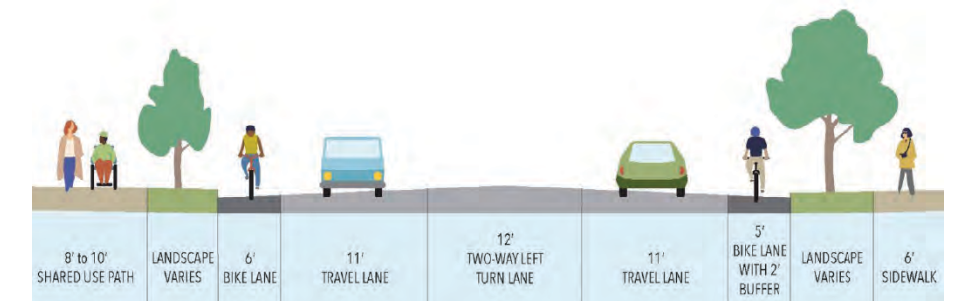
The City wishes to increase visitation and establish a positive image. One way in which to accomplish this goal is to enhance the visitor and resident experience by helping visitors find the City’s assets they seek, particularly those located within commercial centers, and to discover assets they had not been aware of, through a wayfinding system of signage. The signage system should be designed to improve the City image, leaving a lasting, positive impression of Franklin as a special place. The priority is wayfinding in downtown and to guide visitors arriving via I-75 and State Route 73 to the downtown business district and parking, the riverfront park, and businesses along State Route 73.



Franklin Wayfinding Signage

Strategies:

- 1. Design a Series of Wayfinding Elements.** To assist the City in becoming more accessible, easy-to-navigate, and a more exciting destination, the City should retain a signage design firm to design a system of gateway and wayfinding signage. The signage system should include gateway wayfinding signs for the primary entrances, gateway signage for secondary entrances, pedestrian interactive directories, car and bike parking signage, and streetlamp signage.
- 2. Design the Logo.** The designs should comprise of using the new logo or kite as a sculptural focal element throughout the entire system, as well as the new color palette to create visually attractive and welcoming signage to coordinate with the new overall look and enhance visitor experience.
- 3. Brand/market the State Route 73 corridor to generate increased customer traffic.** Franklin can bring together multiple resources to help define the brand, and to coordinate effective marketing campaigns for the corridor. This might include collaboration with the University of Dayton, University of Cincinnati, Miami University or other arts programs to use students to develop graphic designs and advertising materials.



Example design of road width and right-of-way

Community Facilities

Introduction:

Franklin is a place better described by its opportunities. Despite pockets of poverty and disinvestment adjacent to downtown, Franklin retains assets that any community would envy. Its location between two metro areas, the Great Miami River, stable neighborhoods, the architecture of its commercial and residential buildings, a regional trail system, access to interstate I-75, entertainment events, and other assets are resources that can be leveraged to bring vitality back to its commercial districts. An often-unrecognized asset is the City's community facilities and public services.

Sociability: Bring people together through places and programming.

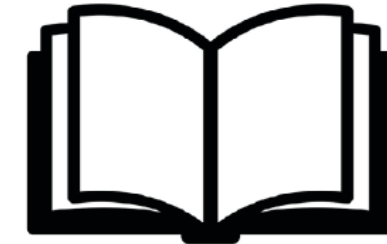


Franklin Public Library

The Library:

Franklin Public Library plays an important role in the revitalization of Franklin, due to its downtown location, strong sense of legitimacy among residents, and the types of services and programs provided. The Library serves as an anchor institution that invites residents for services and events and plays a critical role in involving and informing the community by offering a host of library services to meet their educational, recreational, informational, and intellectual needs. The Franklin Library offers the following services and roles:

- Serves as a technological hub, which includes public computers, scanning, printing, free Wi-Fi, digital content, and online resources.
- Continues to develop a well-rounded library collection that appeals to the needs of the community.
- Targets residents with innovative programs for all ages comprised of literacy programming, high school equivalency exam preparation classes, tutoring, and providing access to online programs that helps citizens gain workforce skills, career transitioning services, and furthering their hobby interests.
- Offers a broad mix of community services, fostering communication, and disseminating information such as forms and publications from primary sources.



- Showcases local history and serves as a public gathering place for events.
- Provides special collections including interlibrary loan materials for book clubs, teachers, parents, and group leaders.
- Delivers materials and provides outreach to homebound residents, congregate living facilities, daycare centers, and schools.

The Public Library is a unique and essential community resource that must be treasured.

Libraries are known for creating programs and services that address the needs, issues, and interests of their residents. The Franklin library could further play a critical role in involving and informing the community by offering a new generation of library services particularly as the number of residents increases. The library could be used as a place to create makerspaces, fab labs, and digital design studios, where residents of all ages build, explore, and learn. Libraries are also offering career transition services such as resume writing, interview skills workshops, and job coaching.

Strategies:

1. Recognize the Franklin Library as it masters many different roles- some traditionally associated with libraries, some not. These include offering a broad mix of community services, fostering communication, and disseminating information, showcasing Franklin’s history, serving as a public gathering place for events, displaying art for art organizations,
2. Work with the Library, the City’s Economic Development Department and the Chamber of Commerce to develop programs that fill important needs for employers, jobseekers, and consumers. Helping local start-up businesses acquire entrepreneurial skills. For people seeking work or taking on career changes, the library connects them to employers and specialized job training. In the absence of a visitors’ center, for the consumer, the library could provide information about the best businesses to patronize within the City.
3. Ensure that the library remains Downtown.

Visual Preference Survey:

The RPC conducted a visual preference survey (VPS) for the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) in order to best determine specific interests and ideas citizens, decision makers, and other stakeholders have for the City of Franklin. The survey helped to gauge public opinion on a variety of topic areas, including community design, architectural styles, land/streetscaping, and environmental options. Traditional and contemporary landscapes were the most requested form of architectural style. Shown on the right are examples of neighborhood and commercial streetscapes in the style residents found most appealing to implement into the current City landscape.

Visual Preference Survey

Results:



City Signage:

Residents preferred a contemporary sign to showcase the entrance for the City of Franklin along the intersection of I-75 and State Route 73. The lighting and landscape along the signage differentiated from a modern and traditional style, that can be in a primary gateway.

Contemporary wayfinding signage was deemed most useful to residents, providing resourceful information directly to residents, as shown in the example above. Locations such as Main Street, eateries, parking, business districts, and bike paths are all located through this signage. The contemporary style is minimalist, highlighting prominent locations with large lettering, contrasting colors, and prominent arrows for directional use.



Neighborhood Streetscape:

Residents were found to prefer the traditional streetscape for neighborhoods, including sidewalks, on-street parking, road frontage, and public utility easement for residential use.



Commercial Streetscape:

Residents preferred a traditional commercial streetscape, reducing trees and high shrubbery from interfering with street sign and frontage. While still maintaining wide sidewalks, in conjunction with potted plants and flower gardens, the traditional streetscape is a much more open view for residents and consumers.

Public Facilities & the Co-Location of Services:

This section involves maximizing efficiencies and resources through coordination among City agencies, the school district, non-profit organizations, and with Franklin Township and other municipalities for the potential co-location of facilities. It includes examining the City’s role in planning, encouraging, and participating in partnerships for the development and/or operation of community facilities.



Co-location can help Franklin to achieve some of the goals described in the Comprehensive Plan, such as maximizing the public benefits that a given public property, asset, facility, or combination thereof can deliver. Co-location can help individually, by providing a variety of services typically needed by the same people in the same facility, or by keeping facilities occupied and thus safer day and night, such as when schools are used for community meetings in the evening. Co-location can be physical, when two or more uses occur on the same site, and/or temporal, where different uses take place at different times even in the same rooms or same building on the site, as when religious congregations rent school auditoriums on weekends and private sports leagues use city athletic facilities.

Thus, co-location includes but is not limited to the following potential combinations of uses on a single site:

- One or more community services or programs located with government offices or in government facilities
- City facilities (the wellfields) that can be also used to produce green energy
- Public uses, such as the library serving as a visitor’s center
- Child development facilities located on school property
- Community Centers at parks
- Multiple health and wellness-related facilities located alongside government uses
- Office space for Main Street Franklin or the Chamber of Commerce
- The Farmer’s Market and food business incubator or community kitchen



Strategies:

1. Seek opportunities to co-locate community facilities to maximize efficiencies in service provision and reduce capital and operating costs.
2. Establish and implement high standards for City facility design and locate community facilities to maximize their contribution to the physical character of the area in which they are located and to the City in general (civic architecture). Community facilities should be designed to foster efficient government, represent a positive image for the City, and illustrate to private developers the City’s commitment to high quality construction.
3. Design and locate City facilities to maximize their potential use for other purposes (e.g., school, non-profit office space, community meeting spaces, etc.).
4. Ensure that community facilities or schools (The Anthony Wayne Elementary School) that are no longer utilized for their originally intended use, are redeveloped as an asset to the neighborhood through cooperative efforts between the facility/building owner, the City, the neighborhood, and local stakeholders.
5. Ensure that all community facilities are designed to be accessible for the elderly, people with disabilities, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services:

The personnel, facilities, equipment, and services established to protect the safety and property of the public are among the most essential community resources. A safe and secure environment that projects a climate of health, vitality, and community spirit among residents of all ages is integral to building a strong Franklin. The CAC feels that the City provides excellent public safety services and that it is not possible to place a value on the civic stability, security, and quality of life that accompanies successful public safety service.

Fire protection and prevention is of vital importance to every citizen and visitor in Franklin and is one of the most fundamental and valuable services provided. Fire stations in Franklin are listed in Map 7.2). Not only is the provision of adequate, state-of-the-art firefighting equipment and trained personnel vital to the preservation of life and property, it also significantly impacts the cost of individual fire insurance premiums. The cost of insurance is a sizable component in overall housing costs. Through the continued provision of adequate fire protection, the City of Franklin can also play a role in the cost of insurance. Insurance companies use a classification system provided by the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) to determine the level of fire protection for each home they insure. The City should continue to provide a high level of fire and emergency medical services.

The City of Franklin achieved high response times for the Fire and EMS divisions; In 2021, the City of Franklin Division of Fire was averaging response times of 5.56 minutes. This includes responses to contracted Franklin Township areas, and routine responses to certain alarms. The average EMS response time was 3.27 minutes, including responses in the City of Franklin and any mutual aid responses¹.

1. City of Franklin Division of Fire & EMS

To maintain and improve the high level of emergency and medical services, the following strategies are recommended:

Strategies:

1. Continue to provide efficient, effective, and timely fire and emergency medical services.



2. As the City grows and redevelops, position equipment throughout the City to provide timely and effective fire service response.



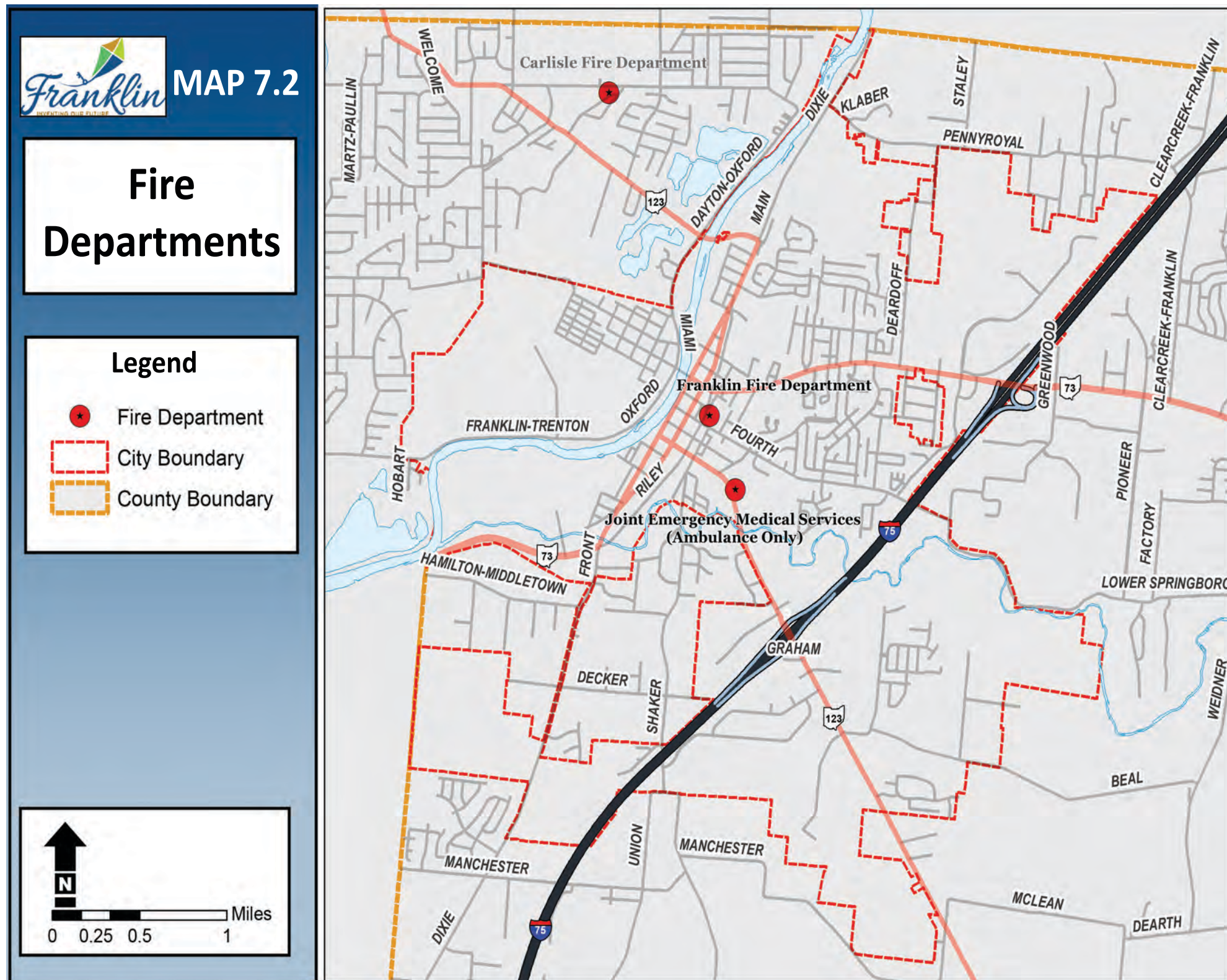
3. Continue to periodically assess fire service locations to ensure that they are strategically located to provide service which meets a defined set of standards.



Franklin Fire Rescue Truck



Franklin Fire Department



Public Safety:

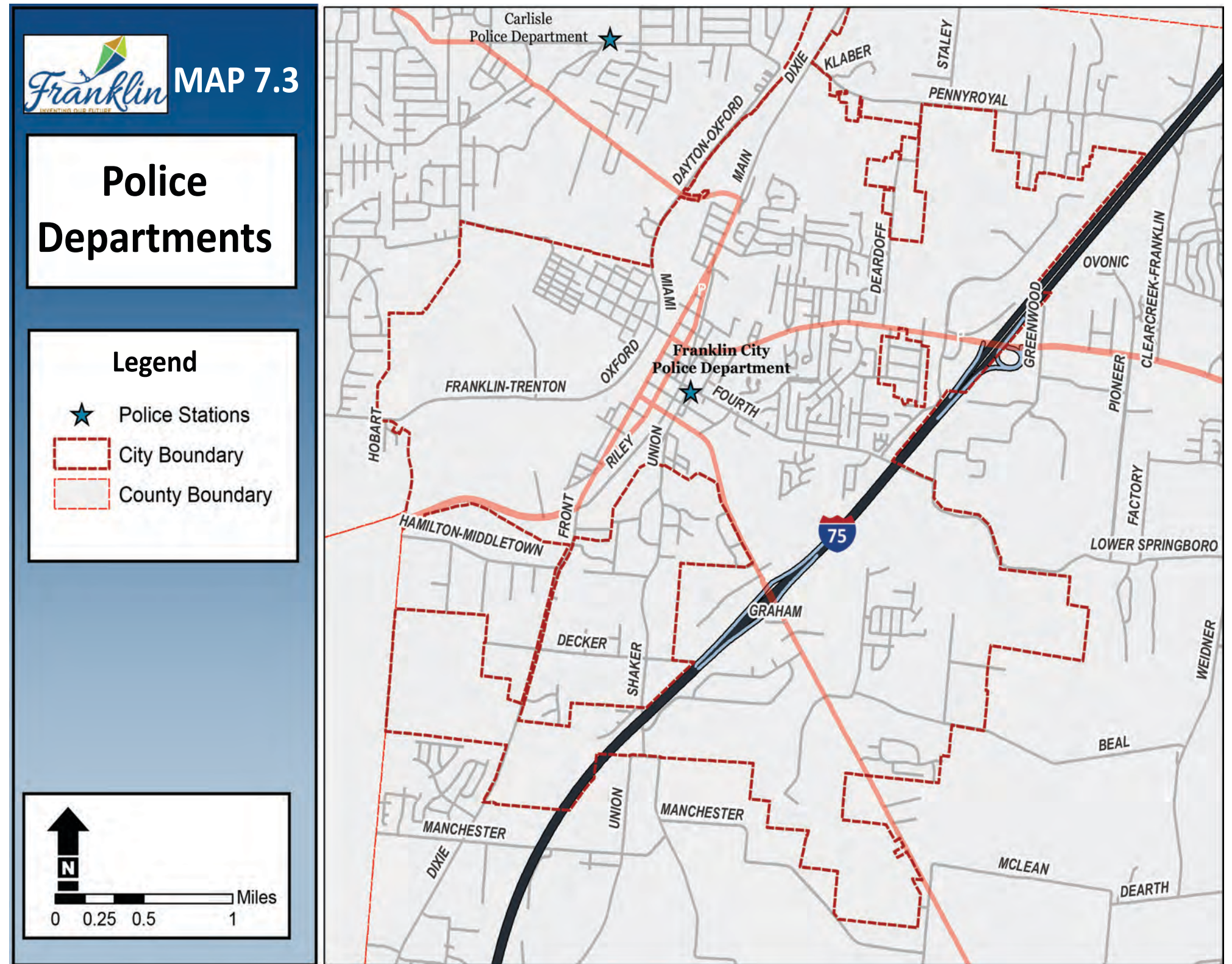
Efficient and effective law enforcement is also essential to the quality of life in a community. Law enforcement in Franklin is provided by the Warren County Sheriff's Department and the City of Franklin Police Department. The location of the Sheriff's Office and those of the City's are provided in Map 7.3. A total of 151 index crimes were reported in Franklin in 2021 - a 46% decrease from the 327 index crimes reported in 2019.¹ There are seven index offenses: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, breaking and entering, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. Index offenses are typically categorized as violent (murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) and property crimes (breaking and entering, larceny, and motor vehicle theft).

Strategies:

1. Continue to provide quality police services in a reactive, proactive, and coactive manner.
2. Ensure that the Police Department can provide effective and timely service to all portions of the City through data collection and monitoring, communication technologies, physical linkages throughout the City, and adequate staffing and vehicle fleets.
3. Enhance outreach to community schools, neighborhood associations, and other local organizations to help improve policing through local awareness and communication.
4. Attend community events and provide education and awareness programs that teach residents how to be safe.

1. See city-data.com: Crime rate in Franklin, Ohio (OH)

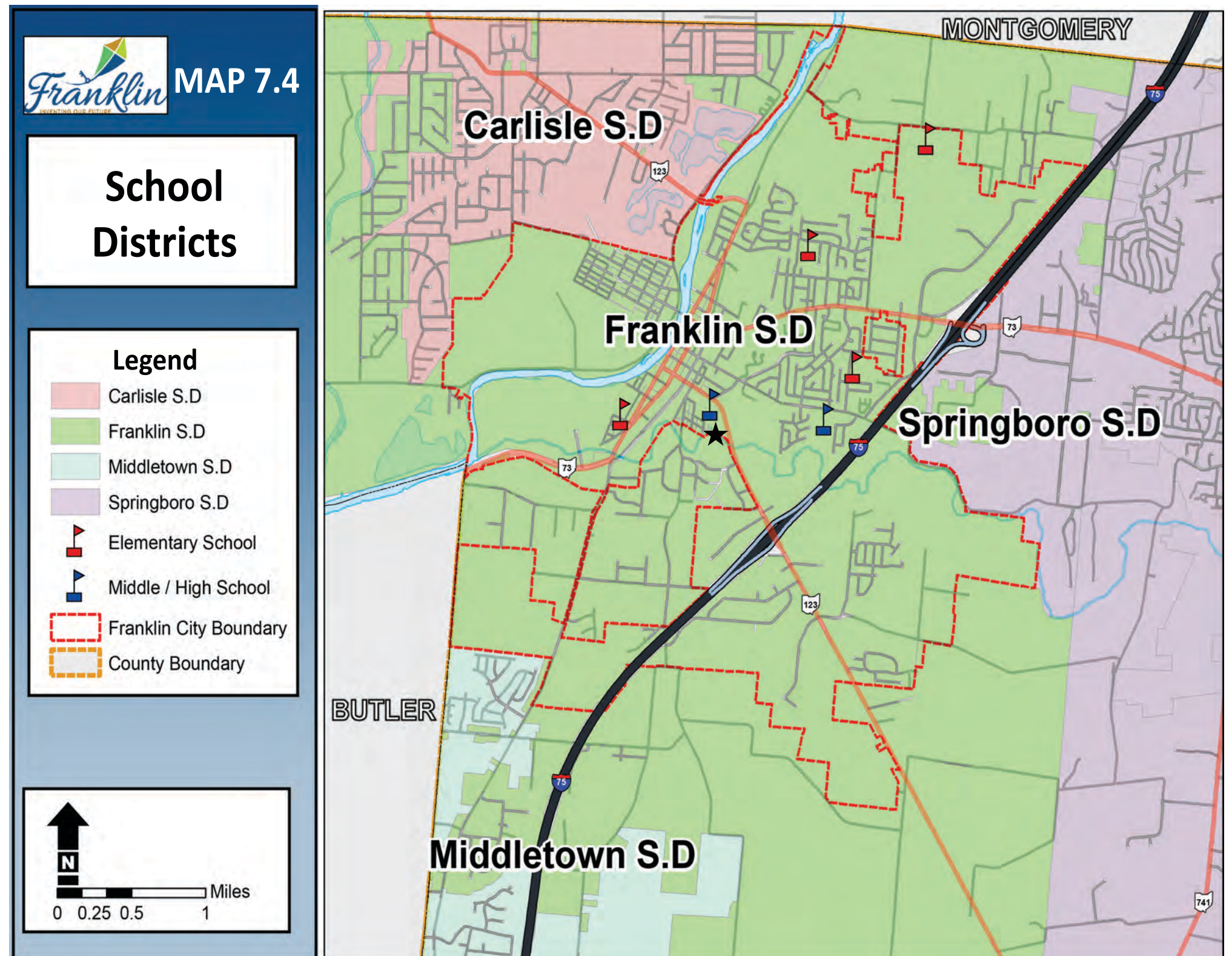
5. Maintain mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities and share data and statistics with surrounding communities to monitor crime trends and proactively curb criminal activities.
6. Work with zoning code enforcement officers to improve the monitoring and maintenance of vacant properties and structures to discourage loitering.
7. Revise the zoning code to include a site plan review process that addresses “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design-CPTED” and ensure that the BZA, and design review board are trained to apply CPTED principles.
8. Develop a set of benchmarks to indicate potential need for additional stations.
9. Use Internet connected cameras to monitor City parks and streets.



Education:

Education is a lifelong process that consists of two basic components - the first is a high-quality foundation of basic education through the K-12 system, followed by an on-going system of higher education and career training opportunities. Cities that prioritize and support education are better positioned to succeed in today's economy. Franklin residents have demonstrated this commitment with the approval of a new school levy to build a new high school and improve educational facilities. Franklin City School District provides administration for five elementary schools, one junior high school, and one high school. The boundaries of the City's school district (Franklin City Schools) and the locations of K-12 and higher education institutions are shown on Map 7.4.

Residents have stated interest in providing access to advanced workforce training programs and higher education as an integral component to achieve economic sustainability. Several other public and private institutions of higher learning are located within commuting distance for Franklin residents in the Miami Valley region, including the Warren County Career Center, Miami University Middletown, Sinclair Community College, and University of Dayton. These institutions also provide residents with a greater level of access to cultural and recreational events, research resources, meeting and conference facilities, and distance education opportunities.



Note: The City of Franklin opens the new high school in 2023, and is located on East 6th Street. The location is shown by the ★.

Strategies:

1. **Provide City-based programs that are accessible to all children.** Sports and high school sports are revered institutions in Franklin. Sports, when delivered appropriately, offer physical, social, emotional, and academic benefits, and stakeholders felt that there is room for improving the quality and quantity of diverse sports experiences for all children and residents, which in turn can produce a healthier Franklin. Schools are a natural place to connect with sports, thus the City and school district should cooperatively address increased access to school recreational facilities to serve more children through community partnerships, intramurals, student-led clubs, and other innovations that supplement the standard menu of sports programming.
2. Education programs are closely linked to the economy and can have benefits beyond those who attend schools.

Franklin - Where all residents have the opportunity to thrive.



The City should seek to leverage local education as a way of enhancing intergenerational relationships, community service, and excellence in academics. Ways to accomplish this include the following:

- a. Coordinate with the Franklin Library and Franklin City School District to provide services that reinforce school curricula.
 - b. Establish a City-sponsored awards program for children that excel in local school programs and activities.
 - c. Foster partnerships between local schools, the senior center, not-for-profits, and other potential outlets for volunteerism.
 - d. Collaborate with local employers to provide internship and mentorship programs through the Franklin City School District.
3. Schools anchor Franklin's neighborhoods. They help establish the identity and serve as the civic center of neighborhoods. As such, it is important that the City support the maintenance and expansion of school facilities, foster safe multi-modal access (Safe Routes to School program), and revise zoning to help mitigate negative impacts of school operations on nearby residential areas.
 4. Provide supporting infrastructure such as broadband, sidewalks and other pedestrian and bicycle connections, and streetscape. This should include updated school facilities to ensure compatibility and close integration between school facilities and surrounding land uses.

5. In cooperation with the Franklin School District, coordinate the location and design of schools to ensure that proposed school facilities are located consistent with and are safely accessible by pedestrian and bicycle modes to residential areas they serve. The use of schools to serve as community focal points should also be addressed.
6. Recognize the relationship between school quality, performance, safety, accessibility, and housing choices of residents and families in the revitalization of Franklin.



Franklin High School

Telecommunication:

The Internet has become an integral part of many aspects of our lives. We bank online, we learn online, we keep in touch with our families online, we conduct business online. We correspond with City Council members about development issues online. We book trips - all online. Doctors can review our x-rays with specialists in distant cities through broadband links. Our pharmacists can track our prescriptions and be more aware of potential medicinal conflicts through broadband links. As we age, we can use Internet connected health monitoring devices and services to stay in our homes longer. The Internet can give us information about an AMBER alert, and link police officers to criminal databases from around the country. In addition, as school districts decide to implement remote or hybrid learning, it becomes apparent that schools need additional technology resources to continue to conduct learning. The City of Franklin should make improving broadband a priority because of the high value broadband contributes to economic development, quality of life, education, and public safety. Improving broadband means:

- Increasing Capacity - increasing bandwidth to all subscriber classes or increasing the number of service providers.
- Improving Reliability - ensuring service is nearly always available even when the City's population has increases due to a special event.

Today broadband speeds are delivered over the airwaves via fixed and mobile wireless, using a variety of DSL technology, over cable companies' coaxial networks, and at the speed of light over fiber optic cabling. The literal definition of broadband has to do with the range of frequencies across which data signals travel. The recently approved federal infrastructure bill will drive an unprecedented amount of money to broadband projects, thus cities that plan and prepare now will find themselves in the best place to succeed in the future. The goal is to provide Franklin residents, and businesses with Internet access and means needed to participate fully in a digital society and to encourage economic development and attract technology. To this end, the City of Franklin should consider the use of grant funds to begin surveying, mapping, developing feasibility studies, and contracting high-level designs, signaling a commitment to improving local Internet access.



Broadband provides access to the highest quality Internet services- streaming media, and interactive services. Many of these current and newly developing services require the transfer of large amounts of data. Therefore, broadband service may be increasingly necessary to access the full range of services and opportunities that the Internet can offer.

1. Research and apply for eligible grants, including the Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion Grant Program and the BroadbandOhio Connectivity Grant to help with the infrastructure costs of the project and help build the networks in areas that need high-speed internet improvements.
2. Determine how existing government sites and community facilities may be utilized for the installation of broadband infrastructure.
3. Work with the Library and the Senior Center to develop digital literacy programs to utilize when expanding broadband coverage- reducing the number of adults that are digitally illiterate and increase the ability for children to understand how to access and utilize technologies and the internet to be successful.
4. Increase broadband industry career awareness by exposing high school students to the industry through curriculum and internships.

Poor Internet could negatively impact students and efforts to work from home and incomplete broadband connectivity could result in a competitive disadvantage.

Implementation of the Reinvent Franklin Comprehensive Plan is possible by the combined efforts of residents, neighborhoods, civic groups, and City government. The plan's policies and recommendations reflect the shared responsibility of the community, and input received during CAC meetings, stakeholder interviews, and the Community Workshop. A series of strategies, recommendations, and policy considerations have been developed to guide implementation of the Plan. Key findings and recommendations discussed within the earlier sections of the Plan have paved the way for the Implementation Chapter.



City of Franklin Administration Office & Municipal Court

Background

Purpose:

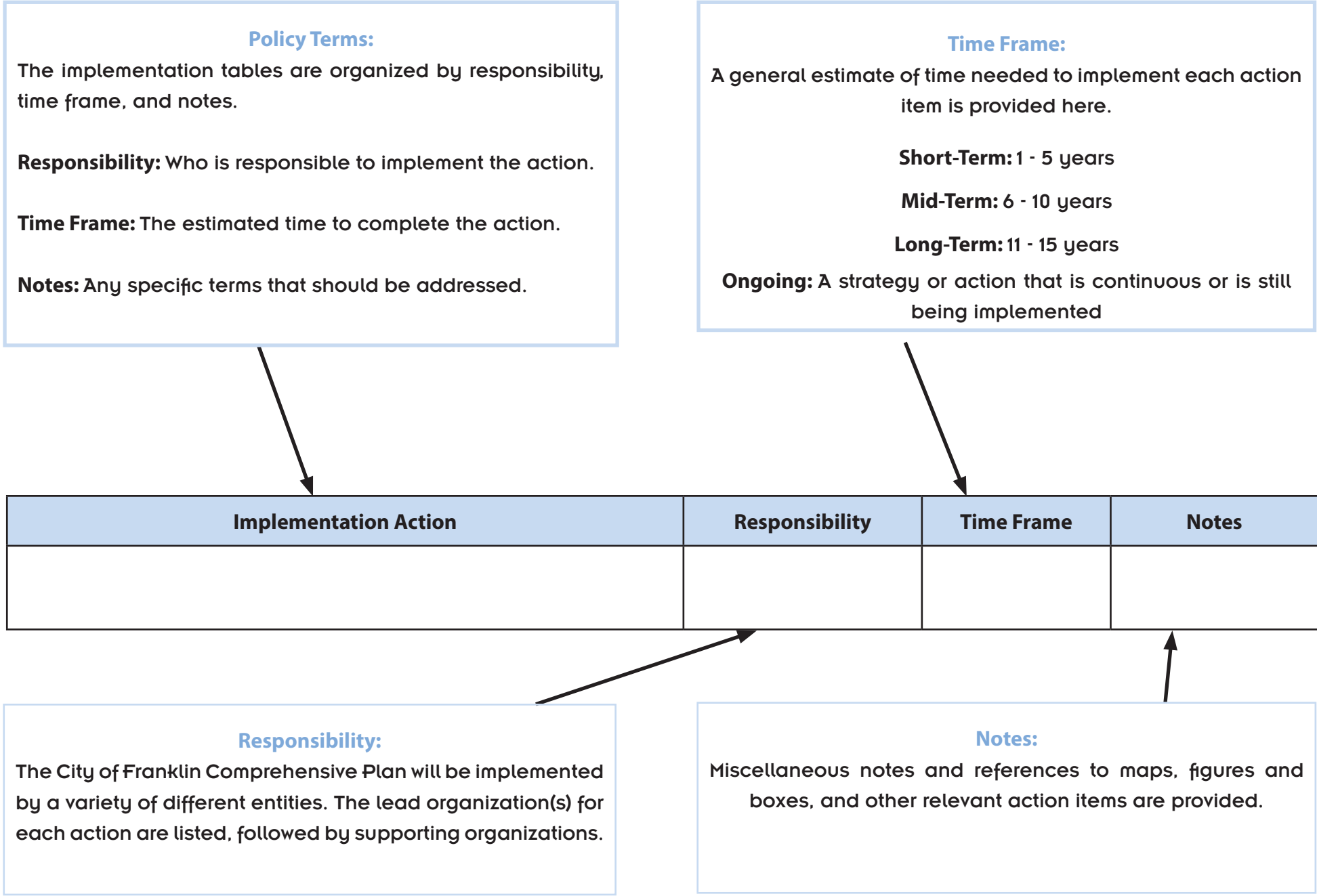
The implementation chapter seeks to tie together all of the information expressed in the previous seven chapters in order to create a policy framework that can be used to implement the City’s vision. Each chapter’s recommendations are divided into goals and objectives, with an estimated time frame, entities responsible, and general notes for each specific item listed. Further details are provided on how to read the tables, and how each column is separated per category.

Completion of the Plan’s implementation is arguably the most challenging aspect of the comprehensive planning process. This Chapter establishes a process to ensure the Plan functions as a living document, improving and advancing the vision for the City. Throughout the life of the Comprehensive Plan, monitoring and evaluation from City staff should be conducted periodically to assess and determine the effectiveness of the goals, policies, and recommendations identified in the Implementation chapter. In order to align with the City’s original vision, certain goals and policies should be added or modified to produce a consistent, comprehensive approach.

There are several approaches that can be utilized to help monitor the impact of this Plan, and to determine the consistency with the City’s original vision. Building permit records identify the location of new developments. Departmental budgets, Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) help to identify where resources exist and should be allocated towards in order to sufficiently meet the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Additional factors discussed in the Quality of Life chapter are influential in the goal and policy evaluation process, including monitoring of environmental quality, physical health, social conditions, housing availability, and public participation.

How to Read the Table:

The text boxes below offer a guide for reading through the implementation tables. Implementation actions are organized according to goals and action strategies. Additional information is also provided for each action to specify who is responsible for carrying out the action, and approximately how long it should take to carry out.



Land Use:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>LU.1 - Amend the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the inclusion of mixed-use districts along major corridors, adjacent to the river and core neighborhoods; b. design standards for mixed-use and infill developments to ensure high quality development; specifically, the areas adjacent to the Downtown, the river, along the SR 73 commercial corridor, and I-75 gateways; c. flexible regulations for the development of mixed-use and infill developments that addresses use; building height, density, floor area, lot coverage, setbacks, landscaping, and buffers; d. a diverse range of housing types, including missing middle, upper story residential, and accessory dwelling units; e. clear compatibility standards for new and redeveloped sites, particularly those adjacent to existing neighborhoods; f. revised allowable land uses, limiting land used to those that are most beneficial (image, financially, and desired services) to the City and residents. Reconsider uses such as Gasoline Service Stations, Self-Service Storage Facility or Mini-Warehouse, and Vehicle Repair Service; g. reflect federal & state legislation on zoning regulations concerning billboards & signs, telecommunications, places of worship, vacation rentals, urban agriculture, wind and solar energy, and new uses; h. updated sign regulations, including potential customized regulations to enhance the identity of commercial corridors; and i. Reduce the amount of land devoted to off-street parking to use land more efficiently. 	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>LU.2 - Provide leadership and guidance for the redevelopment of residential/commercial vacant and underutilized sites to infill housing or higher density mixed-use developments.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See pages 27 - 29</p>
<p>LU.3 - Revisit the existing accessory dwelling units' (In-law suite) standards and update the UDO to include standards for live-work houses and upper story housing.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 30</p>

Land Use:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>LU.4 - Develop buffer standards that can provide a harmonious transition between commercial and industrial districts and residential districts.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>LU.5 - Protect existing industrial zoned land from conversion to other uses by limiting the rezoning and use of the industrially zoned sites for non-industrial uses. Revise the UDO to allow primarily industrial uses within industrial zones.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>LU.6 - Establish and educate a Design Review Board to review new developments and redevelopments and evaluate building orientation, height, parking location, landscape & tree preservation, lighting, building design, sign design, general design standards, and placemaking concepts.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>LU.7 - Establish Low-Impact Development (LID) and Green Infrastructure (GI) standards for the development of the sensitive land; to limit water pollution, and for stormwater management.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 26</p>
<p>LU.8 - Develop sidewalk networks to facilitate alternative modes of transportation such as walking and bicycling and to connect the existing neighborhoods with the community amenities.</p>	<p>City Engineer Warren County Engineer's Office</p>	<p>Short-Term / Mid-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action TR.4</p>
<p>LU.9 - Provide financial and regulatory incentives for desired development and amend regulations to simplify the review for desired developments.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action ED.1</p>
<p>LU.10 - Adopt Tax Increment Financing district/s to help with the cost of infrastructure and improvements for specific areas such as the I -75 gateway along SR 123.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action ED.11</p>

Land Use:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>LU.11 - Designate a City Planner to monitor the development and implementation of the plan(s) as approved by the City and to assist in making decisions and recommending policies that will determine the appropriate usage of land, buildings, design, facilities, and infrastructures affecting and serving the City.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>LU.12 - Prepare a market analysis to estimate market demand and supply for new or expanded residential, commercial (e.g., retail and service business categories), and industrial business opportunities.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Short-Term / Mid-Term</p>	
<p>LU.13 - Develop and implement corridor and small-area plans to refine the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and subsequently encourage high-quality infill and redevelopment.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	

Transportation:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>TR.1 - Analyze, prioritize, and coordinate road and intersection improvements, including appropriate locations for roundabouts, with the Warren County Engineer’s Office and the Ohio Department of Transportation.</p>	<p>City Engineer Warren County Engineer’s Office Ohio Department of Transportation</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>TR.2 - Devise a roadway beautification plan that supports the installation of street trees along major commercial corridors.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Forever Franklin Chamber of Commerce Warren County Engineer’s Office Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action QL.2</p>
<p>TR.3 - Adopt Complete Streets policies that support public life and placemaking; seek appropriate funding and grants for implementation. - Request that appropriate departments, boards, and committees review, revise, and develop as needed, appropriate planning documents, zoning code, subdivision regulations, site plan review process, design guidelines, and other programs to make sure they incorporate Complete Street design principles and design standards.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Long-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action QL.2</p>
<p>TR.4 - Develop a sidewalks plan that takes inventory of sidewalks and prioritizes each project for annual funding. Priority will be given to sidewalks near schools, parks, and commercial centers. Comprehensively implement bike & pedestrian safety, and aesthetic improvements along the 73 corridor.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>Priority will be given to sidewalks near schools, parks, and commercial centers. Coordinate with Action LU.8</p>
<p>TR.5 - Work with ODOT and conduct a traffic circulation study to address the SR 123 corridor to meet future demand for truck traffic as industrial and commercial demand increases.</p>	<p>City Engineer Ohio Department of Transportation</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>	

Transportation:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>TR.6 - Continue to support and recognize the importance of the existing rail service through marketing and brochures.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Chamber of Commerce Warren County Economic Development Warren County Visitor's Bureau</p>	<p>Long-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>TR.7 - Seek grants for Electric Vehicle charging stations and link businesses to grants or other funding to implement charging stations in commercial areas.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Long-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>TR.8 - Work with Middletown and Franklin Township to establish a connection between North Briel Boulevard and Franklin-Trenton Road to ease traffic concerns.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff City of Middletown Franklin Township Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission Warren County Engineer's Office Ohio Department of Transportation</p>	<p>Long-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>TR.9 - Ensure road connectivity is accomplished in accordance with the Thoroughfare Plan (Map 3.8) as site plans are approved and new development occurs.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission Warren County Engineer's Office Ohio Department of Transportation</p>	<p>Long-Term</p>	

Economic Development:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>ED.1 - Revise the UDO to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Simplified and expedited permitting processes, programs, and regulations. Periodically evaluate and improve standards and processes to ensure the most efficient methods. Design standards for mixed-use and infill developments to ensure high quality development; specifically, the areas adjacent to the Downtown, the river, along the SR 73 commercial corridor, and I-75 gateways; b. The needs of modern industry (subdivision review process and minimum lot sizes) and to encourage more efficient use of limited industrial land resources. A diverse range of housing types, including missing middle, upper story residential, and accessory dwelling units; c. Industrial design guidelines that maintain an appealing environment. Revised allowable land uses, limiting land used to those that are most beneficial (image, financially, and desired services) to the City and residents. Reconsider uses such as Gasoline Service Stations; Self-Service Storage Facility or Mini-Warehouse; and Vehicle Repair Service; and d. Development review processes that encourage small-scale manufacturing uses conducted as a home occupation or cottage industry; or that is incorporated into mixed-use developments and/or new uses. 	<p>City of Franklin Staff Chamber of Commerce Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action LU.1</p>
<p>ED.2 - Preserve & utilize industrial land for industrial land uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use the future land use map (Map 2.7) to reinforce decisions keeping industrial land for industrial uses; b. Establish and maintain an inventory that identifies and contains information on available land that can be developed or redeveloped and that offers information on public/private development opportunities; and c. Encourage the aggregation of small industrial and commercial parcels to form larger sites. 	<p>City of Franklin Staff Chamber of Commerce Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Long-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action LU.5</p>
<p>ED.3 - Develop business incentivized projects that align with the City's economic priorities.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Chamber of Commerce Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action LU.9</p>
<p>ED.4 - Work with the Warren County Career Center to gage Franklin's workforce development needs. Work with Franklin City School District and the Warren County Career Center to increase access to advanced education, workforce development, and job training opportunities. Potential avenues of exploration include improving science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curricula; creating a mentorship program for high school students or a City internship program.</p>	<p>Warren County Career Center Ohio Means JOBS Franklin City Schools City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term / Mid-Term</p>	

Economic Development:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>ED.5 - Conduct a market analysis to gather comprehensive business and demographic data to gain an understanding of market reach and market competitiveness.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action LU.12</p>
<p>ED.6 - In cooperation with the Warren County Economic Development Department, establish a business incubator that will be able to house multiple small businesses using multiple workspaces, reducing the costs of starting a business. In addition, establish a food focused business incubator— a food innovation district (site) or a community kitchen—that serves as an incubator of restaurants.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Chamber of Commerce Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>	
<p>ED.7 - Support the Chamber of Commerce and work with the Warren County Port Authority to further develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem where networking and outreach to new businesses can be done, but also to further support existing businesses.</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Staff Warren County Port Authority</p>	<p>Mid-Term / Long-Term</p>	
<p>ED.8 - Develop a relationship with local and regional brokers to help raise the City's visibility and send a message that the City is business friendly. This should be coordinated with the Realtor Ambassador strategy of Chapter 7. The City should also work to attract support from commercial lenders that can help match small businesses with lending partners and offers technical assistance in business formation and management.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Realtor's Organization Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>	
<p>ED.9 - Work with a peer city in southwest Ohio to compare best practices in applying for grant money and developing programs that utilize state funding.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Long-Term / Ongoing</p>	

Economic Development:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>ED.10 - Designate an economic development staff person. Staff would pursue state funding and grants as well as implement programs and build relationships.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>	
<p>ED.11 - Utilize Tax Increment Financing Districts and Joint Economic Development Districts as economic development tools and the possibility of a JEDD for non-residential development as well as TIF districts along SR 73.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Franklin Township Warren County Economic Development City of Franklin Schools</p>	<p>Mid-Term / Long-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action LU.10</p>
<p>ED.12 - Support local businesses and help other institutions such as schools to support local businesses by purchasing goods and services locally.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Franklin City Schools Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Long-Term</p>	
<p>ED.13 - Promote the City as a desirable place to live and work. Build upon the City's livability by proactively developing amenities such as parks, streetscape improvements, bike lanes, and pedestrian-friendly streets, and by placing a strong emphasis on placemaking. Constantly articulate a positive vision and spirit of optimism about what Franklin is becoming.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Library Warren County Visitor's Bureau</p>	<p>Long-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>ED.14 - Develop a 48-Hour City Guide & Itinerary that highlights attractions, experiences, restaurants, and hotels within the City.</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Staff Warren County Visitor's Bureau</p>	<p>Short-Term/ Long-Term</p>	

Housing:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>HO.1 - Establish a neighborhood revitalization task force that provides a structured forum to examine and agree on principles, strategies, policies, programmatic and UDO changes that guide Franklin’s housing revitalization.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>HO.2 - Coordinate with public service agencies (Metropolitan Housing Authority, New Housing Ohio) and Warren County to establish a home ownership program that achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increases home ownership. addressing life skills, providing credit counseling, and sponsoring financial literacy classes, homebuyer counseling and education classes loan packaging, down-payment, or loan subsidy assistance; b. Strengthens current homeowners with foreclosure prevention and home repair/rehabilitation education; and c. Identify potential modifications to make the new program more attractive to potential property owners. This may require developing incentives and increasing awareness of the program through targeted marketing. 	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Community Services Warren Metropolitan Housing</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 96</p>
<p>HO.3 - Coordinate with public assistance housing agencies and developers utilizing housing tax credits to reduce concentrations of poverty.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren Metropolitan Housing</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>HO.4 - Revise UDO standards to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Incentives for housing types that attract seniors and young families; b. A simple review process for well-designed, well-located multi-family housing; c. A “By Right” process for a broad range of housing types; d. Identify zoning districts appropriate of Missing Middle Housing; e. Flexible zoning standards for core neighborhoods; f. Simplify the review process to encourage single-family house in-fill, accessory dwelling, upper story residential, multi-family, and mixed-use developments; g. Adaptive and compatible re-use of historic homes; h. Density bonuses for the development of dwelling units that meet visitability standards; and i. Development review that includes Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Standards. 	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See pages 95 - 103. Coordinate with Action LU.1</p>

Housing:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>HO.5 - Develop programs for proactive outreach and counseling to low and moderate-income households experiencing housing vulnerability and housing cost burden.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Community Services Warren Metropolitan Housing Local Churches</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>HO.6 - Retrofit existing housing stock with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. CDBG funds may be used to invest in rehabilitation of existing housing stock, provide direct assistance to homeowners, improve public facilities, or remove blighted properties. In addition, continuously request OPWC and Ohio Capital Budget Funds of neighborhood amenities and revitalization.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Housing and Urban Development Warren County Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 99</p>
<p>HO.7 - Coordinate with local churches and the Warren County Ministerial Association to identify the role churches could play in assisting elderly residents with clean up, painting, and home repairs.</p>	<p>Warren County Ministerial Association Local Churches City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 101</p>
<p>HO.8 - Develop City informational resources that provides the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A homeowner’s resource web site link with resources for existing and future residents that comprehensively identifies the resources provided by Warren County, Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority, Warren County Ministerial Association, and nonprofit organizations that provide subsidies, deferrals, and home retrofit support; and b. A vetted contractor and vendor list that assist households in navigating the rehab and retrofit processes. 	<p>City of Franklin Staff Banks & Realtor’s Organization</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>HO.9 - Develop a neighborhood awards program.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Community Services Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	

Housing:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
HO.10 - Continue code enforcement and ensure that enforcement is coupled with landlord education and directions to resources.	City of Franklin Zoning Staff	Short-Term / Ongoing	Work with Home Owner's Organization's for additional code enforcement.
HO.11 - Identify and assemble small, individual parcels into larger blocks under common ownership to enhance their development potential.	City of Franklin Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission	Short-Term / Mid-Term	
HO.12 - Create a Realtor Ambassador Program that acquaints realtors with new and exciting developments within the City as well as the City's core neighborhood (housing opportunities, education improvements, cultural amenities, business, and development opportunities). With this information, an ambassador would be able to promote the City and have a better understanding of why Franklin is a choice city of residents.	Banks & Realtor's Organization City of Franklin Staff	Short-Term / Ongoing	See page 102
HO.13 - Investigate the use of a land bank, where the County or City acquires properties to control the final development product and require projects to meet various housing goals.	Banks & Realtor's Organization City of Franklin Staff	Short-Term / Ongoing	See page 102
HO.14 - Identify strategies to support the existing food providers (such as the Farmers' Market) and attract new food providers to Franklin.	City of Franklin Staff Franklin Area Community Services Chamber of Commerce	Short Term	See page 86
HO.15 - Establish a "housing trust fund" to receive and allocate new sources of revenue for neighborhood revitalization, housing rehabilitation and used for planning, designing, and constructing streets, utilities, and other necessary infrastructure, land acquisition, and demolition.	City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development HUD	Short-Term / Ongoing	

Housing:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>HO.16 -Investigate the use of a residential Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District and how it may be used for public finance of the development of neighborhood infrastructure.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Short-Term / Mid-Term</p>	<p>See page 102</p>
<p>HO.17 -Investigate the feasibility of a city employee residency incentive program, to encourage full-time city employees to reside in the City of Franklin.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>See page 103</p>
<p>HO.18 -Discuss strategies to address homelessness on a County level, with Warren County, Warren County Housing Coalition, and housing providers.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Metropolitan Housing New Housing Ohio Local Churches HOPE</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 103</p>

Parks and Recreation:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>PR.1 - Upgrade and improve Community Park. Improvements include shelters, parking, restrooms, playground equipment, and a redesigned park entrance that is highly visible from State Route 123.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Parks and Recreation Commission City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See pages 108 - 109</p>
<p>PR.2 - Upgrade park amenities, at a minimum, park amenities should include permanent restrooms, shelter, and drinking fountains. Inspect playground equipment, courts, and fields for safety and quality and restore as necessary.</p>	<p>Franklin Parks Division</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>PR.3 - Establish an Experience Center focused on ecological education in Community Park and along the trail adjacent to Clear Creek.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Franklin City Schools City of Franklin Parks and Recreation Commission</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>	<p>See page 109</p>
<p>PR.4 - Install Wi-Fi hubs and camera systems throughout Franklin Community Park and thereafter extend similar improvements within Dial Park.</p>	<p>Franklin Parks Division City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>See page 118</p>
<p>PR.5 - Develop a parks master plan that achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A park system that integrates the Franklin City School District's sports and recreation needs; b. Includes exercise stations throughout the park and trail system; c. Utilizes QR codes on the signs to convey park information; d. Develops an easy-to-use online service to reserve fields and shelters; and e. Incorporates safety measures such as added EMS info to park signage, and an emergency call system. 	<p>City of Franklin Staff Franklin City Schools Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Parks Division</p>	<p>Long-Term</p>	
<p>PR.6 - Repurpose Laynecrest Park and Third Street Park for residential use, in conjunction with the City of Franklin Future Land Use Map (Map 2.7).</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Long-Term</p>	

Parks and Recreation:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>PR.7 - Install pedestrian and bicycle connections from Community Park to the new High School and Dial Park through underpasses, crosswalks, and the proposed roundabout.</p>	<p>City Engineer City of Franklin Parks and Recreation Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>PR.8 - Design and install the Franklin to Springboro Connector Trail system as illustrated on Map 6.2 and continue to expand the trail network linking neighborhoods; parks, community amenities, and Great Miami River Bikeway.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff City of Springboro Great Miami Riverway City of Franklin Parks and Recreation Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 117</p>
<p>PR.9 - Complete a priority trail segment of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, improving pedestrian and bicycle access between Franklin Community Park and Hazel Woods Park, using dedicated trail facility separate from the local roadway.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff City of Springboro City of Franklin Parks and Recreation Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 117</p>
<p>PR.10 - Utilize a wayfinding system to improve signage throughout and at the entrance of Franklin City parks. Implement additional signage along trails to encourage pedestrians and cyclists using the trail system towards businesses and restaurants located within the City.</p>	<p>Franklin Parks Division Franklin Township</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>PR.11 - Develop an identity for the City of Franklin's Park system through centralized branding and reinforce that brand through wayfinding signage and media posting.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Franklin Parks Division Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	

Quality of Life:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>QL.1 - Update the UDO to establish a State Route 73 Zoning Overlay that achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Allows mixed-use development; b. Offers higher density residential and commercial uses; c. Includes development and design standards and review for commercial, institutional, and multi-family buildings; d. Provides additional attention to signage, building, parking, and corridor design requirements; e. Identifies permitted and prohibited uses; and f. Offers incentives for private developers to incorporate commercial green space parallel to the road right-of-way. 	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Regional Planning Commission Warren County Engineer's Office Ohio Department of Transportation</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action LU.1</p>
<p>QL.2 - Review and implement State Route 73 corridor improvements based on the goal of creating a continuous pedestrian-oriented corridor, utilizing the concepts for complete, green, or context-sensitive streetscape improvements. Improvements should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. widened sidewalks; b. pedestrian and bike connections to neighborhoods; c. added tree canopies; d. sharrows or separated bike lanes; e. pedestrian plazas; and f. a landscaped gateway at the State Route 73 and Interstate 75 intersection. 	<p>City Engineer City of Franklin Staff Ohio Department of Transportation Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Long-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action TR.3</p>
<p>QL.3 - Advocate for the development of additional retail and restaurants along the State Route 73 corridor through coordination and cooperation with the commercial brokerage community.</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	

Quality of Life:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>QL.4 - Define an image of Franklin and the State Route 73 corridor that is advertisable to the Miami Valley Region. Branding includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Partnering with a signage design specialist and utilizing the gateway concepts to establish gateway signs at strategic locations, as identified in the Plan; and b. Implementing a wayfinding system. 	<p>Chamber of Commerce Signage Design Specialist City of Franklin Staff Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>See page 135</p>
<p>QL.5 - Work with the Library in the development of programs for employers, job-applicants, and City residents. Program the Library to support entrepreneurship and employment assistance, and as a business resource and information center.</p>	<p>Franklin Library Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>Coordinate with Action ED.13</p>
<p>QL.6 - Identify City facility colocation opportunities to maximize efficiency and reduce capital and operation cost. Ensure that community facilities or schools that are no longer utilized for their initial intent are redeveloped as an asset for the community.</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>See page 137</p>
<p>QL.7 - Establishing high standards for City facility design to foster efficient government, represent a positive image for the City, and illustrate to private developers the City's commitment to high quality construction.</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>QL.8 - Consistently review fire, EMS, and police response times for efficiency and effectiveness throughout the City. Continue to be proactive on the positioning of equipment and fire service locations for strategic and effective fire response. Maintain mutual aid agreements with adjacent communities for emergency support and to share data collection.</p>	<p>Fire & EMS Chief City of Franklin Safety Director</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>See page 140</p>
<p>QL.9 - Enhance policing through local awareness and outreach to community schools, associations, and organizations. Attend community events to provide education and awareness to help teach residents how to be safe.</p>	<p>Fire & EMS Chief Franklin City Schools</p>	<p>Mid-Term / Long-Term</p>	
<p>QL.10 - Work with the zoning code enforcement officers to improve monitoring and maintenance of vacant properties and structure to prevent and discourage loitering.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff Fire & EMS Chief</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	

Quality of Life:

Implementation Action	Responsibility	Time Frame	Notes
<p>QL.11 - Revise the zoning code to include a site plan review process for “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design”, with training and design review by the BZA.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Zoning Staff Fire & EMS Chief</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>See page 142</p>
<p>QL.12 - Utilize new technology measures, such as internet connected cameras, to monitor city parks and streets. Develop benchmarks to indicate potential needs for additional stations and equipment.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Franklin Parks Division</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>QL.13 - Work with the City school district to establish and provide increased access to school recreational facilities for more children through city-based programs, sports events, and student-led clubs.</p>	<p>Franklin City Schools Local Youth Sports Leagues Franklin Parks Division</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	<p>See pages 143 - 144</p>
<p>QL.14 - Coordinate with the Franklin Library and City School District to provide services that reinforce school curricula, establishing a city-sponsored awards program for children that excel in local school programs.</p>	<p>Franklin Library Franklin City Schools</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	
<p>QL.15 - Foster partnerships between the Chamber of Commerce, local schools, the senior center, non-profits, and other outlets for volunteerism, and partner with local employers to provide internship and mentorship programs throughout Franklin.</p>	<p>Franklin City Schools Chamber of Commerce City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	
<p>QL.16 - Research and apply for eligible grants to manage broadband expansion infrastructure cost for residential, government sites, and community facilities. Apply for programs such as the Ohio Residential Broadband Expansion Grant Program and the BroadbandOhio Connectivity Grant to help with infrastructure costs and help build networks in areas that require high-speed internet improvements.</p>	<p>City of Franklin Staff Warren County Economic Development</p>	<p>Short-Term / Ongoing</p>	<p>See page 145</p>
<p>QL.17 - Partner with the Library, Senior Center, and School District to develop digital literacy programs and help to provide access for all residents. Additional career awareness and opportunity for high school students can be provided through curriculum updates and internships.</p>	<p>Franklin City Schools Franklin Library City of Franklin Staff</p>	<p>Short-Term</p>	

Appendix A

State Economic Development Programs:

- The **Ohio Community Reinvestment Area** program is an economic development tool administered by municipal and county government that provides real property tax exemptions for property owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings. Community Reinvestment Areas are areas of land in which property owners can receive tax incentives for investing in real property improvements.
- The **Ohio Enterprise Zone Program** is an economic development tool administered by municipal and county governments that provides real and personal property tax exemptions to businesses making investments in Ohio. The Enterprise Zone Program can provide tax exemptions for a portion of the value of new real and personal property investment (when that personal property is still taxable) when the investment is made in conjunction with a project that includes job creation.
- The **Transformational Mixed-Use Development Program** provides a tax credit against Development costs incurred during the construction of a project that will be a catalyst for future development in its area.
- The **Rural Industrial Park Loan Program (“RIPL”)** promotes economic development by providing low-interest direct loans to assist eligible applicants in financing the development and improvement of industrial parks and related off-site public infrastructure improvements.
- The **Ohio Sports Event Grant Program** – A local organizing committee, endorsing municipality, or endorsing county that has entered into a joinder undertaking with a site selection organization, may apply for a grant from the sports event grant fund created under section 122.122 of the Revised Code with respect to a game that has not been held in this state by the organization in either of the two preceding years and to which either of the following applies: (1) The organization accepts competitive bids to host the game or (2) The game is a one-time centennial commemoration of the founding of a national football organization, association, or league.
 - The local organizing committee, endorsing municipality, or endorsing county is eligible to receive a grant under this section to offset its qualifying costs only if the projected incremental increase in receipts from the tax imposed under section 5739.02 of the Revised Code, as determined by the director, exceeds \$250,000.
- **Loan Loss Reserve Program** offers credit enhancement of up to 50% of a qualified energy efficiency project on an existing structure. Ohio Port Authorities originate loans for projects that make businesses’ and nonprofits’ facilities more energy efficient.
- **SiteOhio** puts properties within industrial zoning through a more stringent and comprehensive review and analysis than any other state site certification process in the U.S. Site authentication guarantees that all utilities are on the property and have adequate capacity, that due diligence studies have been completed, and that all state and federal entities have provided concurrence with the studies.
- The **Brownfield Remediation Program** is designed to provide grants for the remediation of brownfield sites across Ohio to clean up the sites and prepare them for future economic development. Nearly \$350 million is available. The majority of the funds, approximately \$262 million, will be available on first-come, first-served basis statewide as provided for in statute. The balance of the funds available will provide for a \$1 million set-aside per county that will be awarded on a first-come, first served basis until June 30, 2022. After June 30, 2022, any remaining funds in the county set-aside will be added to general fund and made available for grants throughout the state on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program** is designed to provide grants for the demolition of commercial and residential buildings and revitalization of surrounding properties. Nearly \$150 million is available. The majority of the funds, approximately \$106 million, will be available on first-come, first-served basis statewide as provided for in statute. The balance of the funds available will provide for a \$500,000 set-aside per county that will be awarded on a first-come, first served basis until June 30, 2022. After June 30, 2022, any remaining funds in the county set-aside will be added to general fund and made available for grants throughout the state on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Alternative Stormwater Infrastructure Loan Program** offers below-market rate loans for the design and construction of green infrastructure as part of economic development projects. Up to \$5 million in loan funds per project are available to governmental entities through the program. Developers are encouraged to work with the governmental entity for their projects. The funds can pay for design, demolition, construction, materials and administrative costs associated with the green infrastructure project.

- The **Energy Efficiency Program** helps businesses, manufacturers, nonprofits, schools, and local governments reduce energy use and improve energy efficiency – resulting in lower energy costs by identifying energy use and costs and developing an efficient energy plan.
- The **JobsOhio Revitalization Program Loan and Grant Fund** is designed to support the acceleration of redeveloping sites in Ohio. Business, non-profits or local governments where the entity committing the jobs has signed an agreement such as a letter of intent, option, lease or holds title for the project site and has a specific business plan, financing plan and schedule for redevelopment and job creation to occur are eligible to apply. An eligible site is an abandoned or under-utilized contiguous property where redevelopment for the immediate and primary purpose of job creation and retention are challenged by significant redevelopment constraints. Revitalization projects typically retain and/or create at least 20 jobs at a wage rate commensurate with the local market. Priority will be given to job creation and retention projects within JobsOhio targeted industry sectors, those making additional capital investment beyond remediation and redevelopment and/or projects with wages higher than the average local wage rate. Typical loan funding is between \$500,000-\$5 million and between 20% and 75% of eligible costs. Typical grant funding is up to \$1 million.
- The **Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program** provides a state tax credit up to 25% of qualified rehabilitation expenditures incurred during a rehabilitation project, up to \$5 million. The tax credit can be applied to applicable financial institutions, foreign and domestic insurance premiums or individual income taxes.
- **Ohio New Markets Tax Credit Program** provides an incentive for investors to fund businesses in low-income communities.
- **Qualified Energy Project Tax Exemption** provides owners (or lessees) of renewable energy projects with an exemption from the public utility tangible personal property tax.
- **The Ohio Opportunity Zones Tax Credit Program** provides an incentive for Taxpayers to invest in projects in economically distressed areas known as “Ohio Opportunity Zones.”
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** is an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation.
- The **Energy Loan Fund** helps small businesses, manufacturers, nonprofits, and local governments implement energy efficiency improvements to lower energy use and costs. Through the Energy Loan Fund eligible applicants receive low-interest financing to install efficiency measures that reduce energy by at least 15%.
- The **Ohio Brownfield Fund** is a collection of funding sources that can be used to help plan, assess, and remediate brownfields throughout the state. A brownfield is a piece of property whose redevelopment is complicated by the potential presence of environmental contaminants such as hazardous substances, asbestos, lead-based paint, and petroleum. Brownfield redevelopment allows a community to reclaim and improve its lands, making property viable for new development.
- The **Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant** will provide nearly \$250,000,000 to help Ohio communities make necessary investments in water and wastewater infrastructure.
- **Roadwork Development (629) Funds** are available for public roadway improvements, including engineering and design costs. Funds are available for projects primarily involving manufacturing, research and development, high technology, corporate headquarters, and distribution activity. Projects must typically create or retain jobs.
- The **JobsOhio Growth Fund Loan** provides capital for expansion projects to companies that have limited access to capital and funding from conventional, private sources of financing. JobsOhio will consider loans to companies that are in the growth, established or expansion stage, and that have generated revenues through a proven business plan. The program may finance allowable project costs with JobsOhio Growth Fund Loans typically ranging in size from \$500,000 to \$5,000,000. For established and expansion stage companies, projects should typically receive more than half of their total financing from other private capital sources. For growth stage companies, JobsOhio may consider financing a higher portion of the project’s total investment.
- The **JobsOhio Workforce Grant** was created to promote economic development, business expansion, and job creation by providing funding for the improvement of worker skills and abilities in the State of Ohio. The program requires job creation and training of employees within a specified period of time and may consider the amount of proceeds per job created and employee trained. JobsOhio may consider providing assistance for eligible projects that improve operational efficiencies or production expansion, along with the retention of jobs.