



# Frankfort Master Plan Update

May, 2021





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# City of Frankfort, Benzie County, Michigan

## Master Plan 2021 Update

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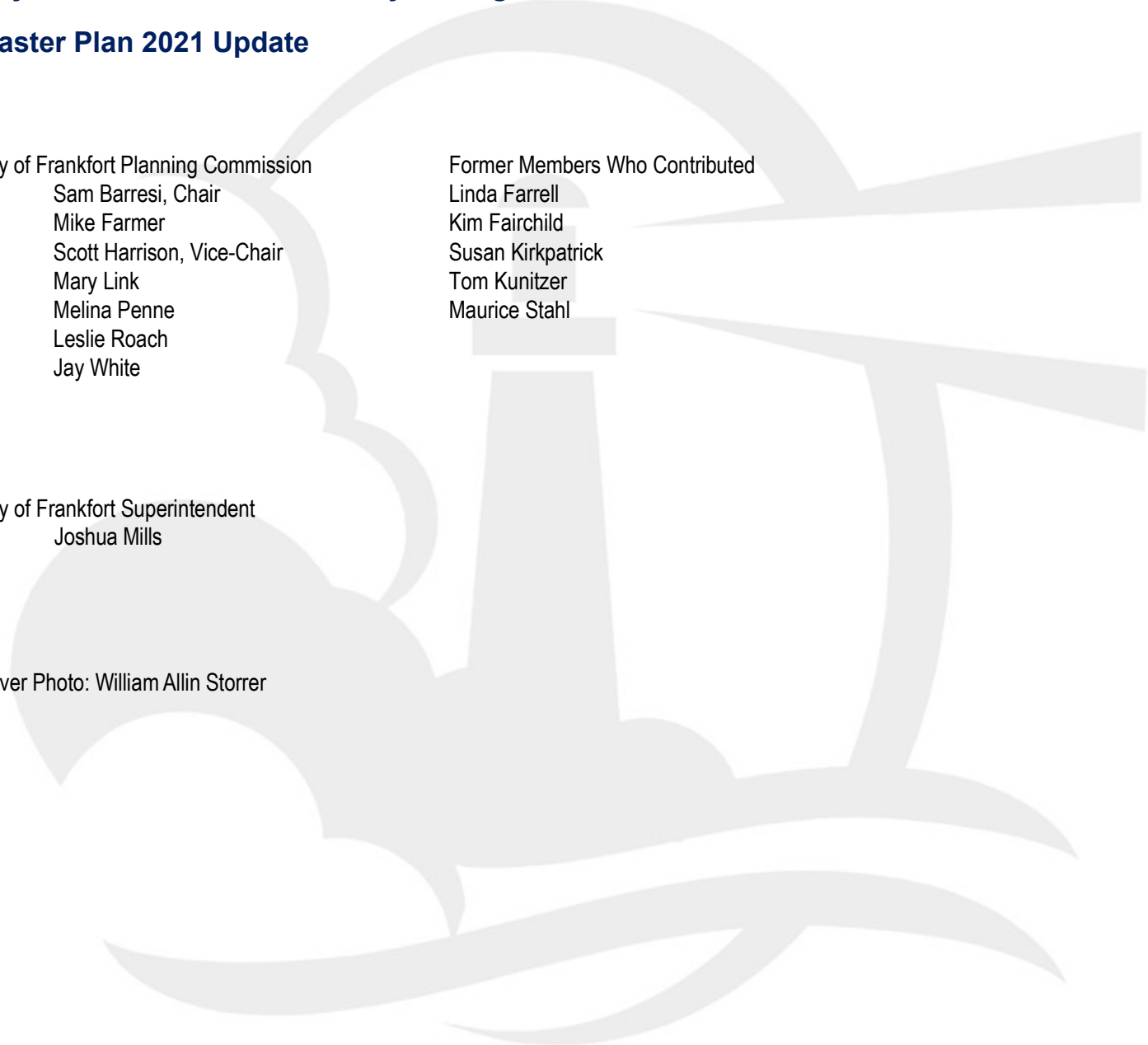
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# Executive Summary



The City of Frankfort 2020 Master Plan update reaffirms the 2010 Master Plan which was the culmination of eighteen months of work by citizens of Frankfort and the City's Planning Commission. The Plan establishes a vision for a sustainable future for this City, containing recommendations that will guide future land use and development decisions. It is a "road map" for the evolution of the City that seeks to remain vital and self-contained. This update validates and provides minor modifications to the 2010 plan.

The long-term nature of a Master Plan is both intentional and required by the State of Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2006. The contents of the Master Plan are regulated by Public Act 33 of 2008, known as the Michigan Planning Enabling Act and is detailed below.

"125.3807 Master plan; adoption, amendment, and implementation by local government; purpose.

## Sec. 7.

- (1) A local unit of government may adopt, amend, and implement a master plan as provided in this act.
- (2) The general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that satisfies all of the following criteria:
  - (a) Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.
  - (b) Considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development.
  - (c) Will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.
  - (d) Includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following:
    - (i) A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets.
    - (ii) Safety from fire and other dangers.
    - (iii) Light and air.
    - (iv) Healthful and convenient distribution of population.
    - (v) Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds.
    - (vi) Public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply, non-traditional energy initiatives and other public improvements.
    - (vii) Recreation.

- (viii) The use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability."

It is the responsibility of this document to establish the Community Vision for the future after a period of intensive study and discernment. It advocates long-term policies, establishes goals, and provides action plans and guidelines for achieving them. Indeed, many of the specific projects described in this Master Plan may be unattainable within the next twenty-five years. Nevertheless, these projects are the physical expression of the policies, goals, and objectives of this Plan. Over time, there will be additional projects added, and others removed from the Plan in the course of regular updates. The citizens of Frankfort with its Planning Commission are required to re-evaluate their goals, objectives, and policies every five years, testing that the values expressed in this Plan remain true to the community vision. In conclusion, the vision expressed is not a static one; rather it is dynamic and ever changing: a work-in-progress for many years to come.

The Future Land Use Plan is divided into five sections: Land Use, Transportation, Economics, Natural Environment and Implementation. These sections describe each future land use district, how it relates to the zoning ordinance, as well as a full description of the street and transportation network required. The transportation section also contains recommended Complete Street profiles, used as a design template for each category of street. These physical recommendations help provide a clear picture of the future goals and actions necessary to fulfill the vision of the Master Plan.

While reading the Master Plan, care must be taken to remember that this document is required to consider development decisions that will take place over the next 25 to 50 years. The plan does not attempt to provide a "working blueprint" that requires the removal, modification or restructuring of existing buildings, structures, roads or spaces to fulfill its purposes. Nonconforming structures and uses are vital, integral parts of the community, as it exists. Therefore, the plan does not advocate the removal or modification of any of these structures. Rather, it establishes a policy for new construction and development that will continue to integrate and reflect the diversity of spaces and architectural style, the history and culture that is uniquely Frankfort.

Citizens understand that their purposes for Frankfort's future are reflected in this Master Plan. They have planned this as a manual to guide the future well-being of the City, being continually mindful of the obligations to its past and the sustainability of its future.

The Master Plan represents the values expressed by the citizens of Frankfort. The values expressed during this process and the resulting ideas developed are driven by community goals, policies, and objectives tested during twenty-seven different public sessions and work-study sessions during 2009 and 2010 and validated during various public sessions with the Planning Commission held during 2015 and 2016.

## **Public Engagement**

Between 2007-2009, the City engaged in a dialog with its residents and other stakeholders about the future of Frankfort. The full extent of this dialog is contained in two reports, "The Frankfort Master Plan Assessment" dated May 30, 2009 and the "Summary of Frankfort Master Plan Public Workshops" dated September 8, 2009. Both of these documents are available at City Hall, Benzie Shores District Library and on the City's website. The input received during this process, as well as comments received during the State required review period, is the basis of the Frankfort Master Plan 2010.

The 2017 update did not utilize the same level of engagement, but reviewed the 2010 Plan versus the goals of the community, which were validated during workshops held August 28, 2017. The input generated from the community reflected that the goals and values of the community remain unchanged from those expressed in the 2010 Plan.

## **Vision for the Future of Frankfort**

"The City of Frankfort is committed to providing a remarkable quality of life for a diverse group of residents and businesses that reflects the City's small town sense of community and unique physical and cultural character, while creating a City that is economically, environmentally and culturally sustainable."

This vision is the guiding force behind the Master Plan and the recommendations contained herein have been designed to reflect this community vision for the future. As the community continues to evolve, the City will be faced with the challenge of maintaining its core values and creating development regulations that preserve the physical and cultural character of the community. (from pg. 19)

## **Achieving the Vision**

A vision is only as good as the implementation blueprint in the Master Plan. Developing the vision for this community, the citizens of Frankfort described the important physical characteristics and community values essential to defining the character of the City. The concept of "small town connectedness" between people, the water, view spaces, the history of the city and architecture with its physical appearance, each, and all together, describe the identified values of this community, as identified by most workshop and vision session participants. The method of implementing the vision while maintaining these essential characteristics is the work of this

document and the enforcing zoning ordinance.

In Frankfort, this means the slow, careful, skillful integration of new development among the existing elements, already valued by the citizens. Many projects, goals, and objectives contained in these pages will be achieved in a few years, others, many years from now, if ever. Beyond the visionary aspects comes the reality that an infrastructure change involves significant investment.

Initial public funding needs to target projects that will act as catalysts to attract private investment and new capital activities. The City government must remain committed to a conservative fiscal approach to infrastructure change, ensuring that local public funds are leveraged through significant outside fund opportunities, and matching grants.

## **What are the steps necessary to shift to a year-round economy?**

The City of Frankfort demonstrates, through its formal documents, compelling evidence of a progressive, sustainable forecast for the future. Such a vision should help attract year-round customers, promote an increasing year-round population base, a willingness to provide the infrastructure to allow "new economy jobs" (i.e., knowledge-based industry and technology-driven entrepreneurial businesses, health care, professional services, adult and respite care, personal services and financial service organizations for home health care, etc.) that pay livable wages. The Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) Plan approved in 2015 helps to provide marketing and merchandising funds that clearly identify Frankfort to its target market.

The individuals interested in an improved quality of life, seek quality education, walkable and safe communities, small town connectivity, high quality natural features, parks, recreation, along with a committed and invested public government, combined and prepared to demonstrate through Master Plan, Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance a flexibility to adapt this high quality of life to newcomers and residents alike.

One element that has changed significantly since the 2010 Plan was adopted is a need for more attainable and work-force housing. This housing is for working people with full time jobs, making 50-120% of the area median income. Lack of attainable and workforce housing threatens to limit economic growth in Frankfort and this Master Plan seeks to create new opportunities for additional workforce housing.

As Frankfort's population ages and retirees from other communities move to the Frankfort area for improved quality of life, the need for additional retirement housing will continue to grow. It will be important to identify locations for independent and supportive housing within walking distance of the downtown district.

# Chapter 1: History of Frankfort



The following history was written by Steve Harold, Archivist and Historic Researcher in the Grand Traverse Areas and Director of the Manistee County Historical Museum, and Bruce Ogilvie, chair of the Frankfort Planning Commission. The bulk of this material was first prepared for the 1993 City of Frankfort Comprehensive Plan and is unchanged from the 2010 Master Plan.

The complete history of the City of Frankfort and surrounding area is chronicled in a number of publications, including the recent publications of the University of Michigan Press in 2008: Grant Brown, Jr., [Ninety Years Crossing Lake Michigan: The History of the Ann Arbor Car Ferries](#); and Jonathan P. Hawley, [Point Betsie Lighthouse: A History of the Lighthouse and Life Saving Services](#). Earlier, [Port City Perspectives, 150 Years of Frankfort](#), by local historians Florence Bixby and Peter Sandman, provided valuable insight and documentation of the recent history of the area.

Frankfort claims establishment as a place beginning in 1856, with the establishment of the first European settlement. Clearly, earlier settlements of more ancient people occurred at various times in the valley and estuary of the Aux Bec Scies (Betsie River).

There is little hard evidence of Native American activity within the bounds of Frankfort. However, since the harbor was the only point of refuge for many miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, it was certainly used at least for brief stops of several hours to many days and as a staging point for further activity upstream on the Betsie River. Similar occupation by fur trappers and an occasional trader would have taken place in the historic period (1600 to 1860). A number of these sites may undoubtedly exist within Frankfort and are deserving of protection, if locations are known. Father Jacques Marquette, one of the first Jesuit missionaries to the Great Lakes Indians, may have died and been buried in Frankfort in May of 1675. Very limited and inexact records make the death site a matter of considerable debate among historians. Frankfort is one of two locations attributed as the death site by the natives since the earliest settlers arrived in northern Michigan and one of at least two sites claimed by historians. In any case within two years the remains were taken to the church at St. Ignace and given a traditional Indian burial.

The land which was to become the City of Frankfort was recognized at an early date for its economic and commercial

potential because it was nearly all purchased by the contractors who surveyed the land for the United States: the Risdon family. The first known settler in Frankfort was Joseph Oliver who purchased the fourteen acres between Lake Aux Becs Scies and Lake Michigan in 1852 and built a small cabin. Oliver was a woodsman who lived off the land: fishing, hunting, trapping and cutting timber. In 1855 a schooner owned by George W. Tift of Cleveland was caught in a gale on Lake Michigan and driven inland by the wind. Imagine the surprise of Captain Snow when he found a previously little-known river outlet and harbor which provided a safe refuge. Thus, Aux Becs Scies Lake was discovered by an outside investor, George W. Tift, who purchased most of the land around and adjoining the lake (more than a thousand acres all together).

In 1859 a company from Detroit owned by Ransom Gardiner, George S. Frost, and others purchased the Tift lands and commenced development of Frankfort within the year. In September, Louis A. Doby moved to the area as agent of the developers with John H. Adams to oversee the work. They sent along a sawmill and A.S. Dow to manage that phase of the development. (Descendants of the Dow family—founders of the Dow Chemical Company—are unaware of any relationship to A.S. Dow.) Doby held a contract to dredge a new channel so the harbor would be available for navigation by all types of craft. He also constructed a building for the firm which served as a hotel and store. The first lot in the development near the west end of Forest Avenue was sold to William H. Cogshall. He built a large home for his family but his dwelling also served the fledgling community as a hotel and for religious and political meetings. The second lot, also at the west end of Forest Avenue, was purchased by Dr. Alonzo J. Slyfield, who served for 22 years as keeper of the Point Betsie Light House. Although the development had a promising start there was relatively little activity during the Civil War years. Virtually all of this early development took place in the area of First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Main Streets and Forest Avenue.

By 1867 the United States government recognized the importance of Aux Becs Scies harbor and commenced improvements. Doby's work from 1859 had completely disappeared and a channel was dredged at the south end of the strip of land dividing the two lakes. Shortly an enthusiastic newspaperman reported four to ten vessel arrivals a day and new settlers came in droves. Stores were

built and a large hotel, the Delbridge House, opened for business. A post office had been established in 1860 with Cogshall as postmaster but was eventually closed for want of business. This was reopened in 1867 with N.W. Nelson as postmaster. Among the other early settlers were Jacob and Charles Voorhies, J.B. Delbridge, Dr. T. Harvey, and J.B. Collins who opened his drug store in 1869. Although the initial opening of the harbor was in 1867 the work was actually ongoing for several years. By 1870 the channel was 200 feet wide and had a south pier of 600 feet while the north one measured 550 feet. A depth of about nine feet was maintained which allowed most of the vessels on the Great Lakes to enter the harbor. In 1873, the United States Lighthouse Service established the first pierhead light to mark the entrance. In 1887 a United States Life Saving Station was established on the south side of the harbor. In 1934, as the United States Coast Guard, this station was moved to large new quarters on the Frankfort side of the channel. The original piers had been extended until they reached a length of 2,000 feet in 1912. Between 1929 and 1932 the breakwaters were built to protect the harbor at a cost of over a million dollars and the old piers were reduced in length.

Crystal Lake Township was organized in 1859 and initially included all of the present Benzie County. The first Township meeting was held in the spring of 1860 at Frankfort in Doby's (the development company) store. The Benzie County government was organized by Public Act 385 of 1869 and local citizens set off in search of a county seat and a courthouse. After two elections, Frankfort was chosen and the Supervisors met in the community for the first time in April of 1870. Although the first session was held in the Saterlee Hotel later sessions were held in a two story commercial building on the corner of Second and Main Streets. However, in 1872 new elections were held and citizens of the county decided to move the county seat into the countryside east of Benzonia. Frankfort contested the move and managed to retain the seat of government, at least in name, until 1876. Following another election in 1894, the county seat returned to the community and a large school building was converted to a courthouse. Although the matter was frequently debated the county seat remained in Frankfort until 1908 when citizens voted to move it to an abandoned church in the Village of Honor.

In October of 1873, the citizens of Frankfort unanimously petitioned the circuit court to become a village under a new act of the State Legislature. The petition was granted but the effort failed when the State Act was declared unconstitutional. In 1885 the citizens petitioned the State Legislature in the normal fashion and the incorporated village of Frankfort was established by Local Act No. 352 of 1885 on April 1 and by Local Act No. 352 of 1885 on May 14. Frankfort has enjoyed a steady growth over the years and by the 1930's had reached a population whereby they could

become a city. Accordingly, voters of the village elected to become a city of the fifth class on March 11, 1935, with 229 votes in favor and 127 against. There was no change in the boundaries of the original village.

The first school in Frankfort was established as District No. 2 of Crystal Lake Township in January of 1868. School opened within a short time in temporary quarters near Lake Aux Becs Scies between Third and Fourth and was taught by W.H. Marsh. A school measuring 25 by 50 feet in size was built the following year on a lot set aside by the development company for that purpose on the corner of Leelanau and Seventh Streets. This building was gradually enlarged and the "graded" plan was adopted after 1881. The first students graduated from the 12th grade in 1884. Over the years the school has remained at the same location with the new buildings constructed as necessary. For many years a County Normal school was also provided at Frankfort.

The first religious services were held in the development company's boarding house in 1867. In January of the following year, the first pastor arrived. In 1871 they built the Congregational church at 431 Forest Avenue at a cost of \$5,000. Methodist services were held as early as 1867 and their first church was constructed in 1876. The Second Evangelical Lutheran Church was built in 1883 and St. Ann's Catholic Church in 1895.

After the burst of development in 1867 the community of Frankfort settled into a period of slow steady growth. A decade later 19 commercial businesses were listed in a State Gazetteer including three general stores, two drug stores, two furniture stores, a grocery, a meat market, a hardware store, and two hotels. The community enjoyed the services of a doctor, a lawyer, and a dentist. A similar listing shortly after the turn of the century shows over a hundred commercial enterprises.

The first industrial enterprises in Frankfort were all related to the readily available natural resource - wood. The 1877 Gazetteer lists two lumber, shingle, and wood dealers, two sawmills and a broom handle manufacturer. Although emphasis remained on wood over the years it eventually turned to fruit processing and other light industries.

In 1889 a new firm, the Frankfort & Southeastern Railroad, was organized to build a railroad. For two years a local train provided connecting service with the Ann Arbor line until the latter railroad actually purchased the Frankfort & Southeastern. They immediately started running through trains and transshipping freight across Lake Michigan from a warehouse at the west end of the village. This package freight was all handled by hand from rail cars to the warehouse to the boats. Vessels which carried the freight included the ALICE STAFFORD, the OSCEOLA, and the CITY OF MARQUETTE which made 71 round trips to Kewaunee in 1892. The same year the railroad ordered two

car ferries and built a spur and slip on the south side of the harbor. By 1893 the railroad had moved their entire operation, including the tremendous Lake Michigan freight business, to the new location virtually abandoning Frankfort.

The railroad continued to serve Frankfort with passenger and local freight service. In 1901 they proceeded to develop their extensive property in the southwest part of the village, the area known as “the island” because it was between the old channel and the one constructed in 1867. On the site, a magnificent five-story hotel five hundred feet in length was built. The building, known as the Royal Frontenac, enjoyed direct rail and steamboat service quickly developing a good clientele among the wealthy of Ohio, Detroit, Chicago, and other places. Unfortunately, this railroad operation was also short lived for the Royal Frontenac burned to the ground in a fire of mysterious origin on January 12, 1912, and was never rebuilt. The Royal Frontenac initiated tourism development in Frankfort and seasonal housing has since been constructed near its original location but also near Lake Michigan, the traditional tourist attraction. The Ann Arbor Railroad continued to provide passenger service to the community until 1954 and freight service until 1982.

In recent years small industries have continued to be developed in Frankfort. However tourism has grown steadily to a position of dominance. Tourists were originally drawn to the community because of its scenic and restful qualities but in recent years sport fishing has added thousands of visitors annually.

Frankfort got its start as a harbor along a main transportation route—the Lake Michigan coastline. Its location was selected due to its natural harbor. Early in the community’s history with fur trade, and later with the lumber industry the City’s location retained its importance due to the Betsie River. This is a classic “colonial” geographic economy situation. By that it is meant the City’s location is where a “step” in transportation modes takes place. In this case Frankfort became a service center for the surrounding farming community. Farm products were sold to merchants in Frankfort for shipping elsewhere. Lumbering, like what was going in Manistee or Muskegon, with 400 or more miles of river servicing a major watershed and major manufacturing-lumber mills, was not a major industry in Frankfort. Forest products provided important farm income but remained secondary to the agricultural community which grew with the Homestead Act and end of the Civil War. Frankfort was not a lumber town, but purchased forest products – (firewood, fuel for the Elberta Iron Mill, and minor wood processing).

The main trade and “step” in transportation centered on merchants and agricultural service industries. The City’s main existence is based upon an exploitation of raw material (agricultural crops) and their export. The merchants/agricultural service industry owners were the

builders and owners of the large homes in the city. Otherwise, major industry owners and investors are from outside the community.

The advent of the Ann Arbor and Northern Michigan Rail Road perpetuated the “step” in transportation function for the Frankfort/Elberta area longer than might have occurred otherwise. Thus much of the Frankfort’s economy is dependent on its location and the prevailing modes of transportation: boat and rail. This is particularly true as Frankfort never developed an industry which extracted a natural resource beyond agriculture and timber. When lumber was depleted, there were no other resource extracting industries to take its place, such as with Ludington’s or Manistee’s chemical and salt factories. Also starting in the 1950’s and continuing to today, transportation modes have shifted toward the automobile. This has made necessary a fundamental change in the character of Frankfort and its economic place.

The recent history of Frankfort is reflective of the more general history of the United States during the last sixty years. Overarching this recent time is the continuation of the tourist trade that is, arguably, the continuing, and dominating history of the last hundred years. The arrival, and departure, of the Ann Arbor Car Ferry fleet, the opening and closing of Pet Ritz Pie Factory, the establishment of small and medium sized manufacturing plants for the auto industry, because the Ann Arbor Railroad provided good transportation of raw materials and finished goods to the Southeastern Michigan auto plants, have all contributed to the maintenance of a diverse, self-sustaining economy on the north- western boundary of the lower peninsula of Michigan. When the Ann Arbor Railroad ceased operation soon after the end of the Car Ferry Services, a significant change of pattern emerged. By 1985, the City of Frankfort was experiencing unprecedented unemployment and dislocation of the original population.

By 2000, the results of population dislocation, the loss of locally owned and operated businesses, the increased dependence on automobile and truck borne transportation, and the increasing urbanization of the Grand Traverse Region had changed the character of Frankfort, and the surrounding Benzie County. The local Chamber of Commerce and the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau use the tagline in the advertising – Northern Michigan Preserved – what they are really saying, is this part of Michigan is much like it was in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Among the characteristics remains a predominant rural overtone, frequently dominated by automobile borne visitors and limited employment opportunities outside of the tourist driven, service industries.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Benzie County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau to Benzie County, 2008*

The City of Frankfort would be recognizable to the residents of forty and fifty years ago. It is, in that very real sense, Northern Michigan Preserved. The essential character of this small city is residential, however, it is home to fewer full time residents than at any time in its recent past. Many of the traditional homes have become the part-time vacation residences and short-term rentals for out of state and downstate people, who want to experience the “small town” life that Frankfort offers.

Without significant manufacturing, industrial, or essential industries, the economy of the City revolves around the preparation for and living through the traditional tourist season – beginning early May and ending sometime in early October fulfilling the phrase, “Leafs to Leaves,” attributed to one local wag about the Frankfort economy. Significant exceptions exist: Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital, Graceland Fruit, Frankfort Manufacturing, Luedtke Marine Engineering, and others, continue to provide meaningful work and long-term employment to area residents.

It is where the natural landscape and man interact that dominates the notable features of Northwestern Lower Peninsula of Michigan. The ability to traverse this region of sand dunes and forested land begins with access. The City is connected by the non-motorized Frankfort – Elberta Beach to Beach Trail that surrounds Betsie Lake connecting to the Betsie Valley Trail – a Rails to Trails Project of Michigan

Department of Natural Resources. The Betsie Valley Trail extends southeast from Betsie Bay to Thompsonville, following twenty-three miles of what was the original Frankfort and South East Railroad.

The use of the water and the water connection to Lake Michigan, through the Frankfort Marina and Harbor facilities, both public and private, are among the most sought after berthing for short and long-term use during the boating season on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan reflecting Captain Snows long ago use of this “safe harbor.”

The Betsie Lake Utilities Authority (BLUA) is a state of the art water treatment facility maintained cooperatively by Frankfort and the Village of Elberta. The BLUA plant is capable of sustained treatment of at least approximately double the current use without additional capital improvement. Frankfort has been designated an Arbor Day Foundation Tree City, USA for the fifteenth consecutive year.

Extensive gardens are a joint project of the local Rotary Club and Garden Club, connecting open spaces with the Beach-to-Beach Trail and the Betsie Bay waters. Within the past ten years, the citizens of Frankfort invested in the state of the art Frankfort Fire Department Building and a City Hall Building that symbolize the determination of the citizens to keep Frankfort a viable, residential and resort community, toward the city’s Bicentennial Celebration in 2056.

# Chapter 2: Analysis of Existing Conditions

## Population and Demographics

The City of Frankfort is located in Benzie County, Michigan, which covers a land area of approximately 321 square miles. In 2018, Benzie County had an estimated population of 17,753 (US Census, 2018 Population Estimates), and a population density of approximately 55.3 people per square mile. Benzie County's population remained relatively stable between 2010 and 2018, increasing by 1.4%. This is down from the 8.8% increase experienced between 2000-2010, when the County's growth rate was only outpaced by Grand Traverse County in the region.

In 2018, the population of the City of Frankfort was 1,288. Covering a land area of 1.4 square miles, the City has a population density of approximately 953 people per square mile. Similar to Benzie County, the population remained fairly stable between 2010 and 2018, experiencing a 0.4% increase.

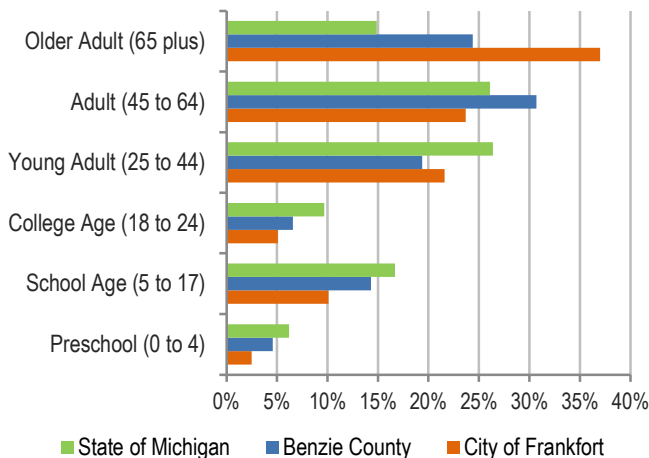
The City of Frankfort's population represents approximately 7.3% of Benzie County's total population. Another 10.1% of the County's population resided in the adjacent communities of Gilmore Township (830) and Crystal Lake Township (966).

According to the US Census population projections for 2040, the greatest growth rates will occur among the population ages 65 and older. Growth is also expected among those ages 25 to 44, as well as the population 19 and under. However, this growth does not offset the in-migration of senior populations.

The population among those ages 45 to 64 is expected to decrease by 20% by 2040. However, this age cohort is still predicted to represent a slightly larger percentage of the overall population than those ages 25 to 44. 2040 projections show the population 45 and older will represent approximately 53% of the County's population, with 31% over the age of 65.

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income
City of Frankfort	\$39,516	\$60,000
Crystal Lake Township	\$66,917	\$74,583
Gilmore Township	\$45,865	\$58,750
Benzie County	\$53,185	\$65,349
Michigan	\$52,668	\$66,653

**Population by Age, 2017**



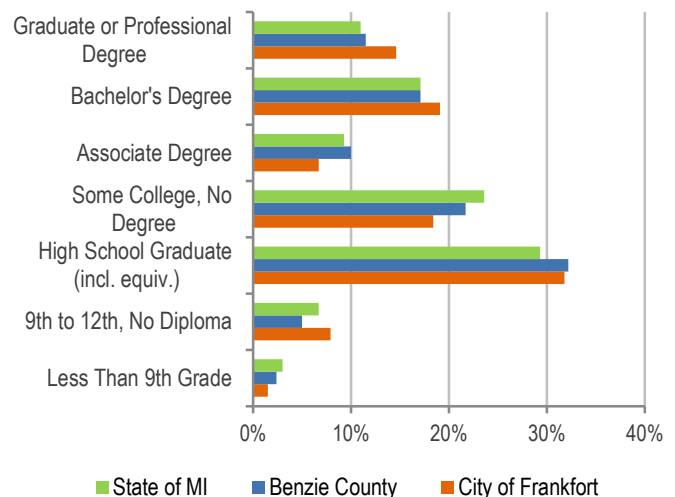
Benzie County, similar to much of Northwest Lower Michigan, has an aging population. This is largely due to the area's desirability as a retirement destination. As of 2017, approximately 55% of Benzie County's population is over the age of 45 and 24% are over the age of 65 (2017 ACS).

The median age for the City of Frankfort is 58.1 (2017 ACS). This is ten years older than the County's median age of 48.9, and well over the state median age of 39.5 years. Approximately 37% of the City's population was over the age of 65 and 61% over the age of 45 in 2017.

Source: American Community Survey, 2017

There is significant disparity of incomes within Benzie County. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, the household median income in Benzie County was \$53,185. The City of Frankfort's household median income was \$39,516.

**Educational Attainment**  
Population Age 25+ Years



Over the past decade, educational attainment in Benzie County has risen among the population 25 years and over. As of 2017, 93% of Benzie County residents have a high school diploma or higher, and 29% have a Bachelor's Degree or higher (2017 American Community Survey). In the City of Frankfort, 34% of residents over the age of 25 have a bachelor's degree or higher, and 91% have a high school diploma or higher.

### Housing

In 2017, the City of Frankfort had 1,018 total housing units (2017 ACS). Of the 552 that were considered occupied households, 290 (53%) were family households and 262 were non-family households. A family household is defined as a household in which a person is living with one or more persons related to him or her by birth, marriage or adoption. A non-family household is a household where a person is living alone or with non-relatives only.

As the population ages, the number of one- and two-person households increase, a trend reflected in the smaller average household size. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, the average household size in the City of Frankfort was 2.10 persons, which was below the statewide average of 2.49. Average household size in the City was also lower than in the nearby Village of Elberta (2.4) and Benzonia (2.6).

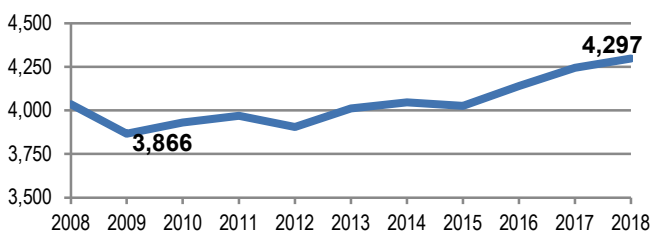
As with population density, the City of Frankfort has a higher density of housing units per square mile than Benzie County overall. As of 2017, the City had approximately 727 housing units per square mile, whereas the County had 39 (2017 ACS). This conveys the more urban, centralized character of the City versus the more rural character of the surrounding County.

The City of Frankfort has a large seasonal population, as the City is a prime vacation destination during the summer months. Of the City's 1,018 housing units, approximately 386 or 38% were considered seasonal units in 2017. This is up from 2010, when seasonal units represented 24% of the housing stock.

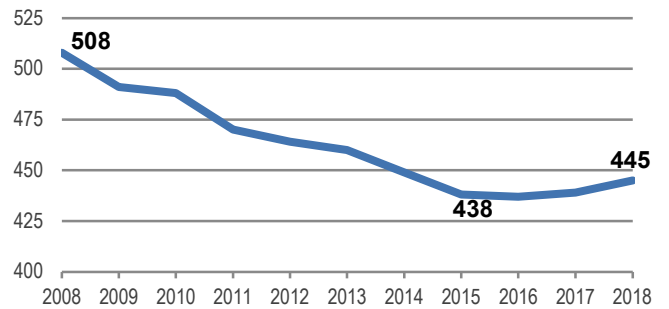
### Workforce & Employment

Between 2008 and 2018, the number of establishments in Benzie County decreased by 12.4%, and the number of jobs in the county increased by 6.5% (2018 Bureau of Labor Statistics). The 2018 average unemployment rate in Benzie County was 5.5% (Bureau of Labor Statistics).

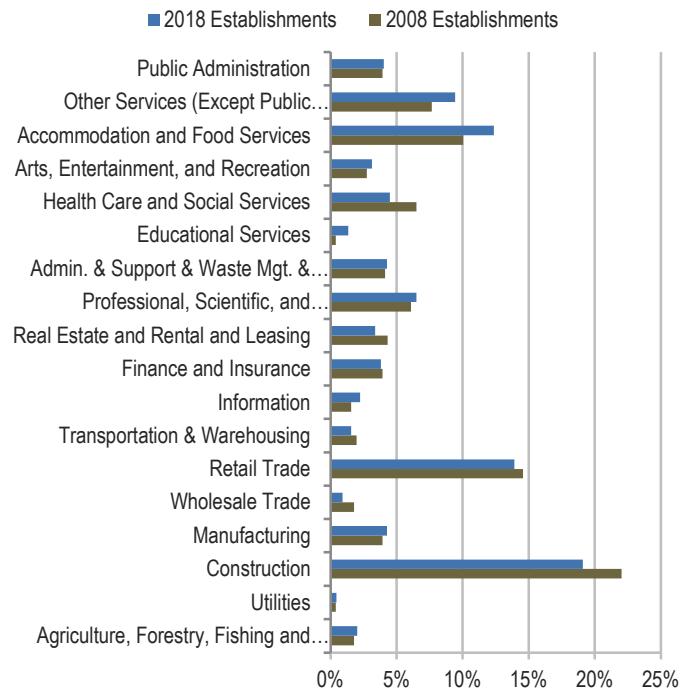
**Jobs, Benzie County**



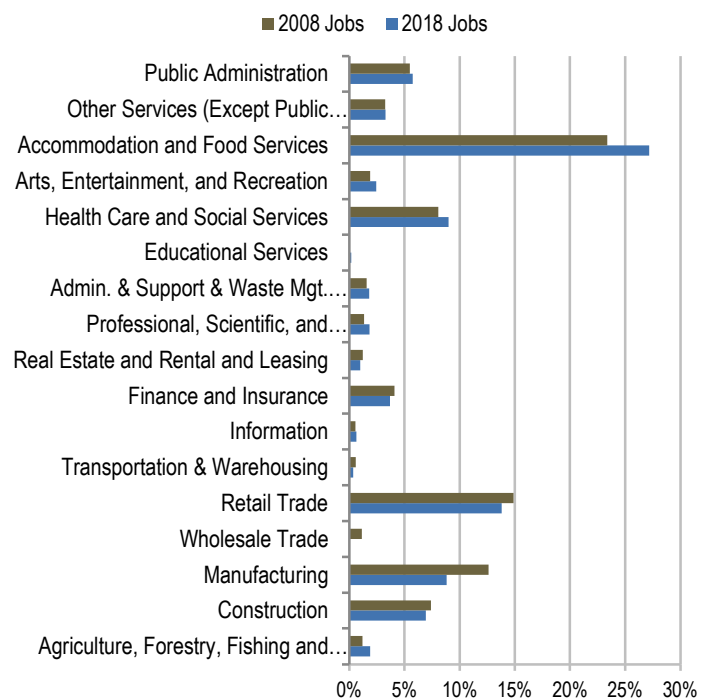
**Establishments, Benzie County**



**Industry Distribution of Establishments**



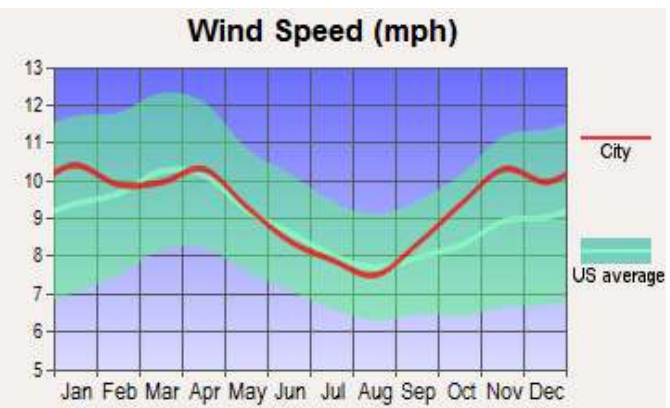
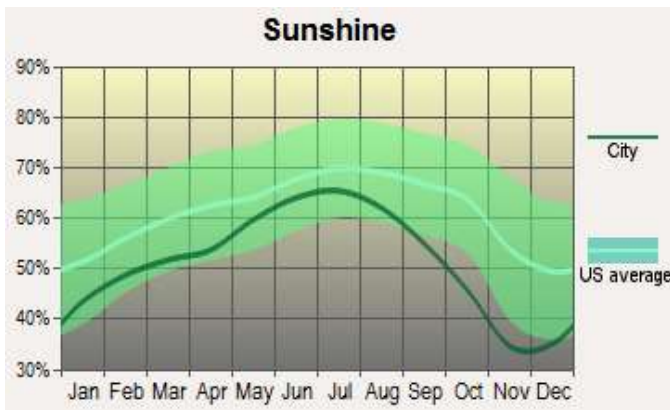
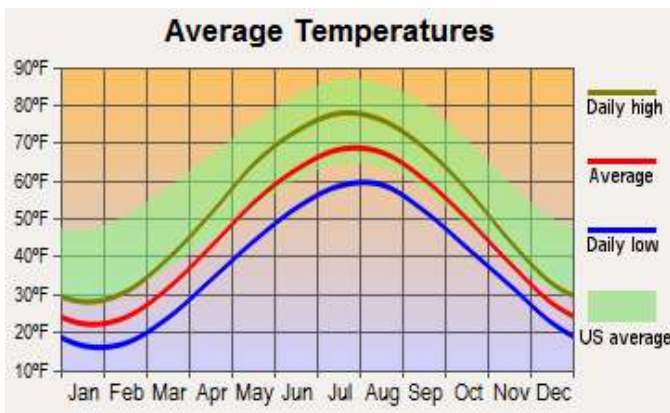
**Industry Distribution of Jobs, 2018**



## Natural Resources

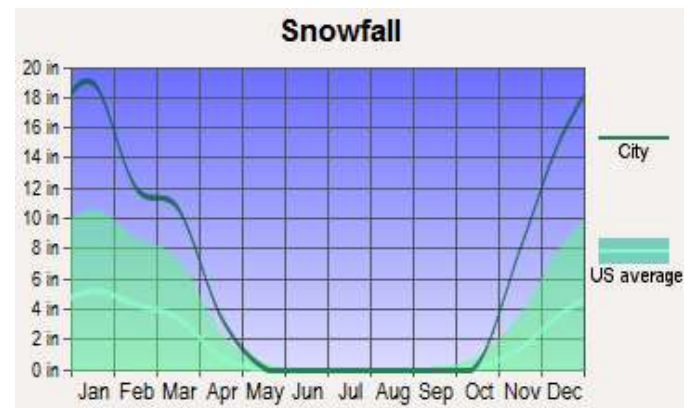
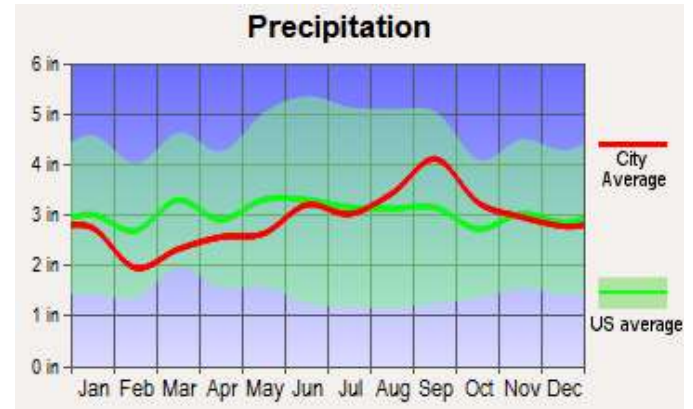
### Climate

Frankfort's climate is fairly representative of northern coastal communities. The climate is mild during the summer months with typical July high temperatures close to 80 degrees and lows around 60 degrees. The warmest month of the year is July with an average maximum temperature of 77 degrees. The climate is cold during the winter months. The average high temperature between December and February is about 30 degrees and the average low is around 20 degrees. January is the coldest month of the year with an average minimum temperature of 18 degrees. Temperature variations between night and day tend to be fairly limited during summer, and fairly limited during winter.



The City of Frankfort roughly averages 35 inches of precipitation per year. The month of the year with the most average rainfall is September.

The snowfall count for the 2018-2019 winter was 122.75" as measured by the Benzie County Road Commission in Honor, MI. Snowfall is typically lower in areas along the Lake Michigan coast, including the City of Frankfort.



### Geology and Natural History<sup>2</sup>

The City of Frankfort is atop of a glacial drift. A glacial drift is sand, clay, and gravels which are found on the surface of the ground. This drift material is about 200 to 300 feet thick in this area and rests on a subsurface of Michigan bedrock formations. The subsurface consists of slightly inclined limestones, gypsums, sandstones and shales of the Middle Devonian and silurian periods of the Paleozoic geological era. Because of the thick layer of glacial and lacustrine sediments, bedrock does not outcrop in this area as it does in the Petoskey, Rogers City and Alpena areas where limestone strip mining operations are found.

Frankfort's surface geology is a product of glaciation. A great deal can be learned about the natural features of the City and the surrounding area through a review of the underlying glacial formations.

<sup>2</sup> City of Frankfort 1998 Comprehensive Development Plan. Pp 3-10. The entire Geology and Natural History section was originally part of the City of Frankfort 1998 Comprehensive Development Plan as originally prepared by Larry Nix, PCP.

The geological characteristics of any part of Michigan cannot be discussed without reference to the great continental glaciers which repeatedly scoured the land as far south as northern Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. There were four such glaciers, the first beginning about one million years ago, and the last, withdrawing about 10 to 20 thousand years ago. Since each glacier largely buried or eradicated any evidence of its predecessor, the glacial period with which we are concerned is the last one, known as the Wisconsin stage. Like the earlier stages, it included several sub-stages, during which the ice halted its advance and withdrew briefly (geologically speaking) before advancing once again.

The latest period, known as the Port Huron Substage, is the one which created the basic landforms in the northern part of the Lower Peninsula. The geological results of this period have been modified by nature (wind, water, temperature and vegetation) and, of course, man in the intervening years, but there remains clear evidence of the original glacial action.

## **Moraines**

Moraines are hilly areas which consist of variegated rock and soil material deposited by water running off the edge of a receding glacier. Several forms appear in the area.

End Moraines are rocky hills composed of material pushed before the leading edge of a glacier that stopped advancing. The Manistee End Moraine made up of fine textured till generally located north of Manistee City, is one such moraine. It has better farming soils which, combined with the irregular topography and moderate lake effect climate, lends the area to unique farming conditions. It is in these areas that the conditions of climate, topography and soils combine to form nationally unique farmlands, sites which are preferred for cherry and other fruit and orchard farming. The network of hills south and east of Betsie Lake and the Betsie River valley are a part of the Manistee End Moraine.

Interlobate Moraines were created by large headlands similar to those along the present Lake Michigan shoreline that resisted the advancing glacier and directed the icy lobes into the valleys and pre-glacial stream beds. The ice which flowed into these channels was deeper and moved faster than on the ridges on either side. Thus the glacier moved toward the Manistee Moraine as a series of lobes, separated by ridges. These ridges were covered with glacial drift (the material transported in the ice) and are called Interlobate Moraines. The best examples in the Frankfort area are the ridges on either side of the Crystal Lake and Herring Lakes embayments.

Ground Moraines are areas which are covered with glacial drift but are neither End or Interlobate in nature. These areas were under the body of the glacier. The majority of Frankfort is on a coarse-textured glacial till (non-sorted glacial debris of predominantly sandy clay loam, sandy loam, or loamy sand textured with variable amounts of cobbles and boulders). This is a

ground moraine or undifferentiated ground moraine-end moraine complex. This includes the areas in Frankfort north of Main Street and east of First/Michigan Streets. Morainal Plateaus are areas where glacial drift is particularly deep with a relatively flat top. In the study area they are often covered by sand dunes.

## **Glacial Drainage Channels**

The Betsie River Valley is a lacustrine plain. A lacustrine plain is a glacial drainage channel. The theory is that these drainage channels were cut by flowing glacial melt water in much greater quantity than would be seen today coming from a stationary or receding glacier.

A major characteristic of lacustrine plains is the presence of wetlands and poorly drained soils. A small portion of the City, along the Betsie Lake shoreline and that part of the city that extends south along M-22, is a part of this lacustrine plain.

## **Bluffs**

Bluffs were formed wherever lake waters eroded moraine headlands. The Frankfort Bluffs over Lake Michigan and those surrounding Crystal Lake are prime examples of this geologic feature.

## **Sand Dunes**

Although not strictly glacial in their formation, dunes in this area are created secondarily by erosion of moraines along the lake Michigan shoreline. This erosion and grinding, through the complex action of waves and currents, results in sand being formed and deposited at the edge of the water. As the level of the lake varies over time, sand is periodically dried and blown inland by onshore winds. The size of particles picked up in this fashion and deposited in mounds called dunes, is nearly uniform because smaller, lighter particles have been washed away as silt and heavier ones cannot be moved by the winds. Blowing sand drops to the ground when the wind is slowed by obstacles in its path and dunes begin to form much like snowdrifts.

Established dunes in this area continue to grow and move inland because of the erosive action of water at their foot precludes additional sand, which blows up the windward slope and deposits on the leeward side. Two types of dunes are common and still being formed at or near lake level. The most spectacular of these are being formed near the lakeshore in the Frankfort area. Those being formed at or near dunes are simply dunes "perched" atop morainal plateaus. Excellent examples of ancient dunes associated with post-glacial lakes and modern dunes are located north and south of Frankfort such as the Elberta dunes and Pointe Betsie Dunes. The Frankfort Bluffs along the Lake Michigan Coastline on top of the morainal plateau west of First Street and north of Forest Street are sand dunes. The high dunes, which are perched on top of a moraine (such as found in Frankfort north of Park Street and west of

Michigan Street) are parabolic dunes on the former (late Wisconsinian) Lake Nipissing. (Best known of the Lake Nipissing dunes are the Sleeping Bear Dunes.)

Such dunes are fragile, and if destroyed they will not form again in this era. It is these dunes in the northwest corner of the City which are subject to regulation by Michigan's Critical Dune protection legislation.

### **Embayments**

As the glaciers receded, the melting water was trapped in the deep valleys gouged out of pre-glacial stream channels thus forming embayment lakes, with the glacier itself blocking one end. Later as the ice retreated north, the high waters of Lakes Algonquin, then Nipissing, Algoma, and Chippewa (as Lake Michigan's predecessors were called) reached into these valleys forming wave-cut bluffs, beach terraces, sand bars, ridge and swale formations in four consecutive stages. As drainage outlets at lower levels finally became free of ice, the waters of the early lakes dropped to near present level leaving, over the course of time, sandy plains and many of our smaller inland lakes which formed in depressions in the plains.

Soils in these embayments tend to be sandy, with pure sand along the beaches and richer soils in the inland areas. Outstanding examples in the Frankfort vicinity are the Platte Lakes, Crystal Lake, and the Herring Lakes. Both sides of Betsie Lake, and inland along the Betsie River almost to Benzonia and north to Crystal Lake used to be an embayment area to the predecessor of Lake Michigan. Along the edge of this bay, there remains today traces of the former shorelines of glacial and post-glacial stages of the Great Lakes. The former shorelines are either wave-cut bluffs or low ridges of sand and gravel of former beaches.

Over time the Betsie and Crystal Lakes embayments became inland lakes, as they are today. Glacial and contemporary Great Lakes wave action, longshore currents and wind combined to close off the bay—by formation of the baymouth dunes—to form the inland lake. The baymouth dunes were formed, among other factors, when the longshore current slowed down (such as when encountering an obstacle or in this case an open bay). This caused the deposition of waterborne materials which built up sand bars and eventually shore dunes. The dunes soon closed off the bay, forming an inland lake. Crystal Lake was closed off from Lake Michigan entirely in this manner. In the case of Betsie Lake, with the Betsie River drainage a natural channel continued to make its way to Lake Michigan. With prevailing summer winds from the south, and the Elberta dunes encroaching from the south side of the lake, the original outlet of Betsie Lake started from the northwest corner of the lake. Thus the original outlet of Betsie Lake was from the northwest corner of the Lake and ran northwest over a course which varied widely by year.

### **Topography**

Several areas in Frankfort have steep slopes which have limita-

tions for high density residential development. The hillsides, being steep, will cause erosion problems during construction and after when paved drives and lawn areas cannot retain water runoff. Required connection to City-supplied water, sewer and storm sewer systems may help mitigate these negative impacts. Although these cautions are given in Soil Conservation Service Land Resource Inventory Maps, only a few of the hillsides in the City are so severe that development without proper measures is not possible. Notably the Lake Michigan bluffs and the hillsides between Leelanau Avenue and Pine Street, commonly referred to as "Tank Hill" are precluded from development activities. Frankfort desires energy efficient homes – including the possibility of partially underground residences on hillside building sites. Obviously, caution is required for any such building activity. Erosion controls, during construction and afterwards are required.

The Lake Michigan shoreline bluffs continue as a protected area, precluded from development activities, based on objective standards and statutes of the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). Recognizing the cyclical high water levels of Lake Michigan, the city may need to explore potential options for preserving and minimizing the high risk erosion and critical dune areas along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

The setbacks for erosion control are determined by estimating the recession rate, or amount of erosion which is likely to occur at a given location along the shoreline. For example, from a point 1,000 feet north of the northern breakwater to the north city limits, setbacks are established at 70 feet. The 70 feet was determined by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources by using historical air photos and surveys, and comparing the shoreline with modern surveys and air photos. The erosion was measured for a period of 30 years. Thus a 70-foot setback indicates that the shoreline has eroded 70 feet in the past thirty years and is estimated to erode another 70 feet in the next thirty years. Erosion rates and setbacks were not established where loss of bluff occurred at an average rate of 1 foot per year or less (30 feet in 30 years). However, in recent years, with high Lake Michigan water levels, actual erosion has not occurred as predicted. Observed erosion has occurred in areas where not predicted, has not occurred where predicted, and has occurred at rates greater than predicted, therefore, increased setbacks are required.

The minimum setback (administered via permit by the MDNRE unless the same or stricter setbacks are incorporated into local zoning) is designed to protect residential structures built along Lake Michigan for a period of thirty years. Thirty years was the assumed length of an average mortgage at the time. For longer protection, a greater setback should be followed.

### **Vegetation/Land Cover**

The majority of Frankfort, or 62% of its land area, is covered by natural vegetation. While 38% of the City's land area is covered

by anthropogenic uses (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, etc.) A similar percentage (31%) is covered by deciduous forest.

Other forest types include mixed forest (6%) and evergreen forest (4%). These forests are concentrated to the north of the City, with concentrations of deciduous forest between Leelanau Avenue and Park Avenue, and west of Michigan Avenue towards Lake Michigan shoreline. The majority of forest cover, however, is located in northwest Frankfort: north of Elm Street extending northward and eastward from Bridge Street to Crystal Avenue.

Other natural vegetation includes upland grasslands/herbaceous grasses and forbs. These areas cover approximately 8% of Frankfort and appear throughout the City, with the highest concentrations near Bridge Street and Park View Lane, as well as Corning Avenue. These areas are typically disturbed, and are often utilized for grazing or other activities.

A small percentage (1%) of Frankfort's land area is covered by wooded wetland. These areas are located to the west of the Betsie Valley Trail, and are most concentrated near Brook St. at the edge of Lake Betsie. These are areas where the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with water.

Although covering only a small percentage (1%) of the City, Frankfort has several areas of sand beach along the Lake Michigan shoreline. The most prominent area is located at the terminus of Main Street at the Frankfort Beach, which extends south to the U.S. Coast Guard building and north to the Lake Michigan beach west of the end of George Street.

## Soils

The soils within Frankfort are characteristic of the Lake Michigan interface, where steep slopes meet sand dune beaches. The majority (80%) of the City's soils are varieties of sand.

The Lake Michigan shoreline consists of Beaches and Dune Land/Quartzipsamment, which comprises approximately 2% of the City's soils. These soils are generally unstable and support little vegetation.

Thirty-seven percent of the City's soils are Spinks-Coloma sands, mostly located at the periphery of the City limits, north of Park Avenue and Elm Street. The current distribution of forests is consistent with the location of Spinks-Coloma sands, as Spinks-Coloma sands are characteristic of steep slopes and thus present some limitations for construction. These soils support many deciduous and evergreen species of trees, including American basswood, American beech, Eastern hemlock, Eastern white pine, red maple, and sugar maple, among others.

Approximately 20% of the City's soils are Covert sands. These soils are generally located to the east of the City from 9th Street to the city limits. These sands can be somewhat saturated, sup-

port vegetation such as black cherry, red oak, and red maple, and present some limitations for construction past the saturation zone.

The majority of the downtown sits atop Kaleva sands, which support vegetation similar to Spinks-Coloma sands and Covert sands. These sands present few limitations for construction due to its significant depth to saturation.

North of the downtown, there is a large area of Benzonia sands, running from approximately Harbor Place to Leelanau Avenue, and then northward along 7th Street toward Beech Street. Again, these soils support vegetation similar to Spinks-Coloma sands.

Other soil types with less frequent appearance include Dair muck, Fogg-Benzonia sands, Udipsamments, Histosols and Aquents, Pipestone sands, and Perrington loam.

## Wetlands

These wetlands were identified by the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) and by the Michigan Resource Inventory System (MIRIS) as potential locations of wetlands and wetland conditions, but are not ground-truthed by the Federal or State agencies. The NWI defines "wetlands" as follows:

"In general terms, wetlands are lands where saturation with water is the dominant factor determining the nature of soil development and the types of plant and animal communities living in the soil and on its surface. The single feature that most wetlands share is soil or substrate that is at least periodically saturated with or covered by water. The water creates severe physiological problems for all plants and animals except those that are adapted for life in water or in saturated soil.

Wetlands are lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. For purposes of this classification wetlands must have one or more of the following three attributes: (1) at least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes; (2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil; and (3) the substrate is nonsoil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year.

The term wetland includes a variety of areas that fall into one of five categories: (1) areas with hydrophytes and hydric soils, such as those commonly known as marshes, swamps, and bogs; (2) areas without hydrophytes but with hydric soils-for example, flats where drastic fluctuation in water level, wave action, turbidity, or high concentration of salts may prevent the growth of hydrophytes; (3) areas with hydrophytes but nonhydric soils, such as margins of impoundments or excavations where hydrophytes have become established but hydric soils have not yet developed; (4) areas without soils but with hydrophytes such

as the seaweed-covered portion of rocky shores; and (5) wetlands without soil and without hydrophytes, such as gravel beaches or rocky shores without vegetation. Drained hydric soils that are now incapable of supporting hydrophytes because of a change in water regime are not considered wetlands by our definition. These drained hydric soils furnish a valuable record of historic wetlands, as well as an indication of areas that may be suitable for restoration.”<sup>3</sup>

The existing wetlands within the City of Frankfort are concentrated in two primary areas:

- 1) At the Betsie Lake shoreline, west of the Betsie Valley Trail
- 2) At the intersection of Day Avenue and James Street

There are also two smaller areas of wetlands within the City limits. One is located west of Bellows Avenue, north of St. Ann’s Catholic Church, and the other is located near the Michigan Shores Co-Op.

It’s estimated that there are approximately 170 acres of wetlands within Frankfort’s limits. Of these, only approximately 130 acres have characteristic wetland soils. The remaining acreage was identified by the National Wetland Inventory, but do not have compatible soil characteristics.

## Land Use

Nearly half (49%) of land uses within the City of Frankfort are residential, and a significant percentage of land uses (42%) are detached single-family uses. While single-family uses appear throughout the City, they are most concentrated to the north of downtown, from Anchor Place to Leelanau Avenue.

Attached single family uses comprise 5% of land uses within Frankfort. Apartments, multi-family buildings and townhouses are concentrated near the Lake Michigan shoreline, south of Main Street near 2nd Street and Waterfront Drive, and west of Michigan Avenue. Additionally, there are two small blocks of townhouses fronting Main Street at 3rd Street and 5th Street.

The City of Frankfort has relatively few (less than 1%) attached multifamily uses. These uses are dispersed along Main Street, with concentrations at Michigan Avenue to the west and Grove Place to the east.

There are fewer than 2 acres (less than 1%) of two family, or duplex, residential uses within the City. These are located within the predominately single-family areas north of Anchor Place.

There is one mobile home park within the City. This park is 1.29 acres in size, and is located at the intersection of Elm Street and Day Avenue.

Approximately a quarter (26%) of the land uses within the City of Frankfort are non-residential. These uses consist of commercial,

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Dept of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States. Pp3*

industrial, civic/institutional, parks and recreation, health facilities, and mixed uses. The majority of these uses are concentrated near the downtown, along Main Street and to the west near Day Avenue.

Commercial uses, which represent 6% of land uses in the City, are most concentrated along Main Street as retail and service uses.

Industrial uses represent only 3% of land uses, and are concentrated to the east of the City from the Betsie Bay waterfront northward.

Civic/institutional uses, such as churches, schools, and libraries, comprise 8% of land uses and are evenly distributed throughout the City. The City has two schools: Frankfort High School at 534 Eleventh Street, and Frankfort Elementary School at 613 Leelanau Avenue. There are also civic buildings along Main Street, including a post office and library at 7th Street, and several churches within the neighborhoods north of downtown.

Parks and recreation uses are most concentrated at the Betsie Bay waterfront, south of Main Street. These uses include parks such Mineral Springs Park, Rotary Park, and the Betsie Valley Trail, and cover approximately 48 acres, or 7% of the City. One of the most prominent park uses is the Frankfort Beach, located at the Lake Michigan shoreline near the terminus of Main Street.

The City’s health facilities comprise 2.3% of the City’s land uses, and are located north of the downtown at Park Avenue. These uses include the Maples Nursing Home and the Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital.

Mixed uses comprise less than 0.5% of the City’s uses, and are scattered throughout the downtown.

The remaining quarter (25%) of the City is currently undeveloped. The majority of these vacant parcels are concentrated at the periphery of the City’s limits near George Street and Bridge Street. Although there are several vacant parcels west of Lake Street at the Lake Betsie shoreline, the majority of these consist of wetlands or wetland soils that pose significant limitations for future development.

A breakdown of the percentages of different land uses within the City is shown below:

Single Family Detached	55.1%
Single Family Attached	11.8%
Multiple Family	.4%
Commercial	10.47%
Industrial	.7%
Civic/Parks/Recreation	7.6%
Vacant/Undeveloped	13.9%
Health Facilities	.6%

## Transportation

The City of Frankfort is served with a well-established grid network of streets, particularly in the historic portions of town. There are two state highways in Frankfort - M-115 and M-22. M-115 is the primary route for traffic coming from the south and the east. Lake Street (M-22) connects Frankfort with Elberta to the south. M-115 ends at the intersection of Lake Street and Forest Avenue. M-22 continues west as Forest Avenue before turning north at 7th Street. M-22 carries the highest traffic volumes and creates the most challenging pedestrian conditions. MDOT has jurisdiction over these roads.

Main Street is the City's central business district and runs parallel to the Lake Betsie shoreline. Vehicular traffic typically accesses Main Street from 7th Street and Lake Street. Main Street has on-street parking over the entire length of the street. West of 6th Street, on-street parking moves from parallel to head-in angled parking on the north side of the street.

Local streets have appropriate speed limits for residential neighborhoods. Moving north away from town, speed limits increase, most notably on M-22, which returns to highway speeds.

Non-motorized transportation consists of the City's network of sidewalks and the Beach-to-Beach Trail. The oldest part of town is fairly well connected with sidewalks on both sides of most streets. There are some notable exceptions, like the north-south streets between Forest and Leelanau Avenues west of 7th Street, which have some significant missing sidewalk pieces. The sidewalk network east of 7th Street and north of James Street is not as complete as the network west of 7th Street.

Pedestrian crossings are marked with striping on the roadway, but are otherwise not sufficiently called out. There are no bump-outs or pedestrian refuges at the busiest and most dangerous crossings - namely those M-22 crossings closest to the Elementary School. Workshop participants continually referred to the lack of adequate pedestrian crossings as a major impediment to walking and bicycling in Frankfort.

## Infrastructure - Water and Sewer

The City of Frankfort provides water treatment and distribution. The City of Frankfort provides sanitary sewer and storm water distribution. The Betsie Lake Utility Authority (BLUA) provides sanitary sewer treatment. The City of Frankfort has been committed toward upgrades of the sanitary sewer system to eliminate combined distribution of sanitary sewer and storm water as well as inflow and infiltration. Enhancements to BLUA have resulted in an increased capacity that will facilitate growth.

## Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools (FEAS)

The Frankfort-Elberta School District (FEAS) has two buildings within the district. Frankfort Elementary is located at 613 Leelanau Avenue which houses students in grades preschool

through sixth. The Frankfort Junior-Senior High School is located at 534 11th Street. The district office is also located at 534 11th Street. The K-12 enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year is 454 students with 32 students attending the preschool programs.

Students receive the required curriculum with elective classes while offering on-line classes and dual enrollment which allows students to earn college credit. Students are also able to attend the Traverse Bay Area Career Tech Center which offers a variety of vocational and technical programs. The M-STEP student proficiency scores are well above the State average and ranked in the top three to four districts within the Traverse Bay Intermediate School District. SAT scores are on the rise and above State averages. The Mackinac Center which assesses the success of schools based on a number of variables, including socio-economic status, ranked the elementary school 75th in the State with a grade of **A** in 2017. The junior-senior high school received a rank of 77 and received a letter grade of a **B**. Upon graduation from Frankfort High School, the majority of students continue their education at either two or four year institutions. Some choose to enter the military while others choose to go directly into the work force.

In 2015 the supportive communities of FEAS passed a capital projects bond of 3.9 million dollars. These funds allow the district to enhance technology for our students, continue with site improvements and allowing the purchase of school buses and other needed equipment upgrades in the district. The funds are not used for the operating costs of the district. The district also has a strong parent support program known as Panther Parents. In April of each year this group organizes the Spring Fling which is a one-night event that raises \$30,000-\$35,000 for student programs/materials/activities.

The district also works well with outside agencies including the City of Frankfort. FEAS also supports programs outside of the school year such as Summer Migrant Program, Summer Daycare and Food Programs, Benzie County Summer Youth Program, Summer Credit Recovery and hosts Michigan bike tours and athletic camps.

FEAS continues to operate under the belief: **Every Student, Every Classroom, Every Day.**

## Frankfort Area Resource Center (FCRC)

The City of Frankfort has long maintained an interest in providing a Community Center. The current center has been located for decades in a decaying, structurally unsound building at 1290 Main Street on the north shore of Betsie Bay adjacent to Mineral Springs Park, the municipal marina and boat launching site, the Beach-to-Beach Trail and a short distance from the Benzie Shores District Library. The building that started its long life as a lumberyard office has undergone many adaptations over the decades to meet community demands ranging from a gathering place, meeting hall, commercial kitchen facility, senior center, child care center, pool hall and game center, Masonic Hall and even a storage place for civic organizations. More recently, the building has fallen into decay and abandonment despite a hoped

for revival that has never been realized. In early 2018, the City Council established a community task force to develop a viable long-term plan to address the issue, urged on by the possibility of significant private funding. Given that mandate, the Frankfort Area Community Resource Center Advisory Council was created. Holding more than 25 meetings in the following months, a vision and a focus was developed. Providing a means to help residents and visitors of the Frankfort area with resources to enjoy successful lives here became the vision. Development of the vision was helped extensively by the creation of a community survey. The survey was promoted and distributed throughout the community during the late Spring and Summer of 2018 and was also available online at the City's website. Based on extensive committee discussions and from 473 participants in the survey, results showed overwhelming support for development of a Community Resource Center. The Survey also underscored the focus should be a place for education in skilled trades and an extensive certified childcare operation. Included would be a multi-purpose conference center. All of it would mandate a fulltime operations manager with extensive experience and knowledge of the requirements needed including fund-raising and permanent operational funding.

With designated funding from the Frankfort City Council, a 501(c)(3) non-profit was established to receive donations, apply for available grants, and develop other funding opportunities. The non-profit received significant funding from a private donor in December, 2018. That funding will help develop other fund-raising and additional community support.

In addition, following the leadership of the Advocates for Benzie County (ABC), the Frankfort Area Community Resource Center has helped develop and participate in an alliance of other recently formed similar efforts currently being developed in communities throughout Benzie County. Those projects include repurposing of the closed Platte River Elementary School in Honor, an existing project at the Betsie Valley Elementary School, and the long-established Grow Benzie. Each of these projects has identified many similar community needs and problems that need to be much more effectively addressed throughout Benzie County, especially for our families and children. The Alliance also recognizes that a number of potential conflicts, unnecessary duplication and unforeseen problems can be avoided by sharing information and resources. Continued participation in and encouragement of the Alliance as well as the FCRC as they develop should continue to receive the full support of the City of Frankfort.

The vision is hopeful. The focus is broad and in need of refinement. From the start, however, the discussion has not been about the bricks and mortar that might house a Community Center in Frankfort, as important as that discussion will be. The discussion has been about what might be put inside the bricks and mortar. With encouragement and support, the FCRC Advisory Council will continue developing plans and funding to establish a real addition to the Frankfort area at 1290 Main Street.

## **Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts**

Located at 132 Coast Guard Road in the old Coast Guard station at the confluence of Betsie Bay and Lake Michigan, the purpose of the Elizabeth Lane Oliver Center for the Arts is to establish and maintain an educational program and facility for the advancement of the arts. The Art Center also works to promote and develop the visual, performing, culinary, and literary arts in Benzie County and the surrounding area.

High quality classes and workshops for adults, youth, and families are offered year-round in a variety of media, including clay and ceramics, painting, collage, drawing, pastel, textile arts, culinary arts, fiber arts, writing fiction and poetry, editing, and wellness arts.

Outreach programs in the schools, including the MOSAIC program, as well as scholarships for youth and adolescents to help ensure that Oliver Art Center's serves its entire community.

Oliver Art Center hosts approximately 10 exhibitions annually, including special exhibitions. The Annual All-media Juried Exhibition and Annual Student Exhibition consistently engage our community. Two member shows per year keep everyone connected and learning about the best our membership has to offer. Featured artist shows in summer months bring artists from across the country, along with fresh ideas, inspiration, and connections for local artists.

A wide variety of events are free to the public, year-round. These include exhibition opening receptions, artist talks, the June open house with hands-on activities and compelling discussions. Ticketed events include performances held in partnership with Chamber Music North, as well as theme and holiday parties in spring and winter.

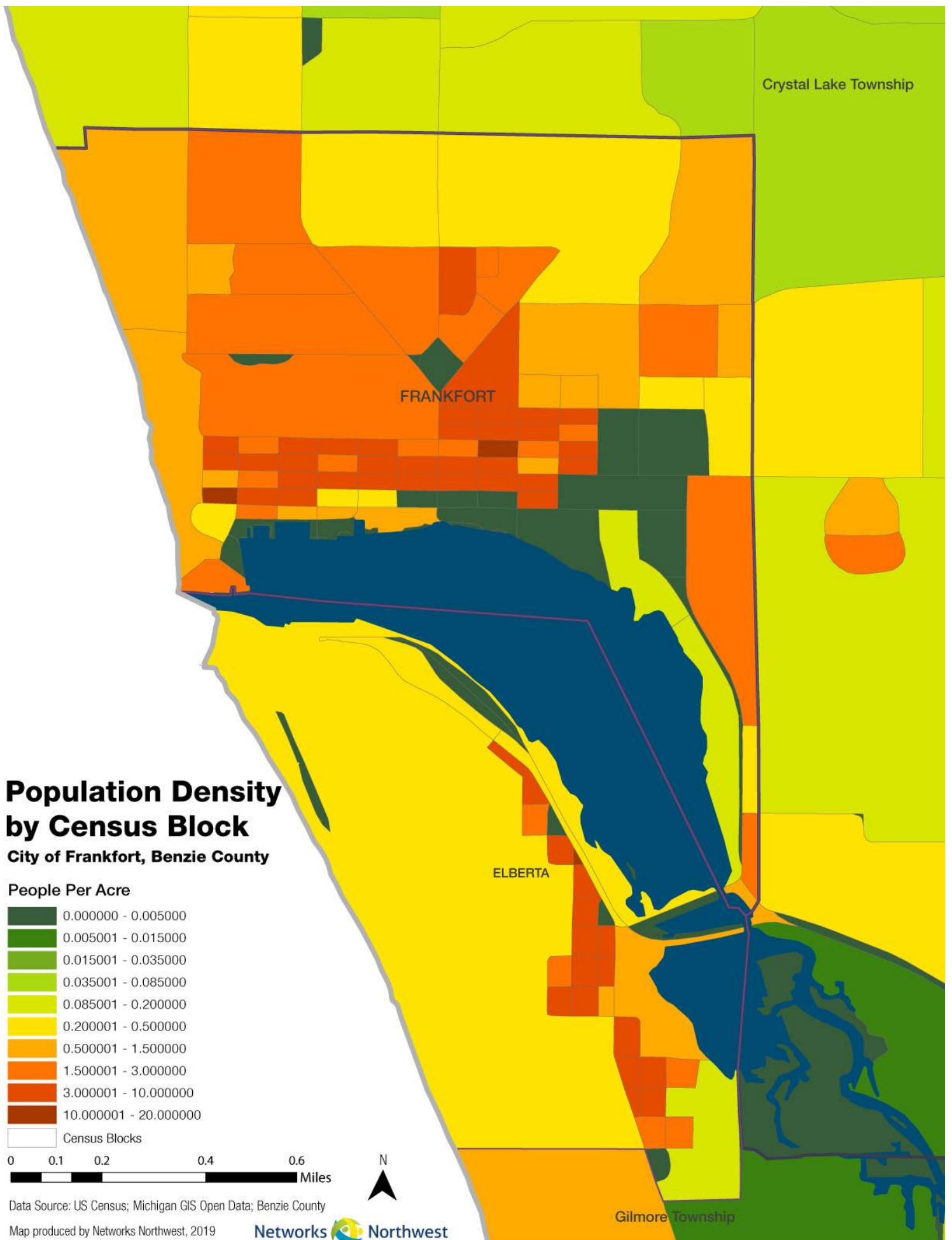
An open studio is made available each Wednesday year-round. Participants are strongly encouraged to become members and to contribute a voluntary donation.

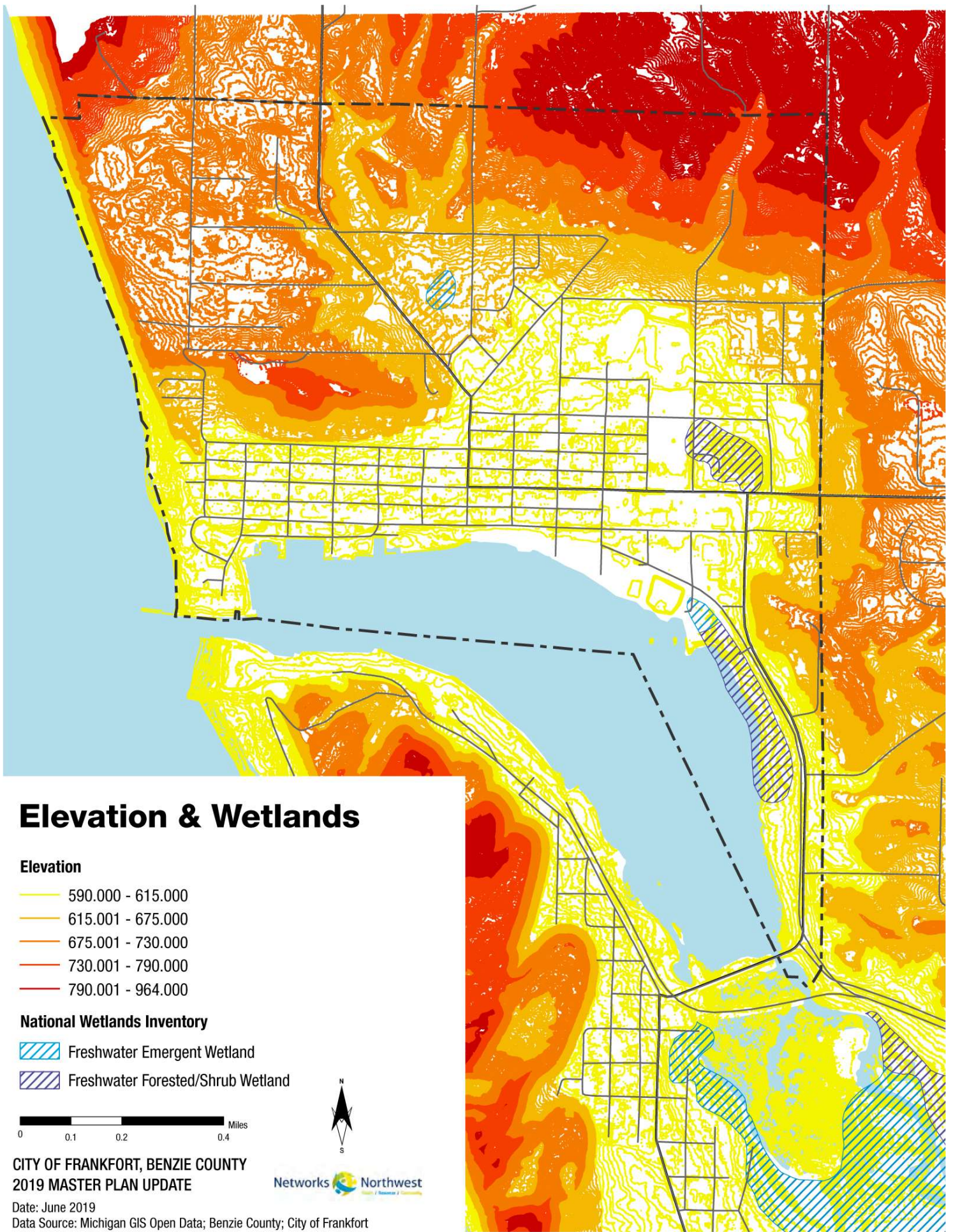
Oliver Art Center also maintains an impressive collection of artist books, monographs, and catalogs in its library. This is a great place to quietly reflect on art history or find new inspiration.

Cultural, historical, and arts tourism are incredibly important to Frankfort's economy. The Oliver Art Center is now established as the primary community art center and cultural organization in Benzie County and has become one of the most active and promising art facilities in Northwest Michigan. It has enriched the region with a lively venue and program of arts and events. Given the Center's location, it also acts as a premier event rental facility that attracts and anchors tourism for downtown businesses including adjacent hotels, restaurants, and shops.

## **Frankfort Dow Memorial Airport**

The Frankfort Dow Memorial Airport is located 2 miles southeast of Frankfort in Benzie County. They service general aviation traffic.





# Elevation & Wetlands

## Elevation

- 590.000 - 615.000
- 615.001 - 675.000
- 675.001 - 730.000
- 730.001 - 790.000
- 790.001 - 964.000

## National Wetlands Inventory

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 Miles

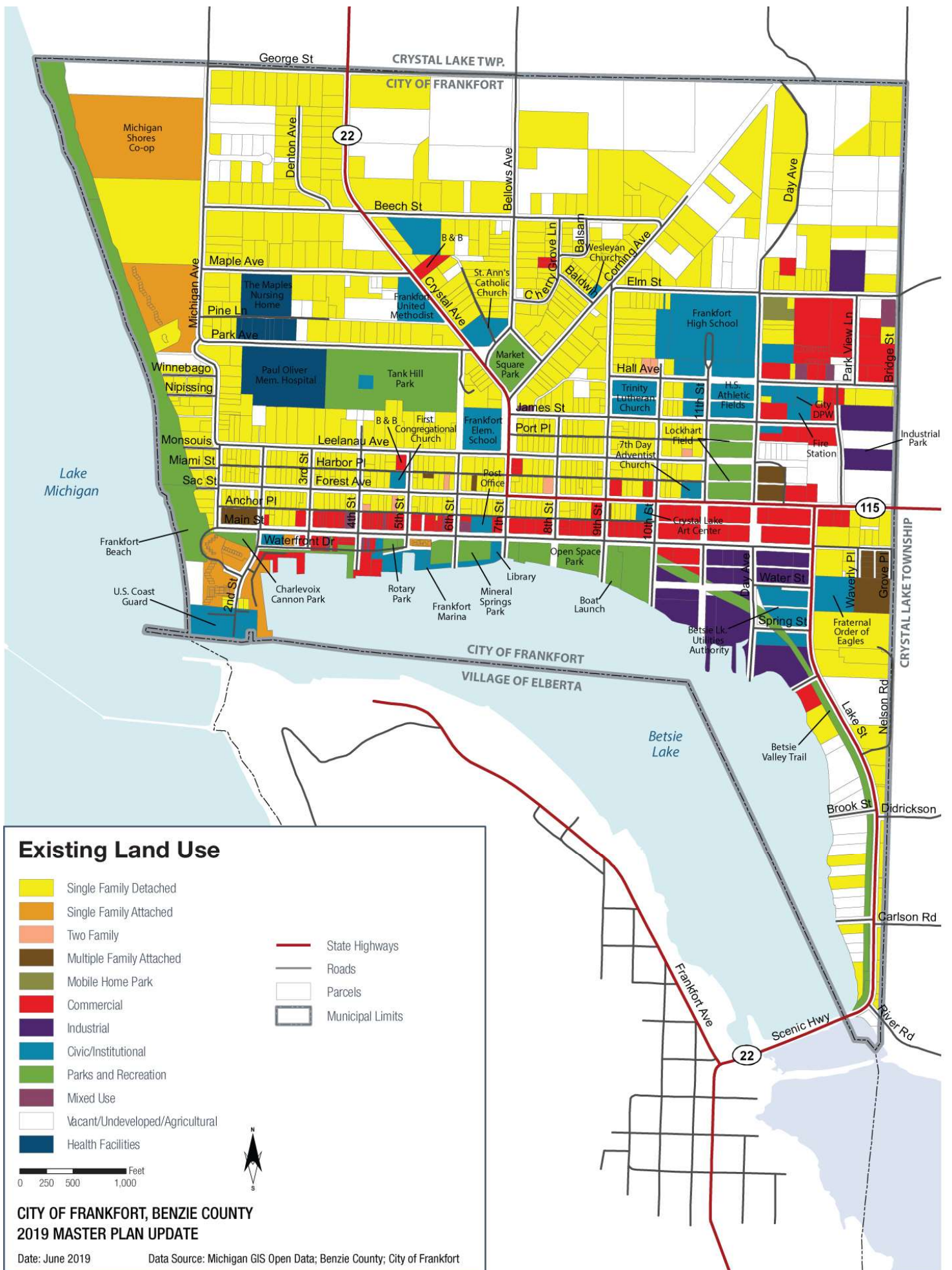


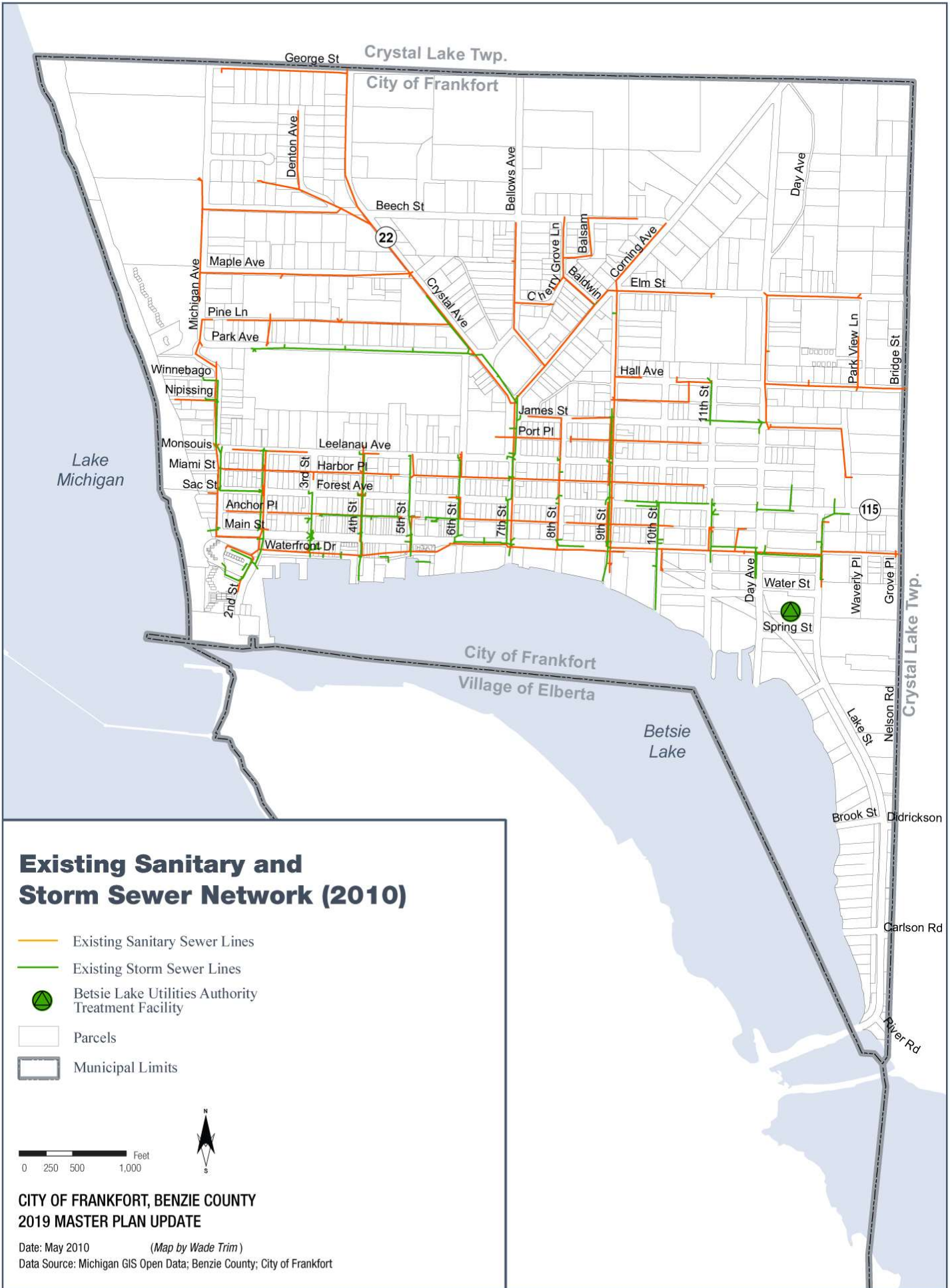
**CITY OF FRANKFORT, BENZIE COUNTY  
2019 MASTER PLAN UPDATE**



Date: June 2019

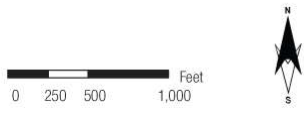
Data Source: Michigan GIS Open Data; Benzie County; City of Frankfort





## Existing Sanitary and Storm Sewer Network (2010)

- Existing Sanitary Sewer Lines
- Existing Storm Sewer Lines
- Betsie Lake Utilities Authority Treatment Facility
- Parcels
- Municipal Limits



**CITY OF FRANKFORT, BENZIE COUNTY**  
**2019 MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

Date: May 2010 (Map by Wade Trim)  
 Data Source: Michigan GIS Open Data; Benzie County; City of Frankfort

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# Chapter 3: The Built Environment: Buildings, Districts and Future Land Use

## Development in Frankfort

In Frankfort, the City's location at the confluence of the Betsie River and Lake Michigan established the City as an important Great Lakes port. Frankfort is bordered by both Lake Michigan and the Betsie Bay, both of which have historically been the basis for much of the economic development that has occurred in the City. Historically, Frankfort's waterfront was a working waterfront. The City's main economic driver was the car ferries that ran between Michigan and Wisconsin that docked in Frankfort. Officers of that fleet and associated administration settled in Frankfort.

Additionally, the topography of the City also shaped where development occurred. The dunes on Lake Michigan and the steep slope north of Leelanau Avenue confined early residential development within a relatively confined and walkable area.

## SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Frankfort is a unique place. It's a small, integrated, 1.4 square mile city with a few distinct features and a very rich history. Over the course of the City's history, there have been several major shifts in the economy which have had tremendous impacts on the City's development. Nevertheless, the City has maintained its unique character and community values even in the face of considerable economic change.

The City must develop a more pro-active vision for future land use and development. SWOT will help identify those key issues that the City must address going forward to preserve the values and character of Frankfort.

### Strengths and Opportunities

The natural environment defines Frankfort. The Betsie Bay and Lake Michigan are two significant freshwater resources and Frankfort has outstanding physical and visual public access to both of these resources. It is the access - both visual and physical - that defines the character of Frankfort and is the community's greatest asset.

These resources are also those which fuel the City's economy and attract tourism. Recreational boating, fishing and beaches are all major economic engines for the City. Preserving the quality of these resources and the public access to them is essential.

Frankfort is blessed with an intact traditional urban grid of networked streets and alleys. This development pattern is

traditional in cities that were developed during the same period. Most notably, the residential areas in Frankfort between the waterfront and Leelanau Avenue are traditional lots, with sidewalks on both sides of the streets, on-street parking, streets with curbs and gutters, and garages that are only accessed from alleys in the rear yard. These alleys provide a concentrated area for service and storage in a way that does not detract aesthetically from the main building.

Frankfort has the tools in place to be a highly "walkable" city. In the neighborhoods south of Leelanau Avenue, there are sidewalks, street trees to provide shade and a sense of enclosure for pedestrians and on-street parking to provide a buffer between pedestrians and moving traffic. In the neighborhoods west of 7th Street, there is good access to the Main Street commercial district which creates a destination for pedestrians and enhances pedestrian traffic.

Unlike most of Michigan's lakefront communities, Frankfort has a significant portion of undeveloped or under-utilized land along the Betsie Bay shoreline. This is a considerable resource that will have a long-term impact on the character (and tax base) of Frankfort.

As residents and stakeholders have reported throughout this process, the overall quality of life in the City is fantastic. The scenic qualities of Betsie Bay, Lake Michigan, the bluffs and topography of the City create a physical environment like none other in Michigan. The connection of people within the community, the tradition of involvement in civic affairs and an outstanding school system complement the natural resources. Combined, these features and characteristics create an overall quality of life that is the City's most marketable asset.

### Weaknesses and Threats

The City's community character and historic qualities are essential to its long-term economic and cultural sustainability. Therefore, the greatest threats to Frankfort's future and overall weaknesses are the forces which conspire to alter the City's physical character or alter the key natural resources.

The waterfront area, specifically, is one area of the City that needs special focus to ensure that public access - both physical and visual - is maintained. There is considerable concern within the community that new development adjacent to the waterfront will curtail this access or eliminate the most important views of both Betsie Bay and Lake Michigan from the City and of the City from the Bay and the Lake.

The less developed northern portion of town represents the least expensive land for new residential development. In the past, there have been many within the City who have advocated for new development in these northern areas, particularly of attainable workforce housing (housing geared toward individuals and families typically earning between 60%-120% of the area median income). In reality, there is considerable opportunity for new infill development within walking distance of downtown. Moving attainable and affordable housing to the outskirts of the City exacerbates sprawl and increases vehicle traffic in town. The neighborhoods within walking distance of Main Street are where new development should be prioritized. These neighborhoods are already served by public water and sewer infrastructure. Furthermore, increasing the year-round residential base that lives within walking distance will strengthen the economic viability of Main Street. Prioritizing new development on the north end of town will serve to work against the goals of creating a more walkable community and will decrease the number of rooftops within walking distance of downtown, which is a key requirement for retail viability.

### **Future Development Goals**

New development should be concentrated within easy walking distance of Downtown. Furthermore, based on the input generated during the planning process, future development should reflect and complement the historical patterns while simultaneously injecting new vitality into the urban core. Creating new development opportunities within easy walking distance of Downtown can be expected to provide a range of housing alternatives and help to strengthen the year-round economy by attracting more families, residents and entrepreneurs to the City.

To preserve and promote the character and vitality of the urban core, it is desirable to promote offsite parking to meet the demand. Additionally, it is desirable to plan, promote, and support alternative transportation options such as walking, bicycling, and other electric or motorized means of transportation in a safe and efficient manner.

### **Future Land Use and the Regulating Plan**

The recommendations outlined in this section are based on the input generated over the course of this project, which has been compiled and is available in Appendix A: Summary of Public Input.

Stakeholders who participated in the 2010 workshops and the 2009 visioning process broadly support a more walkable, pedestrian-oriented place which helps to create a more stable and sustainable year round economy. These over-arching themes include objectives like attracting more families to Frankfort, creating a broader range of housing opportunities, protecting the elements that make Frankfort unique (historic architecture, waterfront and natural resources), and efficiently investing in

infrastructure that will help to achieve these objectives. There remains little support for changing the visual or physical character of the City and most participants agree on the need for physical enhancements, particularly within the Downtown, that will help to accomplish some of the goals listed above. It is necessary to modify existing zoning regulations to ensure the visual and physical fabric of the City continues to reflect the City's unique qualities and history. On the contrary, inaction will result in reactive planning and will do little to preserve the City's character and unique qualities. The approach advocated in the 2010 Frankfort Master Plan and reaffirmed in this update is to clearly define the elements that create Frankfort's visual, physical and historic character and to codify these in the accompanying zoning ordinance update. These changes have been incorporated during two revisions of the zoning ordinance but require constant evaluation to insure these are accomplishing the goals effectively. Using this strategy will clearly convey the City's vision for the future and will help to establish a clear and concise blueprint for future development in Frankfort.

It is important to remember that the projects, goals and objectives of the Master Plan will not be accomplished overnight, or even in three to five years. The projects outlined in this document represent a 20 to 30 year time frame. Some of these can be accomplished through private sector activity. Some of the more transformative physical projects will require public-private partnerships and significant public investment.

### **Future Development**

The built environment is how human activity – buildings, streets and other infrastructure – begins to define a place. In Frankfort, the built environment creates a unique sense of place based on the City's rich history and natural environment. The preservation of the sensitive and unique natural environment is essential to maintaining Frankfort's sense of place. It is imperative that developers, as good stewards and partners of the community, include public space and aesthetic views as part of their development. However, the City will always retain the ability to shape and influence the built environment to ensure that, even as the natural environment evolves, Frankfort will retain its community character.

There are three primary components of the built environment: buildings, streets, and public spaces. This Master Plan includes recommendations for each element of the built environment and advocates a form-based examination of the City's built environment.

### **Residential Development and Housing: Attainable Community Housing**

Residential development includes a wide variety of building types and is not restricted to detached single family homes. It is impossible to consider residential building without addressing the topic of housing.

One feature of sustainable communities is the provision of a range of housing alternatives that includes affordable rental and for-sale dwellings. Typically, these housing alternatives include a wide range of building types including (but not limited to) apartments and other multi-family buildings, duplexes, accessory dwelling units (ancillary living spaces), Micro-units, tiny houses, attached single family units, mixed use buildings and detached single family homes.

The Master Plan for the City of Frankfort states a vision for the future of the City and its place in the wider Benzie County community. This vision reflects a generally agreed upon commitment to maintaining a strong, vibrant and healthy community that serves families, the workforce, residents of all ages, visitors and various economic interests that form the foundation of successful, sustainable communities. Frankfort is committed to providing all forms of appropriate housing across all economic lines for full time and part time residents as well as seasonal residents. City officials recognize the vitality of the city, its employers, and the school system is dependent upon the availability of housing that addresses families and workers across the financial spectrum. The city is committed to exploring and utilizing all legal mechanisms to ensure the city attains this vision.

The Frankfort Area has been profoundly affected by many changes that have occurred during its long history dating back to the 1850's. Those changes make predicting the future difficult at best. Frankfort is currently being affected by several explosive changes that may seriously threaten maintaining a balanced community unless addressed by residents as they have in the past.

Evidence for those threats is anecdotal and statistical. Some examples are: declining student enrollment, many seasonally closed retail operations, escalating prices of existing homes, an exponential increase in short-term rental properties, unoccupied residential homes, employers who report serious difficulty finding and maintaining a workforce. The Frankfort City Council in early 2018 created the Frankfort Area Housing Advisory Council when it became clear that a solid database needed to be established to carefully examine the issues related to housing in Frankfort. A short but well considered informal survey was prepared, publicized and circulated throughout Frankfort and Elberta and the general surrounding area during late spring and summer of 2018. The responses underscored and added to the anecdotal evidence. Respondents repeatedly pointed to their inability to find affordable housing, and often described a community increasingly occupied by visitors and seasonal residents at the expense of year-round residents. They also described residential areas ceded to short-term rentals. In addition, respondents highlighted the seasonal collapse of the retail base on Main Street.

Any near term decisions about the future development of housing in the Frankfort area must address these concerns. As the newly formed Frankfort Area Housing Advisory Council works to maintain a balanced community the evolving situation dictates the following:

1. Zoning: Fully one third of the 1.25 square mile physical area of Frankfort within and immediately adjacent to the City is undeveloped privately-owned land. Much of that property is currently zoned Agricultural/Rural and excludes a higher housing density and could help support future growth if rezoned. Other zoning rules work to discourage the kind of housing development that would support development of workforce housing such as allowing for an increase in density on existing lots. The relatively large number of infill properties of various sizes within current residential areas throughout that could be utilized to address housing demand. There also a significant number of older homes that might be refurbished. In addition, the far north edge of the city-owned property known as Tank Hill along Park Avenue, and other publicly owned properties might be considered for housing development at some point, keeping in mind the sensitivity of these considerations.
2. Tax Incentives: The development of innovative and creative property tax incentives to support additional development of workforce housing should be pursued simultaneously as the runaway short-term rental industry is being controlled.
3. Data Compilation: The transition of the Housing Advisory Council to a housing authority with 501(c)(3) not for-profit status is moving forward. The continued development of a sustainable detailed database to assist community leaders in making future decisions on many levels is necessary. Current, relevant data would help decision makers more quickly identify changes in the community and respond in a timely manner and help to avoid mistakes and pitfalls.
4. An ongoing direct relationship between the State of Michigan, Frankfort Planning Commission, City Council and various city and state representatives should be established, encouraged and maintained.

One feature of sustainable communities is the existence of a wide range of housing alternatives that includes rental and for-sale dwellings. These housing alternatives include apartments and other multi-family buildings, duplexes, accessory dwelling units (ancillary living spaces), attached single-family units, mixed use buildings and traditional single-family homes. Sustainable communities need to ensure there is sufficient housing choice for people of all income levels and needs.

- In many communities, housing is available to those individuals earning 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) or less. However, limiting attainable housing to those individuals earning significantly less than the AMI often

- excludes service industry and seasonal workers who earn up to the area median income and depresses the ability of the low income worker or family to move up the economic ladder.

There are two primary methods used by many seasonal communities to ensure that there is attainable workforce housing. Aspen, Colorado and Flagstaff, Arizona are examples of communities that require a “set-aside” to create workforce housing units in communities with very high real estate values and rental rates. The other tool that many communities employ is to allow a greater range of dwelling type in the zoning ordinance to allow an economic mix of housing units.

The 1998 Frankfort Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) addressed this community goal. Specifically, the 1998 CDP states, “Goal: Strengthen the stability of existing residential areas and accommodate a variety of housing opportunities to maintain affordability for a wide range of income levels.” The 2009 review of the CDP and Vision Fair reaffirmed this value as a community goal. The 2017 Benzie County Master Plan extensively underscores and details similar county-wide housing issues and makes many of the same observations and recommendations reflected in this document.

The current version of the Frankfort zoning ordinance provides the opportunity for a wider range of housing types although it does not permit them by right in all of the zoning districts. This feature of the ordinance creates an additional regulatory hurdle for workforce housing. A diverse housing stock needs to include housing types that appeal to a range of income levels. Creating a diversity of allowable building types will assist development of a density that encourages workforce housing and provides housing choices that encompass the entire range of incomes in the City. Rigid lot size and coverage requirements limit workforce housing development and the range of building options. Flexibility (in building type, lot size and coverage and parking) is essential to creating the diversity of housing stock necessary to provide attainable workforce housing within this defined geographical space.

Increased density allowances and a full range of acceptable building types will not be appropriate in every neighborhood. Identifying the appropriate building types for each neighborhood, developing guidelines for appropriate buildings and development in each neighborhood requires a form-based approach that discusses building types and locations within each lot so as to maintain the characteristics of each neighborhood. Using this approach, Frankfort can revise the existing zoning ordinance to create opportunities for the growth that will help attract new investment and support a year-round economy. The attraction and expansion of knowledge industries, health care, services, eldercare and retirement living, and light manufacturing will support and enhance the existing tourism economy.

## **Short Term Rentals**

The issue of short-term rental, dwelling units rented out for periods of fewer than thirty days, is currently being recognized and addressed by many communities, especially those like Frankfort with substantial natural, historical and recreational and human-made attractions.

In 2018, the Planning Commission was asked to address the explosive impact of the industry, especially on the availability of affordable workforce and family housing in the community. Other impacts include traffic control, parking, noise and other disturbances, diminished numbers of off-season residents, and additional municipal costs among others. With input from the Housing Advisory Council, one well-attended public hearing, numerous roundtable discussions with community members, and additional research, the groundwork is being laid. Although quantifying the number of existing homes participating in the short-term rental market remains largely anecdotal, it is evident that a significant number of Frankfort’s housing stock has been removed from the long-term residential pool.

If the issue of short-term rentals will be effectively addressed, the City will need to develop a set of regulations governing these operations. Any regulations can only be successful if they are developed with substantial public participation. If regulations are adopted they could include annually renewable permits, safety, health and compliance standards applicable to such rental activity, adequate owner insurance, owner and/or residential manager contact information, occupant parking provisions, and more responsive zoning rules. Careful thought and planning must include regular inspection of short-term rental properties. A fee-based process should be developed. If adopted, fees would, at minimum, cover the cost of enforcement, administration of the permits and, perhaps to help fund the continued development of housing needs in the community. If the experience of other communities is considered, however, no regulations can be successful without full and well-considered enforcement of those rules. The cost-impact of enforcement will be critically important in the planning. Careful consideration should always be mindful of our shared respect for the rights of property owners.

## **Urban Design: Physical and Architectural Character**

The physical character of Frankfort is created by the combination of public and private space and the architecture of both. Planners discussed urban design principles and, during the workshops held during July 2009, led participants on a walk through town to discuss and illustrate how these concepts are applied in Frankfort to build a unique community.

## **Public Realm - The Street and Streetscape**

The public spaces in Frankfort include parks, schools and other civic buildings and spaces, however, the most important public spaces in terms of community character are public

streets. Streets are inherently public and the relationship between streets and buildings is what creates a sense of community character.

In Frankfort, the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods establish the City's prevailing physical character in the relationship of public to private spaces. In the neighborhoods, the streets follow a traditional grid pattern, are narrow with on-street parking, sidewalks and a lawn extension or "tree-lawn" with mature street trees. Houses are set back only a small distance and typically have open front porches. The front porch is critically important to the character of the community. Porches create the transition from public realm (the street and sidewalk), to private space (the home). A sense of community is often built through these transitional spaces. A number of studies have identified the front porch as an essential physical element in strengthening the sense of community.

### **Private Space - Architectural Character**

The traditional homes and buildings of Frankfort are a major part of what makes Frankfort different than other similar coastal communities. The appearance of these structures, how they relate to the street and public space and how they relate to other structures is what sets Frankfort apart.

West Main Street and the residential neighborhoods west of 7th Street are the two areas of town most defined by the architectural character of the houses in each district. These areas are particularly important to the City because they are high-traffic and high visibility areas and tend to be the areas, aside from the waterfront, that are most consistently noticed and referred to by visitors.

The architectural features of these districts include a

traditional urban street grid with alleys, sidewalks, mature street trees and buildings that are close together and are set back minimally from the sidewalks. Homes have front porches and windows which create a transition between the public streetscape and private home interior. Parking, garages and service areas are all located along a rear alley and these alleys also serve as streets in these neighborhoods. Homes and buildings are at least two stories and all homes are surrounded by an open yard or green space. Buildings have a distinct bottom, middle and top; these sections of buildings are distinguished by architectural features like windows, clerestories, cornices, moldings, awnings, lighting, paint and other decorative flourishes. As mentioned, these architectural and urban designs combine to create a sense of place that distinguishes the City. To strengthen the City's unique "sense of place", these physical elements can be used in other districts to create more distinctive districts. Using some of these physical elements along with some of the variety already found in other residential areas will help the City's overall sense of place and ensure long-term stability in property values by creating a stronger Frankfort "brand" or image. Bringing these physical design features into other districts will create unique and distinctively different districts without "disney®-fying" Frankfort.

### **The Regulating Plan and Frankfort Building Districts**

This chapter discusses the full spectrum of building types and how they work to create an identifiable character for the City of Frankfort. This plan identifies four neighborhood districts (with subdistricts) – East, West and North City and one Rural District, plus two mixed-use districts – Main Street and Waterfront – that permit residential uses on upper floors as a by-right use. Their locations are illustrated on the regulating plan map.

# West City Residential District



*Example of Historic single-family home in West City Residential District. (photo: William Allin Storrer)*

## West City Residential

West Main Street and the residential area west of 7th Street are essential to the City's visual and community character. Within these neighborhoods there are a variety of architectural styles and housing types and this variety is an important feature.

The predominant features of buildings in this district are front porches, small front building setbacks, multiple stories and quality building materials. Garages and parking areas are typically located behind the house and accessed via alleys (e.g. Anchor Place and Harbor Place). Some garages have been expanded into accessory dwelling units. Currently within the West City Residential district there are single family detached houses, civic buildings, duplexes and accessory dwellings.

## Benefits of West City Residential Guidelines

- Preserves the character of the historic residential neighborhood,
- Allows for new growth and development that is compatible with the traditional neighborhoods,
- Encourages variety within the framework of the historic neighborhood,
- Standards will help to maintain the overall appearance of the neighborhood
- Opportunity for higher density via ADU's and home conversions.

## District Guidelines

### **Permitted Land Uses:**

- Residential
- Civic (schools, church)

### **Compatible Building Types:**

- Single family detached house
- Duplex
- Carriage house or ancillary living space
- Church/municipal building

### **Required Architectural Features:**

- Front porch
- Main entrance shall be from the street
- Pitched roofs
- Sidewalks must be provided along all streets

### **Prohibited Architectural Features:**

- Fully enclosed front porch
- Garage fronting on the street
- Parapets and flat roofs are prohibited

### **Parking Requirements:**

- Each single-family building must have space for two on-site parking spaces.
- Multiple-unit buildings must include one on-site parking space for each dwelling unit
- Accessory dwellings require one additional on-site parking space
- All parking areas shall be in the rear yard
- Parking in front or side yard along street frontage is prohibited

### **Setback and Height Guidelines:**

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

# East City Residential District

## East City Residential District

East of 7th Street, the housing stock and architecture takes on a different character and loses some of the traditional architectural elements and streetscape amenities demonstrated in the West Residential District.

Generally speaking, the blocks south of Hall Avenue and west of Day Avenue are similar to blocks west of 7th Street. East of 7th Street, there are many of the architectural features that define the neighborhood west of 7th Street. These elements define the character of the West City Residential District and can be adopted to do the same in the East City Residential District. In the East City Residential District, however, there is more flexibility in building type so that there is a greater opportunity to provide a wider range of attainable housing alternatives.

## Forest Avenue

This section of the City is also unique due to Forest Avenue, which is M-22 east of 7th Street and west of Lake Street. Forest Avenue is the primary gateway into Frankfort from the east and the south.

Between 7th Street and Lake Street, there is a mix of land uses including industrial, commercial, residential and office. Historically, this district has been residential, however, over the past 10 to 15 years, there has been a gradual conversion of single-family homes to offices and other businesses. Though these structures maintain the appearance of a residential unit, the signage for these businesses and the additional traffic generated by them negates the character of the buildings and creates an unnecessarily complicated experience for visitors as they pass through. This district, as it is today, causes many visitors to think they are passing through the heart of Frankfort's commercial district, when in fact, they are blocks away.

## Benefits of East City Residential Guidelines

The historic elements and character of the East City Residential District work to create a unique and defining space in Frankfort. In the East City Residential District, the wide variety of architectural styles and building types do not work together to create a neighborhood and district. Using many of the same traditional architectural features found in the West City Residential District (front porches, smaller front setbacks, alleys etc.) will help to change perceptions of the district and create a more distinct sense of place.



*Example of existing residential buildings on Forest Avenue (photo: William Allin Storrer)*



*Example of non-historic architecture common in the East City Residential District. (photo: William Allin Storrer)*

These guidelines are not intended to force existing property owners to alter their homes and properties to meet these guidelines. On the contrary, the variety of the existing buildings is what gives the district a unique history and this variety creates a different character for the District. These guidelines are to be applied only to new development.

The benefits of East City Residential District standards include:

- Developing a more visually unified neighborhood
- Improving the public space throughout the district
- Creating a better pedestrian connection to Downtown and areas west of 7th Street
- Providing a wider range of attainable housing alternatives
- Creating clear standards for future development
- Standards will help to maintain and promote the overall character of the neighborhood as a residential district

## **District Guidelines**

### ***Permitted Land Uses:***

- Residential

### ***Compatible Building Types:***

- Single family detached house
- Townhouse (attached single family dwelling) or duplexes to quadplexes
- Loft
- Carriage house or ancillary living space

### ***Required Architectural Features:***

- Front porches
- Pitched roofs
- Parking located in rear

### ***Prohibited Architectural Features:***

- Fully enclosed front porch
- Garage fronting on the street
- Parapets and flat roofs are prohibited
- New driveway curb cuts from Forest Avenue

### ***Parking Requirements:***

- All parking areas shall be in the rear yard and accessed from the alley
- Each single-family building must have space for two on-site parking spaces
- Multiple-unit buildings must include one on-site parking space for each dwelling unit
- On-site parking for multi-unit buildings may be contained in a shared parking area in a rear yard that is accessed from the alley
- Parking in front or side yard along street frontage is prohibited

### ***Setback and Height Guidelines:***

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

# North City Residential District

## North City Residential

North of Leelanau Avenue on the west and Hall Avenue on the east, there is a distinct change in the character of the residential neighborhoods. Leelanau and Hall Avenues are the point where the more uniform development pattern of historic Frankfort begins to give way to a more free-form approach. This change in the development character is directly attributable to the topography. The slopes and soils (and to a lesser extent woodlands) historically determined where building could occur in Frankfort. As topography and soils become more of a development constraint, the more varied the physical character became in these areas.

Steep slopes and tree cover are also critical to the character of the District. Maintaining the steep slopes and tree cover is essential. The slopes and vegetation within the North City District are so essential to the character of the District that buildings, driveways, sidewalks and ancillary or auxiliary structures restricted to 40% of the total building site to preserve these features.

The North City Residential District is a residential district that, architecturally, signifies a transition from the more intense residential neighborhoods of the East and West City Residential Districts. As opposed to the East and West City Residential Districts, which are defined spatially by the street grid, the North City Residential District is more organic and lacks the uniformity of architectural style of the other residential districts. Styles differ from house-to-house and block-to-block.

The lack of uniformity in this district allows for a wider variety of architectural styles and building placement. Typically, properties in the North City Residential District are houses on larger lots, with varying setbacks. Parking is accessed directly from the street instead of via alleys. There is also a greater distance between buildings and between buildings and the street. Buildings may be grouped together in a site to preserve sensitive natural features or to create a shared open space. The North City Residential District permits only one building type - single family detached buildings.

## Benefits of North City Residential District

- Allows greater flexibility to address specific site and context issues (slopes, soils etc.)
- Reflects the diversity of the existing neighborhoods created by the varying site conditions
- Opportunity to add density



*Example of typical North City District house.  
(photo: William Allin Storrer)*

## District Guidelines

### Permitted Land Uses:

- Residential
- Park/Open Space

### Compatible Building Types:

- Single family detached house
- Carriage house or ancillary living space
- Duplex to quadplex

### Required Architectural Features:

- Pitched roofs

### Prohibited Architectural Features:

- Garage fronting street or as the predominant architectural feature as visible from the street
- Parapets and flat roofs are prohibited

### Parking Requirements:

- Each single-family building must have space for two on-site parking spaces

### Setback and Height Guidelines:

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

# Rural District

## Rural District

The Rural District is a single-family residential district with the greatest variety of architecture, lot sizes and configurations and the fewest allowable building types. While clustering to preserve open space and sensitive natural features is encouraged, there are only minimal setback requirements and larger minimum lot sizes. This is also the only district where production agriculture is appropriate and encouraged.

This district is intended to be the least developed part of the City and the district that signals a transition from the urban center of the community to the more rural environs of the Township. This district has the fewest urban amenities.

Within the Rural District sensitive natural features exist, including steep slopes, wetlands, and woodlands. The identification of all-natural features in a catalogue, with special attention for significant areas preserved from development. To accomplish this objective, the City will prepare a Rural District development fact sheet, including a map of sensitive natural resources, steep slopes, and details about soil conditions, allowable building sites, and site fingerprinting techniques. In particular, the development methodology must include a steep slope ordinance that identifies these sloped areas, and establishes use limitations based on slope and soil erosion characteristics.

Site fingerprinting is a development technique that clears only the minimum space necessary for construction. "Clustering" refers to concentrating development in one part of the site in order to preserve a resource - either a natural or visual resource. Clustering standards vary by each site context. A cluster provision in the zoning ordinance is necessary as lot sizes in clustered developments often do not meet generic large lot subdivision standards. Because of the sensitivity of the resources being preserved, there need to be more flexible alternatives to conventional development.

## Benefits of the Rural District Guidelines

Conventional subdivision and development standards yield a generic product, one which does not convey the unique character of Frankfort. There are a number of benefits provided by alternative development techniques. These include:

- Conservation of sensitive natural resources include wetlands, woodlands and habitat for threatened and endangered species
- Preservation of steep slopes
- Development unique to the context of the site results from careful preparation through site fingerprinting and soil



Example of Rural District house and barn on Lake Street. (photo: William Allin Storrer)



Example of Rural District house. (photo: William Allin Storrer)

- sampling,
- Greater variety of lot sizes, configuration and site amenities

## District Guidelines

### Permitted Land Uses:

- Residential
- Agriculture
- Park/Open Space

### Compatible Building Types:

- Single family detached house
- Accessory and farm buildings including barns and pole barns
- Carriage house or ancillary living space

### Required Architectural Features:

- Pitched roofs for all buildings

### Prohibited Architectural Features:

- Garage as the central or predominant architectural feature as visible from the street
- Parapets and flat roofs are prohibited

### Parking Requirements:

- Minimum of two on-site parking spaces

### Setback and Height Guidelines:

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

# Main Street

## Main Street West

Downtown is the cultural and economic heart of the community. Frankfort's downtown provides services for local residents and also serves as the downtown for many other communities within the region. Main Street is a textbook example of a historic Main

Street community. The district's historic architecture and concentration of intact historic buildings set downtown Frankfort apart within Benzie County and the entire Grand Traverse region.

The key to expanding the City's economy beyond a seasonal and tourism-based economy is the community character or "sense of place". Main Street is the district that defines the community's character. Guidelines that try to recreate the traditional building fabric of downtown will only serve to create an inauthentic type space. Instead, it is essential to take some of the historical architectural elements and incorporate them into new buildings that complement rather than repeat the historic core. Old and new buildings need to be able to stand side-by-side and coexist in a way that creates visual and aesthetic continuity. New buildings should use only quality building materials to ensure they complement the existing historic buildings.

As it currently exists, the Central Business District extends between 2nd Street to the west and 10th Street to the east. The heart of the business district, however is between 7th Street and 2nd Street. Land use is overwhelmingly commercial, where second and third floor residential uses are subject to a special use permit. The Master Plan envisions an expanded Main Street that extends east on Main Street to Lake Street and north on Lake Street to Forest Avenue. This creates additional mixed-use and commercial opportunity in areas along Main Street, where there is only scattered commercial development.



A key to developing a vibrant and sustainable Main Street district is to include residential units within the District. Adding residents to a Main Street or downtown district helps inject an energy into the neighborhood that extends beyond typical business hours.

Main Street begins to set the stage for a walkable, pedestrian friendly community that is based on the human scale, not the automobile. Enhancing the "walkability" of the district will bring more people into the district. Improving walkability means enhancing the pedestrian experience in and around Downtown. It requires a comprehensive effort to make Main Street more pedestrian friendly as well as steps to create stronger pedestrian connections between the Downtown and surrounding districts.

### Benefits of Main Street West Guidelines:

- Architectural guidelines reinforce human scale of Downtown Frankfort
- Create additional pedestrian interest along the "street wall" or building facades, which helps to increase pedestrian traffic
- Creates opportunity for new investment and development that is unique, yet complements the historic structures
- Preserves visual and physical access to the Betsie Bay waterfront
- Includes the history of Frankfort in future development,
- Creates a more dynamic pedestrian space
- Will help to enhance the long-term economic viability of Main Street businesses

## **Main Street West District Guidelines**

### ***Permitted Land Uses:***

- Commercial
- Office
- Residential
- Civic/Public
- Parking

### ***Compatible Building Types:***

- Mixed-use buildings
- Civic buildings

### ***Required Architectural Features:***

- Minimum two stories or 30'
- Majority of ground level facade must be glass
- Second story windows must be proportional: taller than wide
- Placement of entryways/doors every 30' at street level
- All buildings must have architectural features that distinguish between the bottom, middle and top of the buildings
- Maximum distance between visual breaks through the building is 40'. Visual breaks provide public views of Betsie Bay from Main Street and Second Street

### ***Prohibited Architectural Features:***

- Single story buildings
- Single family detached houses
- Carriage house or ancillary living space
- Garage or parking spaces adjacent to Main Street except in lots designated by the City for parking
- Garage on street level accessed from Main Street
- False facades
- New or expanded drive-through facilities that are accessed from Main Street

- Auxiliary buildings
- Additional driveway curb cuts from Main Street

### ***Parking Requirements:***

- Since the City of Frankfort Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was created in 2013 with the Downtown Frankfort Development and TIF Plan adopted in 2015, on-site parking requirements within the Main Street corridor pertaining to retail and commercial uses shall be exempt.
- Parking in the Main Street West District should be handled on a shared basis with new opportunities funded through a payment in lieu of parking program and/or the Downtown Development Authority.
- The City of Frankfort DDA may consider charging a fee for on-street parking within certain areas of the Main Street corridor and surrounding neighborhood areas. This would be considered on a seasonal basis with free parking areas at designated locations, connecting to Main Street via a free trolley/shuttle service.
- All on-site parking areas shall be in the rear yard and accessed from the alley, where applicable.
- Collaborate with the businesses to have employee/staff parking on-site or in designated areas. Seasonal on-street parking for employees/staff would be prohibited.
- Residential units require 1 space per unit.
- On-site parking must be located behind buildings and accessed via alleys.

### ***Setback and Height Guidelines:***

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

## Main Street East

Main Street East is made up of a mix of land uses including industrial and commercial, with some scattered residential and utilities. This section of Main Street has been historically associated with Industrial uses - first shipping and shipping-related businesses and then with Graceland Fruit's operations at Main and Lake Streets.

The architecture of buildings is quite varied with single story buildings and larger warehouse style buildings. The municipal boat launch is the anchor of this portion of Main Street, at least during temperate months. Family Fare and Graceland Fruit are two significant businesses that generate considerable vehicular traffic.

As Frankfort evolves, this portion of Main Street has considerable potential for new residential and mixed use buildings on the north side of Main Street. Increased residential opportunity in this area will help to create additional attainable housing opportunity. Main Street East is not intended to be a commercial district on par with Main Street West. It is, however, an opportunity to add residential density that will help to support the Main Street West commercial district.

### Benefits of Main Street East Guidelines:

- Creates opportunity for residential development on Main Street
- Has the flexibility to provide a range of attainable housing alternatives
- Will create a destination at the east end that will increase pedestrian traffic along Main Street
- Create a design standard that reflects the overall character of the City
- Create a strong entry into Downtown Frankfort

## Main Street East District Guidelines

### Permitted Land Uses:

- Commercial
- Office
- Residential
- Civic/Public
- Parking
- Light Industrial

### Compatible Building Types:

- Mixed-use buildings
- Civic buildings
- Townhouse (attached single family dwelling)
- Duplex/Three-plex
- Loft
- Live/work units
- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Retail Condominiums

### Required Architectural Features:

- Pitched roofs are allowed for residential buildings
- Parking located in rear

### Prohibited Architectural Features:

- Fully enclosed front porch
- Garage fronting on the street
- Carriage house or ancillary living space
- Single-story buildings
- Additional driveway curb cuts from Main Street

### Setback and Height Guidelines:

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

### Parking Requirements:

- All on-site parking areas shall be in the rear yard and accessed from the alley, where applicable
- Each townhouse unit shall have 2 on-site parking spaces.
- Consider 1.5 on-site parking spaces per multi-family residential unit.
- Multiple-unit buildings must include on-site parking for each dwelling unit.
- On-site parking for multi-unit buildings may be contained in a shared parking area in the rear yard that is accessed from the alley, where applicable.
- Collaborate with the businesses to have employee/staff parking on-site or in designated areas. Seasonal on-street parking for employee/staff would be prohibited.
- Parking in front or side yard along street frontage is prohibited.
- Provide the alternative for a payment in lieu of parking program that will fund the acquisition and construction of surface parking areas that can be shared within the district. This strategy may accommodate any new parking demand generated by new and expanded development without requiring the provision of on-site parking that typically results in reduced building size/footprint.



Main Street East District.

# Waterfront District

## Waterfront District

The waterfront is a sacred space in Frankfort. Historically, the Betsie Bay was the working waterfront and economic engine that built Frankfort. As the car ferries ceased operation, the waterfront began a significant evolution. The District's grittier, working spaces were replaced with marinas, boat launches, parks and trails. Through the evolution of this space, it has remained the spiritual heart of the community. Today, the boat traffic is largely recreational, however, this change from the historic working waterfront does not diminish the importance of the waterfront to the economic fortunes of Frankfort.

The Waterfront district is one of the City's best assets and also presents one of the brightest opportunities. The waterfront at the east end of Main Street is under-utilized. The undeveloped area between the municipal boat launch and the Betsie Lake Utility Authority (BLUA) facility on Lake Street is a significant opportunity for redevelopment. This portion of the waterfront was historically a working district that serviced boats and provided the storage and maintenance that is absent in significant scale from contemporary Frankfort.

More importantly, the east end of Main Street provides an opportunity for mixed-use development that provides the views and access to the waterfront for residential development without altering the historic character of the Downtown District or the views of the Bay from Main Street. Future development should include a mix of marine-related services (which may include repair and storage), commercial and residential space. The east end of Main Street provides an opportunity to create an eastern anchor for Main Street and will help to provide a destination that will facilitate additional pedestrian movement through Main Street.

## Benefits of Waterfront District Guidelines

Waterfront in Frankfort historically and traditionally is a working, commercial, and industrial space. Today, the veneer of recreational boating and living arrangements adds to the mix. Land use reality demands that it be called, and referred to as what it has become: a "mixed-use" area, combining land use elements of residential, commercial, recreational and industrial. With the addition of civic-institutional uses - including the Oliver Art Center, U.S Coast Guard, and the BLUA - this area exhibits just about every facet of Frankfort City life including education.



*Waterfront District*

Benefits of designating the Waterfront as a mixed use district include:

- Re-establishes the "working waterfront idea"
- Utilizes recreational boating as a foundation for future growth and development
- Creates the market opportunity for additional marine and marina services
- Creates opportunity to add high-value residential units with waterfront views and water access without compromising public views of, or access to, Betsie Bay

## **District Guidelines**

### ***Permitted Land Uses:***

- Marina
- Marine Services (repair/sales)
- Boat Storage
- Residential
- Commercial
- Park/Trail

### ***Compatible Building Types:***

- Mixed-use
- Warehouse/storage
- Commercial

### ***Required Architectural Features:***

- Mixed-use and residential buildings - minimum two stories or 36'
- Maximum height of cold storage buildings is 45'
- Maintain views of Betsie Bay from Main Street, Second Street and Lake Street

### ***Prohibited Architectural Features:***

- Single story residential and mixed-use buildings
- Single family detached houses
- Carriage house or ancillary living space

### ***Parking Requirements:***

- Provide the alternative for a payment in lieu of parking program that will fund the acquisition and construction of surface parking areas that can be shared within the district. This strategy may accommodate any new parking demand generated by new and expanded development without requiring the provision of on-site parking that typically results in reduced building size/footprint.
- 1.5 spaces per residential unit
- 1 space per marina slip. Reduction may be considered for transient slips.
- 3 spaces per 1,000 SF of Gross Leasable Area (GLA) of commercial space

### ***Setback and Height Guidelines:***

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

# Parks District



## **Parks District**

Parks are essential public spaces. They are essential because they are the “green infrastructure” of a community, the network of undeveloped and natural spaces that bring nature into the built environment. They serve to mitigate the impact of human development by filtering stormwater runoff and providing pervious surface for groundwater recharge and natural drainage. The trees and shrubs in these spaces help to absorb carbon dioxide and help to limit the community’s carbon footprint.

Parks provide a natural oasis within the confines of the urban community. They add cultural value as informal and formal gathering spaces and provide local recreational opportunities. They work to form a non-motorized system of transportation that extends from the Lake Michigan shoreline in Elberta to the beach in Frankfort (the Beach-to-Beach Trail).

Traditionally, parks are identified but not given a unique district designation. These public spaces are so critical for Frankfort that these spaces must be preserved by creating a separate district solely for parks, natural areas and recreation. Furthermore, creating a unique designation will help the City develop a long-term preservation and maintenance strategy for parks, wetlands and other open spaces and natural areas.

## **District Guidelines**

### ***Permitted Land Uses:***

- Park/Open Space
- Recreation
- Trails

### ***Compatible Building Types:***

- Recreation
- Accessory structures to support recreation uses

### ***Required Architectural Features:***

- None

### ***Prohibited Architectural Features:***

- None

### ***Parking Requirements:***

- Dependent upon amenities in each Park

### ***Setback and Height Guidelines:***

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

# Civic District

## Civic District

Buildings and spaces within the Civic District are designed for use by the public and for the public good. These may be quasi-public buildings like churches or they may be municipally owned or operated buildings like schools, City Hall or the BLUA facility.

Civic District Spaces are scattered throughout the City in various other districts. The architecture and character of these spaces should complement the adjacent properties and enhance the overall district.

The City should develop design guidelines, methods and cooperative activities with civic, religious and other not-for-profit or charitable organizations to utilize surplus or unused land in a way that is mutually beneficial for the City and for the organization.

## District Guidelines

### Permitted Land Uses:

- Civic

### Compatible Building Types:

- Schools
- Churches
- Municipal Buildings/Facilities

### Required Architectural Features:

- None, however architecture should complement adjacent and surrounding properties

### Prohibited Architectural Features:

- None

### Parking Requirements:

- Varies based on use -
  - Church: 1 space per 10' linear feet of pew
  - Municipal Building: 1 space per full time employee (FTE) plus 1 space per 200 s.f. of common area space

### Setback and Height Guidelines:

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.



Benzie Shores District Library (photo: William Allin Storrer)



Trinity Lutheran Church (photo: William Allin Storrer)



Post Office - Frankfort Branch (photo: William Allin Storrer)

# Institutional District



*Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital (photo: William Allin Storrer)*



*The Maples (photo: William Allin Storrer)*

## **Institutional District: Healing, Aging and Medical Facilities**

Medical facilities are community assets that provide essential medical services to the larger community. Frankfort is lucky to have the Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital to provide ambulatory services and urgent care. Additionally, the Maples is an assisted living center and the Benzie County Advanced Lifesaving Support provides additional services for area senior citizens.

Because of their specialized uses, these buildings naturally stand out from the surrounding district. Therefore, these spaces need to be grander and more memorable.

### **District Guidelines**

#### **Permitted Land Uses:**

- Medical - Primary and tertiary care
- Residential, Assisted and Independent Living

#### **Compatible Building Types:**

- Hospital
- Multiple dwelling unit residential buildings

#### **Required Architectural Features:**

- None. However architecture should complement adjacent and surrounding properties

#### **Prohibited Architectural Features:**

- None

#### **Parking Requirements:**

- Varies based on use -
  - Hospital: 1 space per bed plus 1 space per employee
  - Medical Office: 1 space per examination room, plus 1 space per employee and 1 space per 200 s.f. of GLA
  - Assisted Living: 1 space per bed plus 1 space per employee

#### **Setback and Height Guidelines:**

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.

# Industrial District

## Industrial District: Entrepreneurship and Production Space

Frankfort's industrial district is located north of M-22 and east of Day Avenue. This area is where the city has concentrated efforts to create an industrial park and includes areas with the ability to accommodate expanded industrial activity.

This space is not restricted to manufacturing or industrial use. What the Industrial District seeks to create is a space in Frankfort for more intense production activities that are able to accommodate less pedestrian and residentially-friendly uses like shipping and receiving. Uses in this district may run the gamut from art studio to forge to manufacturing or logistics. Ultimately, this district is designed to provide space for entrepreneurial activity that requires large space and heavy infrastructure.

### District Guidelines

#### Permitted Land Uses:

- Industrial/Light Industrial
- Manufacturing
- Warehouse
- Packaging
- Logistics
- Shipping/Receiving
- Auto Repair
- Art Studio/Production Facility
- Live/ Work accommodations on site
- Limited Retail
- Industry Incubation

#### Compatible Building Types:

- Light industrial
- Warehouse
- Pole Barn/Expanded Garage

#### Required Architectural Features:

- None



Existing industrial property (photo: William Allin Storer)



StormCloud Brewery

#### Prohibited Architectural Features:

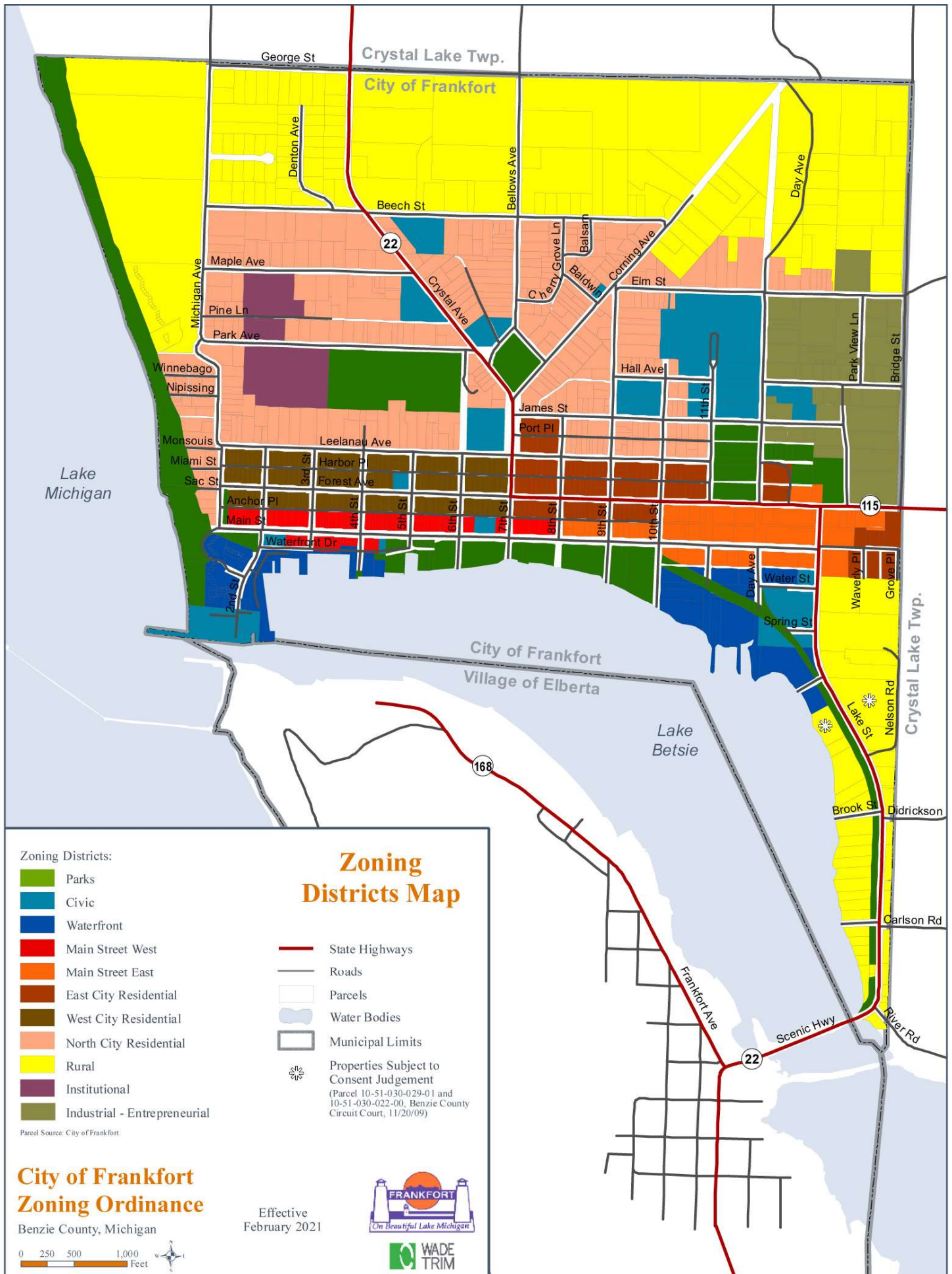
- None

#### Parking Requirements:

- Varies based on use -
  - Warehouse: 1 space per 1,000 s.f. of floor area
  - Industrial/Manufacturing: 1 space per every 2 employees
- Parking may occur in front, side or rear yard, as long as minimum setback from residential properties and landscape buffer is maintained

#### Setback and Height Guidelines:

- For setback requirements and height guidelines refer to the zoning ordinance.



# Chapter 4: The Built Environment: Streets and Transportation Network

## The Built Environment

As stated previously, the built environment is how human activity – buildings, streets and other infrastructure – begins to define a place.

There are three primary components of the built environment: buildings, streets and public spaces. Buildings and public spaces were discussed in Chapter 3. This section discusses the public realm of the street and transportation network.

## Street Network

Frankfort's network of streets is a typical urban grid. Moving north from town, as the topography becomes steeper, the grid becomes elongated with fewer north-south streets in relation to the east-west streets.

In the older residential neighborhoods of Frankfort west of 7th Street and between Main Street and Leelanau Avenue, Leelanau and Forest Avenues are one-way streets. Forest Avenue is one-way headed west and Leelanau is one-way headed east. This configuration has broad public support and works well, particularly in deterring on-street parking in those blocks closest to the Lake Michigan Beach. These patterns are historically part of the City's traffic pattern.

## Transportation

**Goal:** To encourage pedestrian and non-motorized circulation in all areas of the City while maintaining efficient and safe vehicular circulation. This can best be achieved with a network of complete streets.

## Complete Streets

To accomplish the goal described above, it is necessary to develop a standard for "complete streets". Complete streets are designed to prioritize pedestrian or non-motorized traffic over cars. As defined by the National Complete Streets Coalition, complete streets are "designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street."<sup>1</sup>

"There is no one design prescription for complete streets. Ingredients that may be found on a complete street include: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus

lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and more. A complete street in a rural area will look quite different from a complete street in a highly urban area. But both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road."<sup>2</sup>

During the Vision Fair and again during the Planning and Design Charrettes, Frankfort residents stressed their desire to improve pedestrian conditions throughout the City and to make Frankfort a pedestrian friendly community. Developing a Complete Streets policy for the City and identifying appropriate road section profiles that accommodate all users will ensure that Frankfort will become a truly pedestrian-friendly community. All future street improvements should be based upon complete street principles.

## Benefits of Complete Streets

- By providing designated space for each activity, complete streets improve overall safety for pedestrians, non-motorized and vehicular traffic.
- Complete streets are context-sensitive, thus not disruptive to the physical fabric of the neighborhood or individual properties.
- Complete streets demonstrate that the City of Frankfort is committed to maintaining a mix of transportation alternatives.
- Complete streets will make the City more walkable for pedestrians of all ages and abilities.
- Complete streets create safer pedestrian crossings.
- Complete streets will create a more distinct hierarchy of streets and thus help make the City more navigable for visitors and tourists.

## Street Standards and Design Principles

All City streets should be constructed or reconstructed using Complete Street principles, using the sample street profiles and cross sections as a guideline for street standards. These standards are based upon "Complete Street" principles, best traffic management practices and on the input generated during the public outreach phase of the Master Planning process.

These principles should be used to guide street reconstruction, renovation and new construction. Going forward, these design principles will provide a template the City should use to guide these activities. These design principles and recommended tem-

<sup>1</sup> National Complete Streets Coalition. <http://www.completestreets.org/complete-streets-fundamentals/>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

plates are not intended to be constructed immediately, rather they are to be used as a guideline for rebuilding streets when they are reconstructed (either as part of scheduled, on-going maintenance, or as a result of reconstruction due to other infrastructure activity).

- Create safe pedestrian zones at crosswalks and on sidewalks.
- Provide pedestrian right-of-way signage at major crossings.
- Allow for on-street parking in all areas to create additional buffer between moving cars and pedestrians.
- Create pedestrian islands and or “bump-outs” to help calm traffic at all major pedestrian crossings.
- Slow vehicular traffic in residential neighborhoods.
- Provide on-road bicycle lanes and/or paved and striped shoulders to create opportunity for bicycle traffic to share major roads.
- Plant and maintain street trees using a selection of species.
- Add additional crossing signage and visual cues (striping, lights, etc.) at all major crossings around schools, parks and civic spaces.
- Design roads to the minimum necessary width to minimize the total impervious footprint of roads.
- Slow vehicular traffic in the main Downtown commercial district to increase business visibility and to increase safety for pedestrians and non-motorized transportation.
- Provide adequate and unique signage for the City’s commercial district.

### Road and Street Classification and Design Templates

Frankfort’s road network is classified into the following six categories:

1. Boulevard
2. Main Street
3. City Residential Street
4. Lane/Alley Street
5. Rural Residential Street
6. Rural Highway

The Frankfort Master Plan includes complete street templates for five of the streets listed above. The configuration of Main Street is somewhat unique because of the commercial uses west of 7th Street and the current configuration of head-in angled parking. In lieu of a template for a piece-meal transformation of Main Street, the Master Plan includes a discussion of the issues and opportunities on Main Street and identifies additional principles that should be included in any reconstruction of the street.

### Key Principles:

The map on the following page and the table below identify the different streets in Frankfort.

<b>Boulevard</b>	7th St.
<b>Main Street</b>	Main St. (west of Lake St.) Lake St. (Forest Ave. to Spring St.)
<b>City Residential</b>	Day Ave. (south of Elm), Elm St., Forest Ave. (west of Lake St.), Grove Pl., Hall Ave., James St., Leelanau Ave., Main St. (east of Lake St.), Nipissing St., Park View Ln., Spring St., Waverly St., Winnebago St., 1st St., 2nd St., 3rd St., 4th St., 5th St., 6th St., 8th St., 9th St., 10th St., 11th St.
<b>Lane/Alley Street</b>	Anchor Pl., Harbor Pl., Miami St., Pine Ln., Port Pl. Sac St., Sky Pl., Waterfront Dr.
<b>Rural Residential</b>	Beech St., Bellows Ave., Baldwin Ave., Bridge St., Brook St., Carlson Rd., Cherry Grove Ln., Corning Ave., Crystal Ave. (7th St. to Park Ave.), Day Ave. (north of Elm St.), Denton Ave., Didrickson Rd., George St., Hanrath St., Maple Ave., Michigan Ave., Nelson Rd., River Rd.
<b>Rural Highway</b>	M-22 Crystal Avenue (north of Park Ave.), M-115 Forest Avenue (east of Lake St.), M-22 Lake Street (south of Spring St.)

# 7th Street Boulevard



## *Boulevard street profile*

Typical Right-of-Way (ROW): 48' (curb to curb)

Travel Lanes: Two, one each direction

Width of Travel Lanes: 11'

On Street Parking: No

On-road bicycle lanes: Yes, both sides

Sidewalks: Yes, both sides

Width of Sidewalk: 5' each side

Tree Lawn: Yes

Width of Tree Lawn: 5'

Width of Boulevard: 16'

Typical front yard setback distance: 10'

Driveway access: Via alleys

Adjacent land uses: Residential, Civic

## **Boulevard - 7th Street from Main Street to Market Square Park**

7th Street between Market Square Park and Main Street is the geographic center of Frankfort. More importantly, 7th Street is the gateway into Downtown Frankfort from M-22. In its current form, this entry is under-whelming for visitors and does not encourage exploration. In short, it is not currently an entrance that conveys the unique qualities of Downtown Frankfort.

There are short term approaches to improving this entry. However, over the longer term, creating a grand street connecting the Betsie Bay to Market Square Park will create a distinctive entry experience that complements the character of historic Downtown Frankfort.

## **Street Layout - Boulevard**

Using the existing 48' right of way, 7th Street can be reconfigured to become a complete street. The first order of business is to create a tree lawn with mature street trees that will help to immediately improve pedestrian conditions. In the longer term, the City should work with MDOT to reimagine 7th Street between Forest and Market Square Park. Because this segment of the road is an MDOT controlled road, any redesign needs to be a collaborative effort between the City, Frankfort Elementary School and MDOT.

There is ample space within the current right of way north of Forest Avenue to build a 16' boulevard with street trees. This will create a grand parkway for the City and will turn the least pedestrian-friendly road in Frankfort into a textbook example of a complete street.

## **Benefits of Creating a 7th Street Boulevard**

Transforming 7th Street into a boulevard has many benefits. These include:

- Slowing M-22 through traffic between Forest Avenue and Market Square Park to speeds more appropriate for the residential neighborhoods that the road passes through
- Create a more visually distinct connection between M-22 and Main Street
- Enhanced pedestrian safety and improved crossings
- Allows for more street trees
- Physical green space linkage between Market Square Park and the Betsie Bay
- Reduced impervious surface footprint which will reduce stormwater runoff
- Create a distinct space, one that is unique to the City of Frankfort - on the road that is the geographic center of the City
- Eliminate the sense that 7th Street divides the City by making a more welcoming, people-scaled streetscape.

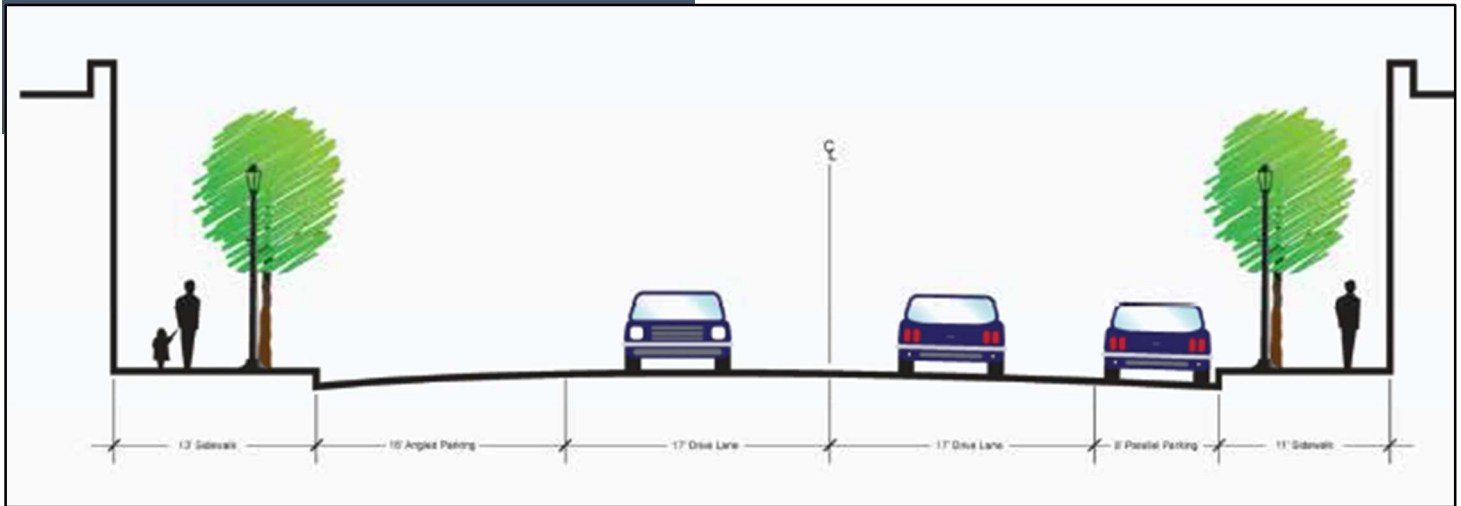
## **Implementation Strategy**

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) controls 7th Street between Forest Avenue and Market Square Park, where it is also M-22. Therefore, the City must work with MDOT as partners to re-imagine how M-22 works in the City of Frankfort.

Turning 7th Street into a street with a fully landscaped boulevard is an idea that will take considerable negotiation and, in order to make MDOT a partner in this process, the City must create a working committee that meets with MDOT representatives from Traverse City, Gaylord and Lansing on a regular basis. Absent this communication, there is little likelihood that MDOT will approve such a configuration.

The vision of a grand 7th Street Boulevard is a long-term vision for Frankfort. In the near-term, the City should work with MDOT to improve pedestrian crossings at the Elementary School and Forest Avenue. Furthermore, a four-way stop or traffic signal is appropriate at the intersection of 7th Street and Forest Avenue to slow through-traffic to speeds more appropriate to residential neighborhoods. Such traffic control will also help to direct vehicular traffic to the Downtown commercial district and improve pedestrian connections between the neighborhoods east of 7th Street and north of Forest Avenue.

# Main Street



*West Main Street - existing conditions*

## Main Street

Main Street is the City's most important local street. Physically, Main Street can be broken into two different categories - East Main (east of 7th Street) and West Main (west of 7th Street).

## West Main

West Main is the main commercial section of Main Street and has a different character and purpose than East Main. For one, the district surrounding West Main is the City's most diverse in terms of land uses. This is the center of the City's commercial district and the street is configured with angled and parallel on-street parking and wider sidewalks. There is considerably more pedestrian and vehicular traffic on West Main.

## East Main

East Main Street is no less important. However, because the nature of the commercial businesses on East Main is different than those on West Main, there is only parallel parking available on the street. There are more individual curb cuts for driveways and parking lots. Buildings tend to be set further back from the street to accommodate on-site parking. The sidewalks are not as wide and the space is designed for cars more so than people.

## Economic Considerations

Main Street needs to be a bustling and vibrant area characterized by pedestrians strolling the streets, bicyclists entering the area from the Beach-to-Beach Trail and cars. All of these users must be encouraged to come downtown and therefore, a safe and comfortable experience for all is a must.

West Main Street functions well for most residents during the

non-peak tourist months (October-May). However, during the peak tourist season, Main Street itself becomes a tangle of pedestrian, bicycle and traffic congestion. The sidewalks also become congested with walkers, bicycles, strollers, wheelchairs, pets, outdoor seating and store displays competing for the very limited sidewalk space. Eleven foot wide sidewalks are not large enough to accommodate the range of competing uses that are found on Main Street during peak times of the year.

A vibrant and bustling commercial district is characterized by an abundance of sidewalk traffic and a combination of motorized and non-motorized traffic. Wide sidewalks encourage more shared space by creating dedicated space for retail displays and outdoor seating while establishing a clear pedestrian movement zone. Encouraging this sort of foot traffic benefits all downtown businesses and actually attracts people into the district.

## Complete Street

Main Street is designed for vehicular traffic, not for shared space. The two 17' travel lanes are wider than typical lanes on an Interstate Highway (which are 14' wide). Head-in angle parking on the north side of the street creates an awkward interaction between cyclists on Main Street and parking cars. There are no striped, on-road bike lanes, bicycles are prohibited on sidewalks and there are no bike parking areas. Furthermore, the Beach-to-Beach Trail ends at City Hall and cyclists and trail users must continue to the beach via Waterfront Drive, which is not signed or striped for non-motorized transportation. These conditions add to the perception that non-motorized transportation is not welcome in downtown Frankfort.

Main Street as it exists today is not a complete street. There are too many conflicts between bicycles and cars and pedestrians. The sidewalks cannot accommodate the seasonal traffic needed to support the business district and cannot be used for outdoor displays or cafe seating that would generate additional business and interest in the Downtown. The existing configuration does not enhance walkability and actually serves as a deterrent to bicycling and other forms of non-motorized transportation.

Based on the goals generated by the citizens of Frankfort and the values expressed during the series of public workshops, adopting complete street principles for Main Street is appropriate.

## **Complete Street Principles and Potential Modifications**

There are many potential design alternatives for Main Street that will create a more complete street. As mentioned, the existing road profile is quite wide. Reducing the size of each travel lane to 11' will create additional sidewalk space and slow vehicular traffic.

Slowing traffic is a benefit for businesses on Main Street because it increases visibility. Slower traffic also makes for a better and safer pedestrian experience.

The current lane configuration is inappropriate for a commercial district. The width of Main Street is a safety concern because it encourages higher vehicle speeds. The extreme width of Main Street also creates an image problem for Downtown Frankfort, particularly during the shoulder seasons and winter. The expanse of pavement with angled parking and wide travel lanes looks empty if there are only a few cars parked downtown. This creates the perception that there is no reason to go all the way into the Downtown district and explore the City. A complete street profile will help to eliminate this issue.

The head-in, angled parking on the north side of the street creates approximately 29 additional spaces as compared to parallel parking. The head-in parking, however, creates safety conflicts between cars backing out of spaces, oncoming traffic, bicycles and pedestrians crossing in the middle of the block. As the Downtown evolves as a mixed use district, the City will have to address parking concerns and may ultimately decide that this parking configuration is not the best configuration for Main Street.

## **Parking**

Parking is a critical land use issue and one that always generates controversy. In every community, downtown parking generates passionate debate from merchants, shoppers and residents. Shoppers and patrons have come to expect available parking at the front door of every business. Merchants perceive a parking shortage during events and peak hours if their custom-

ers are not able to park right in front of the business.

The truth is that sustainable business districts need to provide accessible and convenient parking options, however, these alternatives do not have to be immediately adjacent to each business to create a vibrant and thriving business district. Indeed, one reason thriving Main Street communities are successful is because they do NOT provide parking at the front door of every business. The foot traffic created by distributing parking so that patrons pass storefronts on their way to their destinations increases awareness and ultimately business.

The shopping mall model uses this philosophy to guide design of all shopping malls. The anchor stores are the destinations. However, points of entry into the Mall are placed so that visitors are exposed to the maximum number of businesses possible. This foot traffic is an essential ingredient for retail success in Main Streets and in suburban shopping centers.

Furthermore, when measured in linear feet, shoppers typically walk further from their cars into a mall or big box store than in a small downtown like Frankfort with well spaced parking lots and alternatives.

## **Main Street Parking - Existing Conditions**

The current head-in angled parking on West Main Street provides a total of 104 spaces on the north side of Main Street. Converting the angled parking to parallel parking would result in a net loss of approximately 29 parking spaces.

There is potential to relocate these spaces to the north-south streets by extending curb and gutter north to Forest Avenue and striping the streets for additional on-street parking. Going forward, additional parking may be created in a new or expanded surface lot.

## **Future Parking Demand**

New development and the addition of new residential units in the Main Street District will require additional parking. Instead of requiring dedicated, on-site parking for all of these uses, a more cost-efficient approach is to create shared parking standards and identify locations for surface parking lots in the downtown district.

The location and design of these lots is vitally important. They need to be within walking distance of primary downtown destinations; typically this is a maximum of 1,250 ft.. Additionally, surface parking lots create a "hole in the street wall". This means that a solid block of buildings is interrupted by an open space. These holes in the street wall are impediments to a walkable district and should be avoided. There are design techniques that minimize the impact of these holes. For example, building a solid wall between the parking lot and sidewalk and providing colorful landscaping, benches and

public art can minimize the impact of a parking lot on the perception of pedestrians.

New parking lots are a long-term project. There is not currently sufficient year-round demand to justify the expense of acquiring land and building a new lot. However, as intensity is added to the mix on Main Street, the City will need to study options for shared parking.

### **Parking Policies**

Peak parking demand occurs during special events. It is not prudent to build additional parking areas or to cling to an approach to parking that is designed for the few periods of peak demand. Instead, developing a downtown parking policy during these peak times will alleviate parking concerns and create opportunities for additional business. For example, the municipal boat launch and Open Space Park have an abundance of parking spaces. During peak demand times/seasons, downtown merchants can implement a requirement that all employees park in these spaces. The City should also consider seasonal parking meters downtown as they have been shown to promote the turnover of parking spaces.

Another approach is to work with a local business to provide a shuttle (e.g. a trolley down Main Street a horse drawn carriage, bicycle jitney, or golf cart) for patrons willing to park at Open Space Park. Adding additional events like the Farmers Market during these peak hours and locating them in Mineral Springs Park and Open Space Park will help to attract vehicle traffic to the east end of Main Street and these parking areas.

The library and Post Office are the two primary sources of parking demand on East Main. It is essential to ensure that the library continues to have a dedicated lot adjacent to the building.

The Post Office does not currently have on-site parking, relying instead on the few on-street spots in front of the building. There is adequate space available to provide limited on-site parking and drive-through mail and drop-off services. This alternative should be explored in partnership with the Post Office.

Graceland Fruit, located at the east end of Main Street, is one of the City's most important employers. Current employee parking is adequately handled with dedicated parking areas around the buildings. Graceland's shipping and receiving docks are located on Main Street and often these trucks pull out onto Main Street. The City should work with Graceland Fruit to develop a long-term strategy to ensure continued truck access to the facility, while at the same time, limiting the impact of shipping and receiving operations on East Main Street.

There will always be a need to provide parking on Main Street, however, parking should never be prioritized over pedestrians or preserving the character of Main Street. Frankfort is small enough to be able to create shared parking areas that are within

a 500' to 750' walk of most downtown destinations - less than the typical walk from a car parked in a big box store parking lot to the front door of the store.

### **Implementation Strategies**

Modifying Main Street in a major way is a project that would be phased over many years. It requires significant investment and, in all likelihood, the relocation or modification of major utilities. Considering the size of the task, rather than advocating a complete physical overhaul of Main Street, the Master Plan recommends adopting complete street principles for all streets in the City, including Main Street.

Main Street can become a complete street, at least during peak times, through a series of short-term and temporary projects.

These projects may include:

- A seasonal employee parking area
- Temporary expansion of the sidewalks using planters or temporary fencing during special events
- In-road crosswalk signage that clearly states that traffic must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks
- Designated bicycle parking areas on each block

The DDA should spearhead these projects and programs.

The above strategies and programs are a sample list of methods to begin making Main Street a more Complete Street. As with any similar project, when there is opportunity to test a design through a pilot project or special program, the City should use the test before investing in expensive infrastructure changes.

Most importantly, illustrations of recommended Complete Street profiles are included to provide a standard design that should be used when streets are renovated or repaired as a result of other projects. It is not the intention of this plan to advocate for a wholesale reconstruction, rather to provide a guideline for future infrastructure improvements.

### **Benefits of Making Main Street a Complete Street**

The economic health and vitality of Main Street is synonymous with the City's overall financial condition. Applying the complete street principles to Main Street will provide a number of specific benefits that will help the City and the downtown business community. These benefits include:

- Improved pedestrian conditions which will increase foot traffic
- Wider sidewalks that create expanded sidewalk activity zones which will allow for outdoor cafe seating and additional outdoor retail space
- Clearly designated areas for bicycle parking and improved signage for the Beach-to-Beach Trail
- Improved signage directing vehicular traffic from M-22 into the Downtown district
- More activity on Main Street, which helps to attract more

activity, visitors and customers

- Slower vehicular traffic which increases visibility for Main Street businesses
- Better integration of multi-modal traffic and the shipping/receiving activities at Graceland Fruit.

# City Residential Street



*City Residential Street section.*

## City Residential Alternative 1

Typical Right-of-Way (ROW): 54' (back of sidewalk to back of sidewalk)

Travel Lanes: Two, one each direction  
Width of Travel Lanes: 9'

On Street Parking: Yes, both sides  
Width of On Street Parking: 7' each side of street

Sidewalks: Yes, both sides  
Width of Sidewalk: 5' each side

Tree Lawn: Yes, each side  
Width of Tree Lawn: 13' each side

Typical front yard setback distance: 15'

Driveway access: Via alleys

Adjacent land uses: Residential, Civic

## City Residential Street

City streets are the primary residential streets in town. Generally, these streets are located south of Park Avenue, on the west side of 7th Street and between Elm Street and Betsie Bay east of 7th Street. These streets are characterized by mature street trees, sidewalks, setbacks between 10-15 feet and on-street parking. Forest and Leelanau Avenues are both one-way streets. As mentioned previously, having the paired one-way streets west of Seventh Street does not violate any traffic safety best planning practice and based on consensus developed during the workshop, these streets should remain one-way streets.

### Street Layout - City Residential Street

The recommended City Residential Street profile includes a two-way traffic (except on Leelanau and Forest Avenues) configured in a pair of 9' travel lanes. These lanes are kept narrow and the on-street parking is retained on each side of the street to slow traffic and ensure vehicles maintain appropriate neighborhood speeds of less than 25 mph. Slower vehicle traffic helps to encourage bicyclists to use the street, where cyclists are less likely to be involved in a bicycle-car collision. Keeping bikes in the street also helps to create a safer pedestrian zone on the sidewalk.



City Residential Street section - Forest Avenue (east of 7th Street)

The tree lawn creates a buffer between vehicle and pedestrian traffic that is augmented by the on-street parking. The combination of design elements provides equal access and protection for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Finally, street trees complete the street with a full canopy. Trees should be spaced so that they are able to grow into a complete canopy. Selecting street trees is an art. These trees must be selected based on several characteristics such as: salt and urban condition tolerance, native species, drought-resistance, fall color, flowering and fruiting characteristics and hardiness. A variety of species should be planted throughout the City. The City should also develop maintenance guidelines for street trees on every street type throughout Frankfort.

However, in order to create an alley of street trees, many of the same species need to be planted together on one block. The concern with creating blocks of a single species is that a pathogen or disease could wipe out the entire tree canopy for an entire block, the way Dutch Elm Disease decimated many urban forests in the 1970s and the Emerald Ash Borer has in recent years. These concerns notwithstanding, the value of a mature alley of street trees exceeds the cost of replacement because planting a series of different species along a street ensures a full canopy will never be realized. The City should work with an urban forester to develop a list of acceptable street trees.

### Residential Parking

Parking in residential districts, particularly in those neighborhoods within blocks of the Frankfort Beach, can become quite

### City Residential Forest Avenue Alternative

Typical Right-of-Way (ROW): 48' (curb to curb)

Travel Lanes: Two, one each direction

Width of Travel Lanes: 11'

On Street Parking: Yes, both sides - parallel

Width of On Street Parking: 8' each side of street

On-road bicycle lanes: yes, both sides

Sidewalks: Yes, both sides

Width of Sidewalk: 5' each side

Tree Lawn: Yes, each side

Width of Tree Lawn: 5' each side

Typical front yard setback distance: 10'

Driveway access: Via alleys

Adjacent land uses: Residential, Civic

congested during the summer months. Tourists driving to the beach and rental houses with more than two cars often increase parking demand during summer months and create disruptions in these neighborhoods.

Developing a parking policy for these neighborhoods will alleviate this problem. Requiring residential permits and signing these streets as permit only parking is one method of discouraging day beach users from parking in these areas. Requiring rental guests to purchase a seasonal permit for on-street parking access and limiting the number of rental passes per house is another technique that will help to eliminate the problem of rental parking. These are two administrative programs that can be used to address some of the parking concerns expressed during the course of this project and should not be considered as the only options available to the City.

Summer is not the only time when there are parking issues in residential neighborhoods. Winter snow removal creates a

unique set of parking problems for many of the city neighborhoods. The City should work with residents to create a snow removal and parking policy that does not create undue hardship on residents and visitors. The curbing of north/south streets could help alleviate some of these issues.

### **Benefits of a Complete City Residential Street**

- On-street parking and street trees make safer pedestrian conditions
- On-street parking helps alleviate seasonal parking issues
- Street trees enhance property values and slow traffic through residential areas
- Helps to create a visual hierarchy of the street network that helps with wayfinding
- Ensures that M-22 section of Forest Avenue remains a neighborhood-scale street and does not become a highway thoroughfare as it passes through highly populated areas of the City.

# Lane/Alley



## *Lane/Alley profile*

Typical Right-of-Way (ROW): 12' (width of travel lane)

Travel Lanes: 1, two way traffic

Width of Travel Lane: 12'

On Street Parking: Yes

Width of on-street parking: 7'

Sidewalks: No

Tree Lawn: No

Typical rear yard setback distance: 7'

Adjacent land uses: Residential, Civic, Park

## **Lane/Alley**

Frankfort's historic development pattern mirrors those of other urban communities that developed at the same time. Like cities across the Midwest including Detroit, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Minneapolis, Frankfort has a system of alleys that provide access to detached garages. These alleys were originally designed to provide services like garbage collection, utilities and driveways that were considered unsightly.

Today, these alleys continue to perform these vital service delivery functions. They also create the opportunity for carriage house and ancillary living space development. Adding these residential units helps to provide a broader range of attainable housing alternatives and adds people into the neighborhoods surrounding downtown.

In Frankfort, these alleys continue to be a key part of the street network and are essential to preserve the historic neighborhoods and architecture of the City.

# Rural Residential Street



## *Rural Residential Street profile*

Typical Right-of-Way (ROW): 25' (width of roadway)

Travel Lanes: Two, one each direction

Width of Travel Lanes: 9'

On Street Parking: Yes

Width of on street parking: 7'

On-road bicycle lanes: no

Sidewalks: Yes, typically one side

Width of Sidewalk: 5'

Tree Lawn: Drainage swale

Width of swale: Minimum of 14'

Typical front yard setback distance: Varies

Driveway access: From street

Adjacent land uses: Residential, Civic, Park, Agricultural

## **Rural Residential Street**

Rural Streets are primarily located north of the hill on the west side of 7th Street and north of Park Avenue. These roads are more rural in character with no curbs and gutters, swales to accommodate stormwater runoff, on-street parking, varying setbacks and intermittent sidewalks.

## **Street Layout**

As mentioned previously, there is no uniform definition for what a complete street looks like. Within Frankfort alone, there are seven different configurations that guide development of complete streets. The Rural Street configuration uses the more informal street configuration typical of the northern tier of the City.

# Rural Highway



## *Rural Highway profile*

Typical Right-of-Way (ROW): 66'

Travel Lanes: Two, one each direction  
Width of Travel Lanes: 12'

On Street Parking: No

On-road bicycle lanes: No. Shared path  
Width of Path: 10' minimum

Sidewalks: No. Shared Path  
Width of Sidewalk: 10' minimum

Tree Lawn: Yes, between road and path  
Width of Tree Lawn: Minimum of 11'

Typical front yard setback distance: Varies

Driveway access: From street or side streets

Adjacent land uses: Residential, civic, park, recreation,  
agriculture, industrial

## **Rural Highway**

The rural highway street classification is limited to M-22 north of Pine Lane, Lake Street south of the BLUA facility and M-115 east of Lake Street. This profile is designed to create a separated pedestrian/bike path that will improve safety and allow high-speed vehicle traffic.

## **Street Layout - Rural Highway**

This road profile uses standard MDOT State Trunk Line requirements for sight distance, signage and lighting. However, the proposed profile would increase the number of street trees and adds in additional pedestrian amenities such as wider sidewalks, separated non-motorized facilities, and a wider buffer between the roadway and sidewalk.

# Non-Motorized and Public Transportation

During the planning process, Frankfort residents and visitors have consistently identified walkability and non-motorized transportation as an essential community amenity. The benefits of an improved and expanded network of sidewalks and non-motorized trails is discussed in great detail elsewhere in the Master Plan.



*Pedestrians crossing mid-block in Downtown Frankfort.  
Photo by Wade Trim*

## Pedestrian Traffic

Frankfort, because of its historical development pattern and compact size, is very walkable. However, this does not guarantee a pleasant and safe pedestrian experience in the City. There are considerable obstacles for pedestrians and cyclists in Frankfort, the greatest of which is the design of the City's primary roads, M-22 and Main Street.

Each of these roads is discussed in detail on pages 43-56. In addition to the recommendations contained in those pages, there are some more general pedestrian and non-motorized improvements that will enhance the pedestrian experience by making it safer and more comfortable for walkers and bicyclists.

## Crosswalks

### Forest Avenue between 7th and Lake Streets

Quite simply, there are inadequate crosswalks in Frankfort and a serious deficiency in adequate safe crossings where they are most needed. On Forest Avenue, between 7th Street and Lake Street, there is a single striped crossing. During the summer season, M-22 has a considerable traffic volume. The shortage of signed and/or lighted pedestrian crossings is a significant hurdle for pedestrians. More and improved crossings are necessary to connect the High School and neighborhoods east of 7th Street with the historic core of the City.

### Intersection of 7th Street and Forest Avenue

The intersection of 7th Street and Forest Avenue is both the City's busiest and least pedestrian-friendly intersection. Because traffic from the east does not come to a complete stop, this creates an unsettling and unsafe scenario for most pedestrians. Traffic from the other three directions is also competing to turn onto 7th Street or Forest Avenue which, during peak hours, reinforces the flawed notion that cars have the right-of-way.

This intersection needs a four way stop or a traffic control device so that pedestrians of all ages and abilities can safely cross this intersection at all times.



*Example of temporary crosswalk signage.*

## 7th Street at Frankfort Elementary School

This is a particularly sensitive location because of the Elementary School. There are two primary crossings one at Leelanau Avenue and one at Corning Avenue. Both are striped but lack additional signage requiring vehicles to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. This area is also very difficult for pedestrians because the road right-of-way is 100' wide and the lack of street trees and buildings close to the road creates a perception of a road designed for highway speeds. Street trees and buildings are visual cues to motorists that they are in a residential area and be alert for pedestrians. This corridor has the characteristics of a road designed for high speed traffic with little regard for pedestrians. The wide right-of-way can make it very challenging for children, seniors and those with any mobility issues to cross.

Several improvements are needed at these crossings. First, the striping is inadequate. A brighter zebra stripe pattern is a visual cue for a pedestrian zone. Flashing lights, particularly during school or event activities, will help to slow traffic and ensure safety for people of all ages and abilities as they cross. Temporary

signs should be placed in the crosswalks on the centerline of the road to signal that pedestrians have the right-of-way in the crosswalk. Finally, the City should work with MDOT to explore the use of different surface treatments to help slow traffic in this busy pedestrian zone.

### **Main Street**

Many of the recommendations detailed above and on the previous page are appropriate for crosswalks on Main Street. Improved signage, including the use of temporary signage in crosswalks, is necessary to improve the pedestrian experience on Main Street.

Unique to Main Street is the need for mid-block crosswalks between 3rd Street and 5th Street. This is the core of the Central Business District and has the greatest volume of pedestrian traffic. This part of downtown also has destinations on both the north and south sides of the street, creating a natural tendency to cross in the middle of the block instead of at the intersections in the designated crosswalks. To ensure pedestrian safety and to reflect that pedestrians have the right-of-way in the Main Street District, signed and striped mid-block crosswalks will enhance the pedestrian experience.

### **Bump-Outs and Gateway Treatments**

A bump-out or bulb-out is an extension of the sidewalk at the intersection that reduces the width of the roadway. These extensions help to slow traffic and reduce the distance pedestrians must cross in front of cars. A gateway treatment is a physical or visual indication to motorists that they are entering an area with pedestrians.

Bump outs also provide the opportunity to enhance the aesthetic appearance of the road. In the extra sidewalk space, public art, signage, benches or decorative landscaping can assist wayfinding and make the street more human in scale. These spaces help strengthen an identity for the district. Bump outs also help to protect cars that are parked on the street by creating a visual boundary of the parking lane. Bump outs should be constructed on Main Street, with priority given to the intersections of 3rd and 4th streets.

Gateway treatments can be as simple as in-roadway signage requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk, improved crosswalk markings and signage. These elements are a relatively inexpensive way to slow traffic and create a safe shared space for pedestrians.

### **Neighborhoods**

Pedestrian conditions in Frankfort's neighborhoods are outstanding, particularly in the older neighborhoods around downtown. Adopting the City Residential Street profile described earlier in this chapter will help to create a complete sidewalk network.

Crosswalks in these neighborhoods should be painted with zebra striping to create a more identifiable crosswalk to motorists, particularly visiting drivers. Because of the low traffic volumes and one-way conditions of Leelanau and Forest Avenues, bump outs are not necessary in these areas.

### **Accessibility**

Providing handicap accessibility on all sidewalks is required. Ramps are necessary wherever a sidewalk meets a curb. Where the grade is in excess of 5%, all improvements need to meet ADA requirements for slopes and handrails.

### **Bicycle and Other Rideable Traffic**

Main Street and the downtown district offer limited parking making accessibility to the downtown and the beach areas through transportation by foot, bicycles, skateboards, roller skates, scooters, and other rideables desirable. Bicycles, skateboards, and electric(e) skateboards are examples of modes transportation prevalent in Frankfort, particularly in the summer months. Many people choose to experience new areas on bike or foot to get a more in-depth experience in an area. Bicycles, skateboards and e-skateboards are also an extremely popular form of recreation and exercise, and the principal mode of transportation for kids too young to drive but old enough for a bit of independence.

As part of the effort to make Main Street a complete street that promotes consumer interaction with downtown businesses, maintaining a hospitable environment for all of these forms of transportation is vital. As part of the City's sustainability goals, Frankfort should embrace clean and sustainable modes of transportation. This effort would include supporting use of electric rideables such as skateboard and scooters, and ensuring there are safe, assessible routes available to and from all areas of town.

The number of cyclists that park their bikes and shop, dine and spend time downtown is significant. Of course, attracting recreational users into the downtown district also creates some points of conflict. Specifically, when cyclists come into downtown, there are no on-road bicycle lanes. This creates a conflict with pedestrian traffic. Creating a safer on-road experience for bicycles is imperative to an inviting and safe downtown experience.

Bike parking is another issue. Installing permanent bike loops or individual racks all along Main Street and augmenting them with movable, temporary bike parking corrals placed in on-street parallel parking spaces will address peak season bicycle parking needs.

All proposals for new or redevelopment in the Main Street District should consider bicycle parking, as well as electric car charging stations in addition to auto parking requirements.

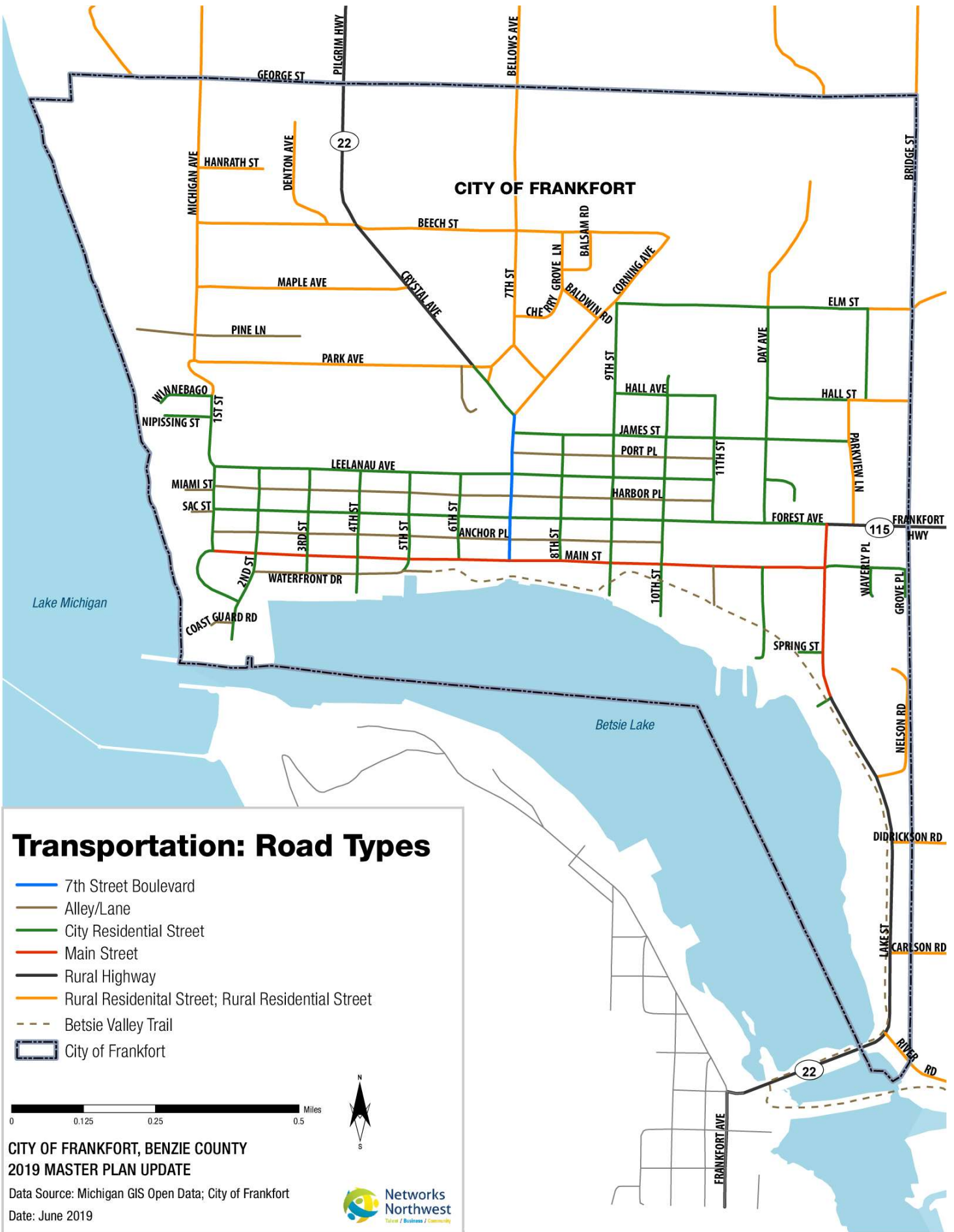
## **Public Transportation – BENZIE BUS**

The mission of the Benzie Bus system, [www.benziebus.com](http://www.benziebus.com), is to connect people of all ages and abilities to the community and to promote independence and prosperity through a safe and convenient public transit system. The bus system seeks to provide convenient service to residents and visitors who cannot, or do not choose to drive, and to those who want to combine a bus trip with bicycling, walking, or carpooling.

The Benzie Bus has received local, state and national

recognition for creatively meeting the needs of the public with region-wide bus service from Frankfort to Beulah, Crystal Mountain, Traverse City, Lake Ann and numerous special events. The bus system delivers curbside dial-a-ride service and regular fixed route transportation along M-115 and US 31.

The City of Frankfort intends to work closely with Benzie Bus as planning initiatives are developed. It is desirable to accomplish a reduced dependency on single occupant vehicle use as well as to promote the reduction of parking needs.



# Chapter 5: The Human Environment: Economic Development

Frankfort, like communities across the state, is working to create a more diverse, year-round economy that will provide jobs that will help to attract young families that ultimately are necessary for the future of the community.

## **Economic Development Goals:**

- To strengthen the overall economic conditions within Frankfort to create a more sustainable year-round economy that serves the needs of area residents.
- To Ensure Frankfort remains a destination for tourists and seasonal visitors.
- To increase the supply of strong and stable job-creating ventures and to create opportunity for a wide range of entrepreneurial enterprises including, professional vocational and skilled trades training.

## **The New Economy**

The new economy is one that is not based on an overreliance upon a single industry or activity. In Michigan, the new economy represents a shift from a reliance upon automotive and manufacturing activity and a movement toward knowledge industries

Knowledge industries are fields like information technology, professional services, health care, tourism, arts, alternative energy, research and development. For the last decade, Michigan has been working to attract more new economy investment to the state with a particular focus on alternative energy, batteries and “green collar” manufacturing jobs.

Understanding these new economy fields and what attracts them to a place is key to establishing a more sustainable year-round economy in Frankfort. Historically, Frankfort has depended upon a single industry or endeavor for many of its jobs. In the past, lumber, shipping and the car ferries have provided the main source of jobs and economic growth for the City. In the more recent past, Graceland Fruit, The Maples, Frankfort Manufacturing, Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital and the Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools have been the City’s most important economic actors. While these actors are a critical piece of the City’s economic future, they should not remain the only source of jobs and opportunity in the community. Diversity will help Frankfort create a stronger year-round economy and, more importantly, will help the City better weather economic downturns that typically result from reliance on a single company, industry or sector.

## **Tourism**

Tourism has been a key part of the City’s economy for the last century and will continue to be a staple component for

the foreseeable future. Currently, the success of any single year is dependent upon the success of the summer tourism season. The City has not yet developed or implemented a more year-round approach that is designed to improve tourism during the spring, fall and winter seasons. Frankfort is uniquely positioned to capture non-summer tourism dollars because of the City’s location and resources.

## **Fishing, Recreation and Eco-Tourism**

Recreational fishing begins during April each year with the run of brown trout through the Betsie Bay and does not conclude until late September or early October. Frankfort is a major destination for recreational fishing on the Great Lakes and Frankfort can better utilize this asset to extend the tourism season into the spring and fall.

Fall foliage tourism is a major economic engine for communities in the upper and northern lower peninsula of Michigan. While there are communities that actively promote fall foliage tours and schedule special events to coincide with peak fall color dates, Frankfort has not attracted the same kind of activity that other similar communities have.

Finally, the City’s proximity to Michigan’s most popular National Park, Sleeping Bear Dunes, is an unrealized asset. Compared with other marquee facilities like Yellowstone National Park or the Grand Canyon, Sleeping Bear Dunes is a rather rustic National Park. While Glen Arbor attracts significant spill-over tourism from the Park, it lacks the same sort of cultural and entertainment amenities that are found in Frankfort.

## **Cultural Tourism**

Frankfort has cultivated a very strong portfolio of cultural, dining and arts institutions, activities and destinations. The community’s commitment to the Crystal Lake Art Center and assistance in moving to the former Coast Guard facility demonstrates the important role of art within the City.

Downtown Frankfort is a culinary destination within the entire Grand Traverse region. No other community of 1,500 residents boasts the variety or diversity of dining that can be found in Frankfort, particularly during the summer months. Even during the winter, Frankfort has an unmatched variety of quality dining establishments that cater to broad range of diners.

## **Winter Tourism**

Winter tourism is a challenge for many northern Michigan communities for a number of reasons, not the least of which

is the weather. Historically, winter tourism has been the exclusive province of those areas with downhill and/or cross country ski resorts. As the popularity of winter sports has increased, these resort areas often do not have the infrastructure to accommodate all of the visitors attracted by their activities and there has been a considerable spill-over effect into surrounding communities.

Nearby Crystal Mountain, located just 19 miles away in Thompsonville is widely recognized as the best Midwest family ski resort. Because of Frankfort's cultural and culinary amenities, and its proximity to Crystal Mountain, additional relationships can be formed to help promote Frankfort as a winter destination.

### **Business Recruitment and Attraction**

Attracting new economy investment is a complicated and multi-faceted undertaking. The competition to attract the knowledge-based industries discussed on the previous page is fierce. These businesses typically provide higher-paying jobs and require a more educated workforce. Attracting this type of investment requires that the City have a base of highly educated and skilled workers (which Frankfort has) and the community must have an outstanding quality of life

### **Quality of Life as a Competitive Advantage**

The importance of quality of life factors cannot be overstated. Coveted knowledge industries are typically those businesses that can locate in a number of communities across Michigan. Historically, Frankfort only had to compete with cities like Traverse City, Manistee, Ludington and Petoskey for business attraction. Knowledge industries were historically restricted to major cities and the two coasts. Thanks to the internet, video conferencing and air travel, Frankfort can now compete with San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis, Detroit, Boston, New York and Miami for these businesses.

Traditional industrial and manufacturing development was predicated on access to markets and major transportation corridors. Because Frankfort is not located on a major transportation corridor - highway, rail or shipping - it never established a significant manufacturing economy. New economy businesses - the knowledge industries - base their entire economic model on a different set of priorities. A single priority "Quality of Life" is what is essential to these businesses and investments.

Quality of Life is the key factor that will attract knowledge industry and new economy investment to Frankfort. Lower taxes, safe communities, good schools, educated workforce, recreational opportunities, and climate are among the factors that businesses may weigh when deciding upon locations. Together, many factors contribute to a high quality of life. The importance of each of these factors will vary according to personality, though some of the more overriding contributors to quality of life are safety, community, access to cultural and natural amenities, schools, efficient transportation, access to technology,

access to airport(s), walkability, housing stock and physical condition and character of the neighborhoods.

Frankfort has many of the assets that are critical for attracting these businesses. To attract new economy investment, the City will need to work with many partners to highlight the City's best assets and features.

## **Implementing the Economic Development Plan**

Frankfort is well positioned to realize many of the steps necessary to build a more sustainable year-round economy that can compete for knowledge businesses and new economy investment.

While the City is well positioned for economic development, there are many steps necessary to realize some of the goals and objectives outlined in this chapter.

### **Action Plan**

There are a number of specific tasks and actions necessary to implement the economic vision outlined in the Master Plan. These include the following:

- Create a partnership with the local and county chambers of commerce, DDA, Benzie County and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to develop a knowledge industry business recruitment package and strategy.
- Continue to partner with the MEDC to be a part of the MEDC's Pure Michigan Travel and Tourism campaign. Support local food production and promote Frankfort as a regional cuisine destination.
- Assign responsibility to the DDA, local and county chambers of commerce, and other agencies to develop an annual schedule of events in Frankfort with events occurring throughout the year. Examples of events include the weekly farmers market, and Benzie Fishing Frenzy.
- Work with the DDA, Chamber of Commerce, and downtown businesses to encourage uniform business hours and develop seasonal events that can be marketed to customers beyond Benzie County.
- Development relations with Crystal Mountain and Sleeping Bear Dunes to promote Frankfort as a destination for dining, lodging, and entertainment.
- Develop a DDA maintenance strategy to ensure that downtown streets and sidewalks are clean and cleared of snow.
- Draft standards that will help to encourage the development of new communication methods and installation of equipment, including broadband internet connections, that will help to

- improve the City's business atmosphere.
- Work to create additional workforce housing opportunities within the City.
- Partner with Chamber of Commerce to support the establishment of affordable, accessible, and developmentally appropriate childcare.
- Strive to stay on the cutting edge of technology.
- Partner with other municipalities that are exploring Community Resource Centers
- Support the Community Resource Center Advisory Council towards the culmination of Frankfort Community Resource Center (FCRC).

### **Benefits of Institutional Infrastructure for Economic Development**

The projects listed above will create the institutional infrastructure necessary to build a sustainable year-round economy. Attracting new business investment, particularly in the new economy sectors, is a multi-disciplinary effort that requires marketing expertise, regulatory changes that improve the overall quality of life, communication and outreach.

Without the institutional infrastructure described in these recommendations, business recruitment activities will remain a piece-meal and happenstance activity in Frankfort and will ultimately yield little in the way of sustainable, year-round economic development.

# Chapter 6: The Natural Environment



## The Natural Environment

Frankfort's natural environment is an essential part to the community's special "sense of place". Frankfort was established because it is at the confluence of the Betsie River and Lake Michigan. The Betsie Bay is one of a few naturally protected harbors on Lake Michigan and this naturally encouraged the development of Frankfort.

Lake Michigan and the Betsie Bay are the two most visible reminders of the importance of the City's natural environment. In addition to the water, Frankfort boasts sand dunes, bluffs, wetlands and woodlands that all work to help define the character of the region. The preservation of these natural resources has long been a community value.

Historically, society viewed natural resources as resources that can (and should) be exploited by mankind. Woodlands were logged for the timber that built our cities, wetlands were drained for farming, the Great Lakes were used as a place for effluent and sewage. We used these resources to build our communities and to create wealth in a relatively young nation.

Over the past 100 years, our collective understanding of the environment and how natural systems work has profoundly influenced how we treat these resources. We now understand that wetlands filter stormwater runoff and recharge the aquifers that provide our drinking water. We now understand how forests regenerate themselves and this has led to more sustainable forestry operations. We have mapped and studied endangered, threatened and rare species of flora and fauna and now understand their habitat requirements and their value and roles within ecosystems.

We also have a better understanding of the value of our natural resources. This value is realized at a community scale and an individual scale. Just as street trees help create a unique neighborhood and district, mature trees also have a measurable impact on individual property values. Green infrastructure is the network of woodlands, wetlands, streams, lakes, rivers, and green spaces within a community. The industrial revolution proved that few communities can be considered "livable" communities without green infrastructure. These spaces and connections help to filter and clean stormwater runoff; they provide habitat for flora and fauna; they create recreational opportunities as parks; nature areas and trails; they maintain woodlands which help to cool communities and provide protection from winter winds.

A complete network of green infrastructure reduces physical infrastructure costs, increases property values, generates economic development and improves the overall quality of life for the community. Therefore, the City needs a detailed environmental and energy policy, with a complementary development of a detailed maintenance and preservation strategy for the natural environment.

This section consists of three sections - Natural Resources, Green Infrastructure and Energy.

## Natural Resources

The City's natural resources are an essential part of what defines the community's overall character. The steep slopes and dunes, wetlands, the Lake Michigan and Betsie Bay shorelines and the significant woodlands throughout the City are all of critical long term importance to both the ecological and economic health of the City.

During the past planning and visioning workshops, participants repeatedly cited the importance of the City's natural resources and features. Specifically, the City's dunes, steep slopes, waterfront areas and water quality in the Betsie Bay generated significant discussion and tentative consensus was reached on measures to protect and preserve these natural features. This input supported the findings of the Master Plan assessment which showed significant support for preservation of these resources.

## Action Plan

- Some previously stated goals such as developing a steep slope ordinance have been accomplished. Future actions should include.
- Generate, by drone, a topographical map of the city at a minimum of two foot contour lines and use this map to identify steep slope areas.
- Identify and inventory wetlands and significant tree cover.
- Develop Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect the long-term water quality of the Betsie River, Betsie Bay and Lake Michigan.
- Implement Stormwater Assessment Management (SWAM) Practices and create incentives to reduce stormwater runoff through the use of devices like pervious pavers, rain gardens, rain barrels.
- Work with Betsie Lake Utilities Authority (BLUA) to ensure funding is available to maintain and enhance critical infrastructure.
- Develop maintenance standards and policies for street trees, parks and natural areas.

## Green Infrastructure

As discussed, a City needs a network of parks, trails, natural and open spaces to ensure the community is a livable place. The spine of Frankfort's green infrastructure is its parks.

Frankfort has a range of park facilities that cover a range of activities. The City has passive parks (Open Space Park), active parks (Market Square Park, Mineral Springs Park, the Beach-to-Beach Trail) and pocket parks (such as Father Marquette Memorial Park). Each of these facilities provides green space, habitat, and recreation.

The most livable communities, which include huge metropolitan areas, small towns, neighborhoods and districts, all have a connected network of green spaces. In some places, these larger undeveloped spaces (typically parks or natural areas) are connected by greenways, streets lined with mature trees and yards with diverse and native landscaping, drainage swales or channels, utility corridors and other undeveloped land.

Frankfort has high quality parks and natural areas. However, the City lacks significant connections between these spaces. There are opportunities like the proposed 7th Street boulevard that may provide enhanced linkage. Additional connections can be created through a robust street tree planting and maintenance program as well as via a larger network of rain gardens, over-land drainage systems and so called "backyard habitats".

The following actions will help to enhance the City's green infrastructure:

- Work with MDOT to improve the 7th Street and M22 intersection
- Utilize and maintain the list of appropriate street trees for planting on all public streets
- Develop and implement maintenance standards and forestry procedures to ensure the long-term health of the City's street trees and provide these standards as information for residents to provide guidance for proper tree maintenance and optimal tree health
- Work with residents, foundations, and other non-profit or funding agencies to create an endowed street tree fund, the sole purpose of which is to plant and maintain a full network of street trees throughout the City
- Continue maintenance of a municipal tree nursery and maintain it in conjunction with local community partners to periodically provide nursery stock for the City.
- Perform ongoing maintenance of the Beach-to-Beach Trail
- Map and inventory the City's woodlands and wetlands
- Periodically work with the Michigan Natural Features Inventory to identify sensitive habitat and local populations of rare, threatened and endangered

species.

- Work with Michigan State University Extension to encourage native landscaping, rain gardens and creation of "backyard habitats" which will help enhance connections between larger natural areas
- In parks and civic properties use rain gardens, rain barrels and overland drainage in lieu of underground stormwater drains where possible
- Use public buildings and properties as demonstration sites for more environmentally-friendly stormwater and landscaping treatments: One example would be to work with the post office to create a drive-through and drop off area and to create a rain garden on site to accommodate stormwater generated by the additional impervious surface

## Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreation facilities provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors and provide significant environmental benefits. Successful facilities are those that combine recreational activities with the preservation of sensitive natural resources.

The value of the City's park system is much greater than the sum of the different facilities. Parks also act as economic engines that attract users into the City and have benefits that extend far beyond simply providing recreational activities and amenities. For example, the City's boat launch in Open Space Park is a major launch for recreational boats and fishermen. Looking at the boat launch as part of Open Space Park demonstrates that the park provides much more than a space for special events, picnicking, and passive recreation.

The City's park system is of tremendous value to the City because it is a major indicator of and contributor to the City's overall quality of life. The range of activities and facilities provided by the City is essential to maintaining a high quality of life. It is no coincidence that such communities who eliminate park and recreation funding, programs and facilities in response to fiscal crisis are communities with a poor quality of life. As a result of these actions, it becomes more difficult for those places to attract new economy investment. Therefore, this Master Plan advocates for the maintenance and expansion of a robust and healthy system of parks and recreation facilities in Frankfort. This system needs to include a range of activities and programs that appeals to people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds and ability levels.

The City's Recreation Plan identifies more specific goals, objectives and projects. Because of the importance of quality of life factors for the City's economic sustainability, parks and recreation are also a major consideration for the City's Master Plan. This section is not intended to supersede the Recreation Plan, rather this section adds additional objectives and recommendations and advocates the full implementation of the

Recreation Plan. Important park and recreation projects include the following:

- Maintain the five-year Recreation Plan to remain eligible for grant assistance with recreational projects
- Improve the Beach-to-Beach trail between City Hall and Lake Michigan
- Provide improved wayfinding to enhance safety
- Develop an informational brochure and distribution plan which describes the recreational and open space offerings and opportunities available to residents and visitors
- Provide opportunities for the involvement of City residents in the identification, selection, and development of recreational activities
- Over time, develop an integrated and multi-purpose open space and park system which helps to maintain the City's valuable lakeshore character while it addresses local recreational needs and open space priorities
- Improve and expand the recreation facilities in the waterfront parks
- Define, improve and regulate the Lake Michigan Beach area for the safety and wellbeing of the public
- Cooperate with the Frankfort-Elberta Area Public Schools to operate joint recreation facilities in the City of Frankfort and the Village of Elberta and formalize this cooperation by institutionalizing it
- Renovate, repair, replace and upgrade existing parks and park facilities to expand each park's usefulness for all age groups
- Expand and improve the hiking, biking, nature and walking trails
- Hire a part-time parks and recreation director to supervise summer programs, sports camps, art workshops, volleyball tournament, horseshoe tournaments, community gardens
- Recreation areas should be conveniently located, accessible, and well designed in each neighborhood area
- Recreation areas should be developed with the visitor in mind, with continued use of the City's park system as an economic development tool

## Energy

As this plan has discussed, sustainability consists of three elements: cultural, economic and environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability is complex and requires additional focus.

This chapter has discussed projects, policies and methodologies to reduce the City's environmental footprint and to mitigate some of the impacts of human development on the environment. Specifically, reducing stormwater runoff from impervious surface, identifying and protecting sensitive natural features and expanding wildlife habitat are all goals that will help to mitigate our impact on the natural environment.

Energy policy is one way the City of Frankfort can have a global environmental impact. In the past, planners have focused on reducing point and non-point source pollution and advocated for open space preservation and reduced development impacts. Over the last 20 years, the science of global warming has painted a much clearer picture of how our behaviors contribute to global warming and how global warming threatens the future of the entire planet. During the Vision Fair workshop in March 2009 and again during the planning workshops during July 2009, Frankfort residents expressed a vision for a reduced carbon footprint and an eventual end to dependence upon foreign oil for energy in Frankfort.

### Benefits of Sustainable Energy

Energy independence creates many positive benefits. Efficiency and reduced costs are the most immediate and positive benefits for the community. Furthermore, developing independent and sustainable energy generation for the City of Frankfort will create the opportunity to channel the money saved into other programs that will further benefit the community. The City of Frankfort values and encourages energy independence and conservation, realizing the importance of these concepts and demonstrating this image and the quality of life it creates. Cutting edge new economy investment tends to be drawn to bold new ideas and ventures. Energy independence will create an additional competitive advantage for Frankfort when it comes to recruiting new economy investment.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, energy independence will reduce the City's overall carbon footprint and will help to create a model program that can be used to combat the impacts of global warming. In creating a model for energy independence, Frankfort can become a model for smaller communities across the globe.

### Renewable Energy and Energy Independence

Over the last 30 years, our collective understanding of energy production has broadened. Instead of relying solely upon fossil fuels for our energy needs, we have developed a variety of alternative and renewable energy sources. The Oxford English Dictionary defines alternative energy as "energy fueled in ways that do not use up natural resources or harm the environment."

Currently, Frankfort and the rest of the United States relies heavily on coal, oil, and natural gas for its energy. "Fossil fuels are nonrenewable. They draw on finite resources that will eventually dwindle, becoming too expensive or too environmentally damaging to retrieve. In contrast, renewable energy resources are constantly replenished and will never run out."<sup>1</sup>

### **Renewable Energy resources include but are not limited to:**

#### **Solar**

Most renewable energy comes either directly or indirectly from the

sun. Sunlight, or solar energy, can be used directly for heating and lighting homes and other buildings, for generating electricity, and for hot water heating, solar cooling, and a variety of commercial and industrial uses.

### **Wind**

The sun's heat also drives the winds, whose energy is captured with wind turbines. Then, the winds and the sun's heat cause water to evaporate. When this water vapor turns into rain or snow and flows downhill into rivers or streams, its energy can be captured using hydropower.

### **Biomass**

Along with the rain and snow, sunlight causes plants to grow. The organic matter that makes up those plants is known as biomass. Biomass can be used to produce electricity, transportation fuels, or chemicals. The use of biomass for any of these purposes is called biomass energy.

### **Hydrogen**

Hydrogen also can be found in many organic compounds, as well as water. It's the most abundant element on the Earth. But it doesn't occur naturally as a gas. It's always combined with other elements, such as with oxygen to make water. Once separated from another element, hydrogen can be burned as a fuel or converted into electricity.

### **Geothermal**

Not all renewable energy resources come from the sun. Geothermal energy taps the Earth's internal heat for a variety of uses, including electric power production, and the heating and cooling of buildings.

### **Hydropower**

Flowing water creates energy that can be captured and turned into electricity. This is called hydroelectric power or hydropower.

### **Goal:**

To utilize a complete toolbox of alternative energy production

that may include wind, solar, and biomass that will ultimately reduce Frankfort's reliance upon the existing energy grid and unsustainable consumption of natural resources.

To accomplish the goal of becoming an energy independent community, Frankfort needs to pursue a number of different alternative energy initiatives that were first outlined in the 2010 Master Plan, including:

- Continue to encourage personal energy efficiency and conservation along with weatherization to help improve residential energy efficiency
- Continue to work with entrepreneurs to encourage alternative energy production in Frankfort's industrial area.
- Partner with Consumers Power, DTE or other third party to investigate the feasibility and potential sites for community wind power generation.
- Partner with manufacturers of home and community-scale wind and solar energy collection systems to use Frankfort as a demonstration project.
- Pursue federal and state grant programs to fund alternative energy pilot projects.
- Implement the policies outlined in this master plan to concentrate new development activity near downtown, in those areas currently serviced by utilities to create a compact and efficient urban area.
- Modernize all civic buildings to include energy efficient systems including (but not limited to) energy star-rated appliances and windows, efficient HVAC systems, passive solar lighting, motion-sensing lighting, adjustable, timed thermostats etc.
- Utilize green building techniques for all civic buildings and improvements.
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of old structures in lieu of demolition and new construction by providing an expedited site plan review or other similar incentive program for adaptive reuse.
- Continue to engage the citizens of Frankfort in discussion about renewable energy sources.

# Chapter 7: Implementation and Zoning Plan

## Introduction

A Master Plan and community vision is only as good as the implementation plan. This section of the Master Plan identifies each of the individual tasks and actions that are necessary to achieve the objectives outlined in the plan, as well as a description of schedule, phasing, responsible individuals and commissions. The Implementation Plan also contains a discussion of potential funding opportunities for those elements of the plan requiring municipal investment. Finally, as required under Michigan State Law, this section includes the Zoning Plan which defines the links between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

## What is a Zoning Plan?

A “Zoning Plan” is another term for “Zone Plan”, which is specifically identified in the Michigan Planning and zoning enabling acts. The Planning and Zoning Enabling Acts require that a zoning plan be prepared to provide the basis for a zoning ordinance. The zoning plan identifies zoning districts and purposes and the basic standards used to regulate location, height, bulk and use of buildings. This section of the Frankfort Master Plan 2020 defines the relationship of the Master Plan’s (Chapter 3) Regulating Plan to the zoning ordinance and identifies the necessary amendments that are required to implement the Regulating Plan.

The 2010 Master Plan was the catalyst for a complete re-write of the City’s Zoning Ordinance that was adopted February 25, 2011 and amended July 2014, which is the current ordinance. The zoning categories in this 2020 Master Plan update are the same as those contained in the current zoning ordinance

## Districts and Standards

The City of Frankfort’s zoning ordinance sets forth the dimensional, use and location requirements for development within the City. The City’s current contains the following districts. All references in this chapter to the existing zoning ordinance refer to the zoning ordinance as it exists as of July 2014. As a result of the 2010 Master Plan, major changes were made to the City’s zoning ordinance including the creation of new districts, the renaming of other districts and the modification of some district regulations to reflect the designations outlined in Chapter 3, which were new in 2010. The following offer the history of each of the current zoning districts.

## Residential Districts

As detailed in the Frankfort Master Plan 2010 and the 2020 Update, the form of the different neighborhoods in Frankfort

necessitates a greater variety of zoning requirements in these areas. The 2010 Master Plan and 2011 and 2014 Zoning Ordinance Updates created three new zoning districts for the East, North and West City Residential districts, which replaced the R-2 and R-3 districts as they existed prior to 2011. The intent of creating these districts to replace the R-2 and R-3 districts was to better incorporate the form of the different historic neighborhoods into the zoning ordinance. Instead of focusing on single family or multiple family use designations, these new districts address urban form and work to create flexibility to create additional housing opportunities. The rationale of this approach is that neither “medium density residential” nor “multiple family residential” translate into a building type or architectural urban form. For Frankfort, it is more critical to address urban and architectural form to preserve the City’s character.

## Rural

The Rural District detailed in the Regulating Plan in Chapter 3 (Zoning Map page 41), and described on page 21, corresponds to the R-1 Low Density Residential zoning district in the City’s zoning ordinance prior to 2011. The intent of this district is to maintain a residential district which may include agricultural uses and has a greater allowance for variation in architecture, site layout, accessory buildings and street layout. Again, it is the intent of this district to allow for a wide range of residential and agricultural uses and to create incentives and opportunity to conserve sensitive natural resources through the use of conservation development practices and, as appropriate, cluster development standards.

## East, North and West City Residential

The three new City Residential Districts (Master Plan 2010 and the 2020 Master Plan update) roughly correspond with the old R-2 Medium Density Residential zone in the City’s zoning ordinance prior to the 2014 zoning ordinance revision. While the location of these three residential districts approximates the boundaries of the old R-2 district, the form of each of these three districts is different enough to warrant three new residential zoning districts. Creating three new City Residential Zoning Districts allows more specific regulations to better address the historic characteristics of each neighborhood. Furthermore, creating these three new districts to replace the R-2 district creates a greater flexibility in the types of units allowed in each district which helps to create more attainable housing within walking distance of downtown in areas already served with water and sewer infrastructure - a major goal of the Master Plan. Finally, creating three form-based districts in lieu of a single R-2 Medium Density Residential District helps identify specific architectural and urban design

standards that preserve the historic character of each of the neighborhoods. These regulations have been instrumental in preserving the City's traditional character and distinctive physical personality while allowing for new development and growth.

### **Mixed-Use Districts**

There are two mixed use districts that were first proposed in the 2010 Master Plan, both of which are described in Chapter 3, Main Street (East and West Main Street) and the Waterfront District. These mixed-use districts updated the old Central Business and Waterfront Business Districts that were in effect prior to the February 25, 2011 zoning ordinance amendment. The new mixed-use districts were a significant change as they both include by-right residential uses and both emphasize architectural form while creating flexibility for landowners.

### **Main Street**

The Main Street designation replaced the old CBD zoning designation in the City's zoning ordinance prior to February 2011. As mentioned, the changes incorporated into the 2011 zoning update allowed second floor residential uses as by-right uses and requires buildings to be a minimum of two stories to reflect the historic development pattern of Downtown Frankfort.

A significant point of emphasis and point of departure for the zoning changes that were enacted in 2011 was a balance between growth and development (or redevelopment) with preservation of views to the Betsie Bay.

### **Waterfront**

The Waterfront District in Master Plan 2010 and the 2020 update replaced the old WB district that existed prior to February 2011. The focus and intent of the district guidelines remain the same - to create a "working waterfront" area at the east end of Main Street. Like Main Street, the Waterfront District allows residential use as a by-right use on the upper floors of buildings. This is vitally important to creating the flexibility necessary to attract additional residential uses that will help to drive commercial and "working waterfront" activities. Furthermore, increasing the opportunity for additional residential uses close to the heart of the Downtown commercial area helps to reduce costly infrastructure extensions and sprawl.

### **Civic and Parks**

The February 2011 zoning ordinance revision created two new districts intended to establish guidelines that ensure these spaces remain in public use. These spaces are special because they belong to the entire community and therefore, the guidelines for each district need to reflect principles that benefit the entire community.

Creating these new district for these spaces has helped to limit development pressure on these properties. In difficult financial conditions, like those of 2008-2013, many communities look at parks specifically as saleable assets. Creating a zoning

designation for Parks has insured that any attempt to sell these community facilities or develop these spaces will require extensive public discussion and community debate.

### **Industrial**

This space is not restricted to light manufacturing, warehousing and industrial use. What the Industrial District seeks to create is a space in Frankfort for more intense production activities that are able to accommodate less pedestrian- and residentially- friendly uses like shipping and receiving. Uses in this district may run the gamut from art studio to forge to manufacturing or logistics. Ultimately, this district is designed to provide space for entrepreneurial activity that requires large space and heavy infrastructure. This updates the old I-1 Industrial District that was in the City's zoning ordinance prior to February 2011.

### **Institutional**

Medical facilities are community assets that provide essential medical services to the larger community. Frankfort is lucky to have the Paul Oliver Memorial Hospital to provide ambulatory services and urgent care. Additionally, the Maples is an assisted living center and the Benzie County ALS provides additional services for area citizens.

Because of their specialized uses, these buildings naturally stand out from the surrounding district. Therefore, these spaces need to be grander and more memorable. The Institutional District replaced the old Major Medical District that was in place until February 2011.

### **Implementation**

There are two primary ways of realizing the goals and objectives outlined in this Master Plan: 1) Revise the zoning ordinance and 2) Implement individual projects.

The primary zoning methodology is to amend the City's zoning ordinance and adopt a Form-Based Zoning Ordinance or variation thereof. Form-Based Zoning regulates appearance of the built environment, whereas, conventional zoning controls primarily land use and density. Form-Based Codes promote a positive picture of what you want your community to look like versus traditional zoning where it basically states what you don't want. Form-Based Codes encourage public participation because they allow citizens to see what will happen where it is proposed to occur and what the proposed development will look like, thus leading to a higher comfort level. Form-based codes create a predictable public realm by controlling physical form primarily, with a lesser focus on land use, through city regulations.

Obviously, zoning changes will effect change over a very long period of time. Changes to the zoning ordinance will be incremental and more noticeable when viewed over many years. It is apparent, based on the new development that has occurred since the Zoning Ordinance was revised in 2011,

following the 2010 Master Plan, that the ordinance has had a direct and positive influence on development in the City, particularly in and around downtown.

The second method of achieving the goals and objectives of the Master Plan is through different projects. These projects may be funded and executed by the public sector, the private sector or as a public-private partnership. It is these projects

that will have more visual and thus, more immediate impact within the Frankfort community. The Implementation Matrix on the following page outlines each project or action, responsibility for actions, necessary approvals, time frame and potential funding sources. This matrix can be used as a report card to evaluate the on-going implementation of this Master Plan.

# Glossary of Terms

**Accessory Use:** A building or a usage of land that is additional to primary use. A garage apartment or ancillary living space located behind the main house is an example of an accessory use.

**Ancillary Living Space:** A freestanding, single-unit apartment located behind the main house or an extension of an existing residence in a residential area. These units are often located above a detached garage.

**Buffer or Buffer Strip:** Landscaped areas, open spaces, fences, walls, berms, or any combination of these, used to physically separate or screen one land use or piece of property from another. Buffers are often used to block light or noise.

**Built Environment:** The urban environment consisting of buildings, roads, fixtures, parks, and all other improvements that form the physical character of a city.

**Cluster Development:** the grouping of a particular development's residential structures on a portion of the available land, reserving a significant amount of the site as protected open space. The usable open space created by a cluster development can meet a number of community goals. These goals sometimes conflict with one another. For example, the protection of wildlife habitat may be incompatible with the preservation of agricultural land. However, the key benefit is the availability of open space that has been preserved by clustering units on smaller lots. The landowner and the community make the ultimate decision on how the open space is used.

**Community Character:** The image and perception of a community as defined by its built environment, landscaping, natural features and open space, types and style of housing, and number and size of roads and sidewalks.

**Condominium:** A form of property ownership in which each owner holds title to his/her individual unit, plus a fractional interest in the common areas of the multi-unit project. Each owner pays taxes on his/her property, and is free to sell or lease it.

These individual units may be either units within a common building or individual units on a common lot. The term condominium refers to a form of property ownership, not a specific style or type of building.

**Density:** The number of dwelling units (houses, apartments, townhouses, duplexes, etc.), or buildings per unit of land. In

Neighborhood Planning, this is often expressed as dwelling units per acre.

**Downtown Development Authority (DDA):** Established by Public Act 197 of 1975, the Downtown Development Authority Act is intended to provide for the establishment of a downtown development authority; to prescribe its powers and duties; to correct and prevent deterioration in business districts; to encourage historic preservation; to authorize the acquisition and disposal of interests in real and personal property; to authorize the creation and implementation of development plans in the districts; to promote the economic growth of the districts; to create a board; to prescribe its powers and duties; to authorize the levy and collection of taxes; to authorize the issuance of bonds and other evidences of indebtedness; to authorize the use of tax increment financing; to reimburse downtown development authorities for certain losses of tax increment revenues; and to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state officials.

Euclidean zoning is utilized by some municipalities because of its relative effectiveness, ease of implementation (one set of explicit, prescriptive rules), long-established legal precedent, and familiarity to planners and design professionals.

However, Euclidean zoning has received heavy criticism for its lack of flexibility and institutionalization of now-outdated planning theory.

**Facade:** The exterior walls of a building that can be seen by the public.

**Form-Based Zoning or Form-Based Code:** Form-based codes foster predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. These codes are adopted into city or county law as regulations, not mere guidelines. Form-based codes are an alternative to traditional Euclidean zoning.

Form-based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. The regulations and standards in Form-based codes, presented in both diagrams and words, are keyed to a regulating plan that designates the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development rather than only distinctions in land-use types. This is in contrast to conventional zoning's focus on the

micro-management and segregation of land uses, and the control of development intensity through abstract and uncoordinated parameters (e.g., Floor Area Ratio, dwellings per acre, setbacks, parking ratios, traffic Level of Service) to the neglect of an integrated built form. Not to be confused with design guidelines or general statements of policy, Form-based codes are regulatory, not advisory.

**Garage Apartment:** A single-unit apartment located above a garage and sited behind the main house. It is permitted in districts that specifically allow them. See Ancillary Living Space.

**Infill Development:** A type of development occurring in established areas of the city. Infill can occur on long-time vacant lots or on pieces of land with dilapidated buildings, or can involve changing the land use of a property from a less to a more intensive one—i.e. from a parking lot to an office building.

**Mixed Use:** A type of development that combines residential, commercial, and/or office uses, within a district, into one development or building. For example, a mixed-use building could have several floors. On the bottom floor, the space could be dedicated to retail or offices. The remaining two or three floors could be for apartments or condominiums. A Mixed Use District allows residential, commercial, retail, and office uses to be combined in a single area.

**Multi-Family:** A building that is designed to house more than one family. Examples would be a duplex, four-plex, or apartment building.

**Nonconforming:** Any land, building or structure that does not conform with current zoning regulations, but was lawful or not required to comply with zoning regulations at the time a zoning district was established. They may be permitted to continue or be given time to come into compliance with the existing zoning ordinance. In addition, specific code requirements address the ability to make major substantial changes to structures designated as nonconforming. This is also known as a “grandfathered”.

**Open Space:** An area set aside or reserved for public or private use with very few improvements. Types of open space include:

- Agricultural Land
- Parks
- Greenbelts
- Nature Preserves

**Prohibited Use:** One that is not permitted in a zoning district.

**Redevelopment:** The conversion of a building or project from an old use to a new one. Examples are the conversions of old warehouses to lofts or retail spaces. It is

also known as Adaptive Reuse.

**Regulating Plan:** The map that illustrates the locations of the different districts described in the Frankfort Master Plan 2010. Also called a Future Land Use Map.

**Rezone:** To change the zoning classification of particular lots or parcels of land.

**Setback:** The minimum distance between the building and any lot line.

**Shared Parking:** parking spaces that are shared by more than one user, which allows parking facilities to be used more efficiently. It is a type of parking management. Shared Parking takes advantage of the fact that most parking spaces are only used part time by a particular motorist or group, and many parking facilities have a significant portion of unused spaces, with utilization patterns that follow predictable daily, weekly and annual cycles.

**Short Term Rental:** A dwelling unit rented for a period of time less than thirty days, permitted and operated in accordance with the City of Frankfort Zoning Ordinance.

**Sprawl:** A haphazard and disorderly form of urban development. There are several elements that characterize sprawl:

- Residences far removed from stores, parks, and other activity centers
- Scattered or “leapfrog” development that leaves large tracts of undeveloped land between developments
- Commercial strip development along major streets
- Large expanses of low-density or single use development such as commercial centers with no office or residential uses, or residential areas with no nearby commercial centers
- Major form of transportation in the area is the automobile
- Uninterrupted and contiguous low- to medium-density (one to six du/ac) urban development
- Walled residential subdivisions that do not connect to adjacent residential development.

**Steep Slopes:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) describes steep slopes as a gradient of 20% or greater. The significance of slope gradient is also connected to other soil properties. Typically slopes in excess of 20% are subject to greater amounts of soil erosion and are thus less suitable for development or agricultural uses.

**Streetscape:** The space between the buildings on either side of a street that defines its character. The elements of a streetscape include:

- Building Frontage/Facade
- Landscaping (trees, yards, bushes, plantings, etc.)
- Sidewalks
- Street Paving

- Street Furniture (benches, kiosks, trash receptacles, fountains, etc.)
- Signs
- Awnings
- Street Lighting

**Sustainability:** A concept and strategy by which communities seek economic development approaches that benefit the local environment and quality of life. Sustainable development provides a framework under which communities can use resources efficiently, create efficient infrastructures, protect and enhance the quality of life, and create new businesses to strengthen their economies. A sustainable community is achieved by a long-term and integrated approach to developing and achieving a healthy community by addressing economic, environmental, and social issues. Fostering a strong sense of community and building partnerships and consensus among key stakeholders are also important elements.

**Tax Increment Financing District (TIF District):** Tax increment finance (TIF) districts allow local units of government to capture (from other taxing governmental units) the increase in property tax levies above and beyond the year in which the authority was established.

For example, a local unit that establishes a tax increment finance authority in 2007 may, in 2008 and every year following for as long as the authority chooses, retain property tax revenues above those collected (the increment) in 2007 (base year) that are otherwise due to other units of government, such as counties and school districts.

TIF districts may not capture millages for debt obligations and typically the State Education Tax (6 mills) may not be captured.

**Zoning:** The method used by cities to promote the compatibility of land uses by dividing tracts of land within the city into different districts or zones. Zoning ensures that a factory is not located in the middle of a residential neighborhood or that a bar is not located next to a school.

Appendix A Goes Notice of Public Hearing and Adoption  
resolution will go here...