

TOWN OF FRANKLIN, NEW YORK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



PREPARED BY TOWN OF FRANKLIN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE
WITH PLANIT MAIN STREET, INC. & DELAWARE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT ADOPTED OCTOBER 10, 2006

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1.0 Introduction

The Town of Franklin's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in the mid-1980s. Since that time, the Town has seen a marked increase in the subdivision of land and with it the understanding that it needs to better manage future growth in order to ensure long-term benefits for the community. The Town Board seeks to create a Plan that will help to protect farmland, revitalize existing hamlet centers, preserve scenic and natural resources, conserve historic resources, and enhance economic opportunities for area residents. The Town Board formed a Comprehensive Plan Committee to lead the effort to create a new Comprehensive Plan. It also called for a strong public participation process so that the Committee could gain insights into the residents' concerns regarding existing development as well as their goals for future development within the Town.

The new Comprehensive Plan is being prepared in accordance with Section 272-a of NYS Town Law which states that the plan will "identify the goals and objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices, and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the Town." While the creation of a Comprehensive Plan is not required under NYS Section 272-a, once one is adopted, all subsequent land use regulations must be in accordance with a community's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

The Town of Franklin Comprehensive Plan was developed in three distinct phases: 1) preparation of baseline data including population, housing, natural resources, community facilities, open space, and infrastructure, etc., 2) identification of issues facing the Town based upon baseline data, a review of existing land use regulations, monthly Committee meetings, along with public input, and 3) the creation of the Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives and policies.

An analysis of baseline conditions, along with public input, was used to identify a list of goals for the Town. These include:

- Preserving the rural character of Town;
- Preservation of prime farmland;
- Protecting natural & historic resources;
- Maintaining quality of the school district;
- Enhancing recreational opportunities;
- Protecting scenic views;
- Restricting large-scale retail and industrial uses;
- Keeping farming as major industry in the Town and protecting the right-to-farm;
- Ensuring good design of new commercial or light industrial developments;
- Allowing for small-scale retail uses;
- Identifying where new industrial uses should be permitted;
- Allowing for growth while maintaining rural character of the Town; and
- Protecting private property rights.

**“We Shape
Our
Buildings
and
Afterwards
Our
Buildings
Shape Us.”**

Winston Churchill



Plymouth Church – CR21

1.1 Purpose of the Plan

This Comprehensive Plan is meant to build upon the 1985 Comprehensive Plan and is intended to guide the Town's growth for the next 5 to 10 years. The Comprehensive Plan serves as the Town's official policy document, providing a general set of planning principles relating to land use, agricultural resources, natural resources, housing, historic resources, and economic development and other related issues in order to guide future growth and development.

The Mission Statement of this Comprehensive Plan is as follows: *"To guide future growth and development within the Town of Franklin in a manner that respects the Town's rural character, so that its unique sense of place is enhanced, its agricultural, historic, and natural resources protected; and its social and economic vitality ensured for years to come."* The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to realize the community's vision for the future and to guide growth in a manner that fosters orderly, coordinated and beneficial development within the Town.

The Comprehensive Plan is meant to be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure it continues to reflect the long-range goals of the community and that it addresses the regulation of land uses that were not envisioned when the document was created.

1.2 Implementation

In order for this Comprehensive Plan to be effective, the Town of Franklin must actively apply the policies that are contained within the Plan and its Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals must use the Comprehensive Plan as a framework to guide their decisions with respect to the review of development proposals.

Certain recommendations contained herein will require the subsequent action of the Town Board to enact recommended revisions to the Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations. Other actions such as the preservation of historic resources, transportation improvements, or the development of programs to support the agricultural industry will require the collaboration between the Town and County, State and not-for-profit entities. These actions are outlined in the Chapter 13 - Implementation of this Plan along with the party responsible for taking a leadership role in the implementation of the policy or program.

Each member of the Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals should have a copy of the Plan. The Town Board may want to appoint Comprehensive Plan subcommittee to spend time each month reviewing progress on the implementation of this Comprehensive Plan and coordinating efforts with other entities where necessary.

Mission Statement

"To guide future growth and development within the Town of Franklin in a manner that respects the Town's rural character, so that its unique sense of place is enhanced, its agricultural, historic, and natural resources protected; and its social and economic vitality ensured for years to come."

2.0 Public Participation

The Comprehensive Plan Committee was formed by the Town Board to guide the process of developing the Comprehensive Plan. In January of 2006, Planit Main Street, Inc. was retained by the Town to assist the Committee in the development of the new Comprehensive Plan. The Committee's first meeting with Planit Main Street was held on February 9, 2006. Their next meeting was held on March 9, 2006 which was also the first public participation meeting. The Committee then met on the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Town Highway Barn at the corner of Route 357 and CR 21.

It should be noted that all meetings of the Committee were open to the public and public input was welcomed by the Committee during these meetings. Recommendations for recreation, and the regulation of commercial businesses were some of the topics discussed.

During the preparation of this Comprehensive Plan, public input was also gathered from Town residents through a variety of instruments including: a Community Character Survey™, Assets & Challenges exercise, a Resident Survey, as well as input from the Comprehensive Plan Committee members. In addition to the above, interviews were held with Planning Board & ZBA members, and other interested stakeholders in order to gather additional information regarding the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

The first public participation meeting in the development of the Comprehensive Plan was held on March 9, 2006 in the Franklin Central School in the Village of Franklin. Over eighty (80) residents came to the first meeting along with representative from the Town Board and Delaware County. The meeting was co-facilitated by Alan J. Sorensen, AICP from Planit Main Street, Inc., along with Tom Shepstone from Shepstone Management Company. The meeting began with a Community Character Survey™ followed by an Assets & Challenges exercise. A discussion of each is provided later in this section.

At the March 30, 2006 Committee meeting, Planit provided an analysis of the Community Character Survey™. During this meeting, an overview of the Town's existing Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations was discussed by the Committee with the public participants encouraged to provide input. Through this public participation exercise, a set of priorities were developed to help guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Committee met on February 9, March 9, March 30, April 19, May 10, May 17, May 24, June 28, and July 6. While the public meetings represented an opportunity to discuss broad planning issues for the Town, the Committee meetings served as a forum for focused discussions with respect to how to effectuate change through the Town's Zoning Code and its Subdivision Regulations. Public hearings were held on July 27 and August 23, 2006.

“It is within our power to create places worthy of our affection.”

James Howard Kunstler
Geography of Nowhere



**Farm
Hamlet of Leonta**



**Elementary School
Treadwell, NY**

The Committee meetings were facilitated by Planit Main Street, Inc. with the goal of focusing on particular topic areas. One meeting focused on issues related to farmland protection along the Route 357 corridor. Other meetings focused on where certain business should be permitted within the Town and the nature and size of retail businesses. The Committee also focused on subdivision regulations. During one meeting a detailed discussion and explanation of cluster subdivision regulations was provided. Recommendations for encouraging cluster subdivisions are provided in Chapter 9.0.

The Committee also discussed the results of the Community Character and Assets & Challenges Surveys which helped in the formulation of key policies. A summary of the Assets & Challenges exercise along with the Community Character Survey follows - including an analysis of each.

2.1 Assets & Challenges

At the first public meeting at the Franklin Central School, eighty five residents were each asked to describe what they felt were “Assets” in the Town and what they saw as “Challenges” facing the Town now as well as into the future.

The individual responses were recorded by the Planit Main Street, Inc. and then grouped into specific topic areas for the purpose of providing an analysis of the results. A complete tabulation of the results is provided within the appendices of this Comprehensive Plan.

2.1.1 Assets

Assets are aspects of a community that the residents look upon favorably. Identifying assets from the community’s perspective is an important step in defining a vision for its future. While specific assets varied; they can generally be grouped into several broad topic areas. The analysis of each topic area is provided below:

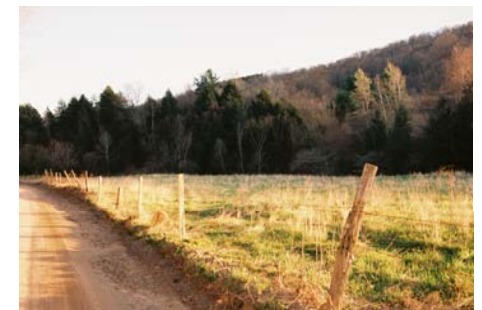
1. Quality of Life: Participants noted that the quality of life in the community was an important asset. Factors that contributed to the quality of life included: a low crime rate, road maintenance, public schools, the Franklin Library, “Old Franklin Day”, its fire department, beautiful farmlands and access to the surrounding region via Interstate-88. Other residents liked Franklin because it was a quiet place to live.
2. Agriculture: Many residents cited the presence of farming in the community to be an important asset. It was noted that farms help to provide for the rural character in the Town, that they preserve open space, and that they are an important part of the Town’s economy. Many businesses in the Town support and, in turn, are supported by the farming community. The presence of historic barns was also cited as an asset in the Town and a part of the Town’s landscape that people would like to see preserved.



**Franklin Free Library
Village of Franklin**



**Farm Stand
State Route 357**



**Bucolic Scene from
Cob Web Road**

3. Natural Resources: Many of the assets cited by local residents can be broadly grouped under the heading of natural resources. Specific assets that were identified included: farmland, forests, clean water, wildlife, outdoor sporting opportunities, beautiful landscapes and trees with large canopies.
4. Historic Resources: The Town of Franklin has a rich history which is reflected in the architecture of its commercial, residential and agricultural structures. Residents cited the traditional architecture of the Town and its historic barns as an important asset.
5. The Schools: Residents noted that the Franklin Schools as an important asset. The Franklin Central School is located within the Village of Franklin and the Elementary School in Treadwell.
6. Businesses: There are a variety of Town-based businesses such as the diner, general store, and agricultural-related businesses that residents cited as important assets in the community. Post Offices in Downtown Franklin and Treadwell were seen as assets that should remain downtown.
7. People: A friendly tolerant people with lots of pride were attributes of Town residents that residents felt were assets.

2.1.2 Challenges

Residents were also asked what they would like to see changed in the Town, or expressed another way, challenges facing the Town in the future. A summary of their responses is discussed below.

1. Quality of Life: While residents expressed an overall satisfaction with their quality of life, there were several areas of concern that were noted. To begin, residents felt the need for additional recreational activities for children and adults. There was also concern that there was a lack of transportation for the growing elderly population in the Town. This was especially a concern when related to access to healthcare. Other challenges cited include: the cost of energy, taxes, and the lack of housing for low to moderate income residents.
2. Agriculture: Residents expressed concern over the future viability of agriculture in the Town. Part of this concern focused on the loss of prime farmland to residential subdivisions. Another concern was ensuring the future profitability of farming so that farmers could stay in business. Along with this concern was a strong desire to preserve farming as an industry in the Town. This Plan explores measures that can be used to retain farming as a way of life in the Town.



**Historic Church
Village of Franklin**



Farm off of Merrickville Road



Historic Barn – North Franklin

3. Natural Resources: There was general concern among residents that the Town's natural resources need to be protected. Issues of concern included: protection of the water supply, the need for code enforcement, and the regulation of burn barrels. Residents also expressed concern that there needed to be better control over the subdivision of large properties within the Town.

There appears to be a desire to allow for growth but to do so in a manner that preserves the rural character of the community as well as open space. Finding the right balance in regulation was seen as perhaps the greatest challenge in protecting natural resources.

4. Recreational Opportunities: Several residents expressed a desire to have more recreational opportunities within the Town. Specific recommendations included more hiking trails as well as recreational opportunities for area youth.
5. The Schools: Generally residents seemed satisfied with the Franklin Schools but were concerned with declining school enrollment. A few residents expressed concern with respect to the exodus of young people in the community. Having additional employment opportunities for young workers was cited as one solution to this concern.

6. Business: While residents noted that existing businesses in the Town were assets, they were concerned with the growing competition from big boxes stores – especially those in Southside Oneonta. There was general concern over the growing loss of local businesses. There was a strong desire among residents to attract new businesses to fill vacant storefronts. It is assumed that residents were referring to vacant storefronts in the Village of Franklin and the hamlets of North Franklin and Treadwell. Specifically, residents noted the preservation of Main Street in the Village of Franklin as a challenge.

It should be noted that this Plan addresses the Town of Franklin outside the Village. While the Town supports the goal of encouraging new businesses to locate within existing buildings, it also recognizes that it must allow for some small-scale retail elsewhere within the Town. To ensure that new retail buildings compliment the character of the Town, size limitations and some design criteria are recommended.

7. People: The exodus of young people from farming, those looking for jobs elsewhere, a difficult local job market, and declining school enrollment were all cited as challenges facing the community as it planned for its future.

2.2 Community Character Survey™

During the March 9, 2006 public meeting, 85 residents participated in a Community Character Survey. The Community Character Survey (CCS) is a planning instrument that was developed by Planit Main Street, Inc. to ascertain resident preferences for various aspects of the community. We begin with the premise that there are common attributes of development that people find visually appealing or not.

To determine resident preferences, participants were shown a variety of images that suggest different aspects of community character. The first set of images related to commercial and/or industrial development. The second set of images related to residential development and the third set of images focused on the landscape. Residents were asked to rate each of these images on a scale of -5 to +5 (negative vs. positive) on the survey forms.

All of the images that are included in the Community Character Survey™ are carefully chosen to reflect both the best and worst attributes of development and the landscape. In an ideal world, good design would simply happen. In reality, it is more often shaped by developer preferences within a framework of community land use tools that help to ensure good design. The photos of commercial and industrial development within the CCS included: shopping centers, office buildings, stand-alone commercial buildings, and downtown buildings.

The images of residential development included: single-family houses on small lots, large houses on large lots, townhouses, village streetscapes, and exurban residential development. The landscape images focused on the natural environment. Included were photos of the Ouleout Creek, local farms, as well as views from public rights-of-way that were either enhanced or diminished by the man-made environment.

Those images that most represented what participants would like to see in their community, or what they found to be visually appealing, were given a positive rating. Those images that reflected things they did not want to see in their community, or that they found visually unappealing, were given a negative rating. The greater the like the higher the score and vice versa.

A total of 85 residents participated in the Community Character Survey. The full results of the survey are provided in the appendices of this Comprehensive Plan. An analysis of the survey responses is provided below along with a discussion of some of the land use decisions that may have affected the development that was represented in each photo.

This Plan includes some general recommendations for how the Town of Franklin can better regulate the design and signage of commercial businesses through its land use regulations.

“In an ideal world, good design would simply happen. In reality, it is more often shaped by developer preferences within a framework of community land use tools that help to ensure good design.”

The Community Character Survey revealed strong and consistent preferences among participants. These results give us solid insights into the community's values regarding design and future land use development. An interpretation of those values is provided below.

Highly rated attributes of commercial and industrial uses.

- The highest rated commercial images reflected downtown mixed use buildings;
- Nicely designed, landscaped and maintained public buildings such as the Elementary School in Treadwell;
- Well-designed small-scale retail developments were also highly rated. An example is the Ben & Jerry's in the photo right that incorporates a sloping roofline, stone and heavy timbers;
- Signage that was well-designed and appropriate in scale;
- Projecting signs on Main Street buildings, well-design wall signs with goose neck lighting;
- Monument signs;
- Nicely landscaped properties;
- Downtown commercial districts with well-maintained sidewalks, a row of street streets and/or historic Main Street buildings;
- Well-maintained properties; and
- Small-scale retail businesses.

Top Five Rated Commercial Images

This image of the Treadwell Elementary School received a weighted average of +2.5 overall. What are some of



the factors that contribute to the appeal of this image? One factor is the well-maintained and net appearance of the property including the lawn and ball fields. Another is the architecture and placement of the school that allows it to fit within the rural landscape.

In a rural setting, it is important that institutional buildings have sufficient land area and landscaping to enable to buildings to blend into the rural landscape as the Treadwell Scholl does.

With a weighted average score of 2.4, the Post Office in Morris, New York was the second-highest rated image. The architecture of the building, neat appearance, simple but elegant signage all were positive attributes that people liked. The similarity of this building to similar buildings found within the Village of Franklin also likely contributed to the positive rating.



Above: Top Five Rated Images

This building received a +2.3 average score. Positive aspects of this image include: signage that is appropriate to the architecture of the building, large display windows, recessed entry and the placement of the building to the edge of the sidewalk.



With a weighted average of +2.3, this mixed use Main Street building in Andes tied for the third-highest score of the 27 commercial and industrial images that were shown. The distinguishing features of this building include: classic Main Street mixed use architecture with large display windows and recessed entry; the building is well-maintained and the signage is appropriate in scale to the building.



The General Store in Treadwell received an average score of +2.2 which was the fourth highest score overall. It reflects the type of small-scale retail the community would like to encourage.



Poorly rated attributes of commercial and industrial uses.

- Commercial sites without landscaping;
- Poorly placed commercial buildings where the rear of such buildings dominate the streetscape;
- Commercial developments with insufficient landscaping;
- Poorly maintained commercial and mixed use buildings;
- Signage that does not respect the architecture of a building;
- Billboards that create visual clutter along area roadways;
- Building utilities that face the street;
- Large expanses of off-street parking without landscaping;
- Poorly defined driveways and the lack of pedestrian walkways along roadways;
- Storage of used vehicles and other equipment on commercial properties that are not screened from the public view;
- Excessive size of some commercial signs that then dominate the streetscape;
- Poor building orientation as it relates to adjacent buildings;
- Box-like commercial buildings; and
- Buildings that are unappealing and/or out of character with their surroundings.



Above: Lowest Rated Images

The score for this image was -3.8. Billboards, lack of landscaping, poor maintenance and storage of materials along the street edge create a visually unappealing environment.



The very large Kohl's Distribution Center received a -3.6 weighted average, the second lowest rated image. The low rating reflects the mismatch between developments of this scale with the rural character of the Town of Franklin. Other factors contributing to the negative rating: little landscaping, large parking area, ugly building.



This -3.5 rated image boasts excessively large off-premise signs, storage of equipment and vehicles in plain site the traveled right-of-way. There is also too much signage on the buildings. Building placement, materials, and uncoordinated design also contribute the low rating.



This commercial retailer received a -3.3 rating overall. Factors that contributed to the low rating include: the sea of asphalt without any landscaping islands and the big-box appearance of the building.



This commercial development got a score of -3.1. What factors contribute to the unappealing attributes of this development? To begin, the building is poorly maintained. It is also poorly placed so that the rear of the building and all the utilities dominate the streetscape. This building is located in a Downtown setting. The billboard-type signage on the wall is unappealing as are the poorly maintained sidewalks. Last but not least is the noticeable lack of any landscape. A tree may grow in Brooklyn, but not on this site in the heart of an otherwise beautiful historic Downtown.



“All of the factors that contributed to the negative rating of these commercial developments could be avoided with effective land use regulations.”

All of the factors that contributed to the negative rating of these five commercial developments could be avoided with effective land use regulations. These points to the need for enhanced site plan review guidelines to regulate landscaping, signage, and site layout.

Highly rated attributes of residential development.

- Houses with trees and a modest lawns;
- Houses that are oriented to the street or rural roadway;
- For densely developed housing - the provision of sidewalks;
- In a rural setting - larger setbacks for housing sites from the road to help maintain the rural landscape;
- The provision of street trees along residential streets;
- Attractive design of residential buildings whether single-family, townhouse, or multi-family;
- Residential developments where the housing designs varied, thus avoiding the cookie-cutter appearance;
- Housing within pedestrian-oriented neighborhood settings;
- A residential streetscape defined by narrow streets, sidewalks, tree-lined streets, and modest yards; and
- Good quality, well-maintained, and well-designed housing.

Score +3.8: The home in the photo to the right is located just east of the hamlet of North Franklin. Factors that contribute to this positive rating include a well-maintained house, lawn, and stone walls. Note that the garage entrance is located to the rear of the house, so that it does not dominate the house. This house is located along a rural highway where there are higher traffic speeds. The larger setback from the right-of-way in rural settings helps to maintain the rural character.



Score +3.1: Historic French Second Empire home in Owego, New York. Contributing factors to the positive rating include: pedestrian-oriented sidewalk, nicely maintained and landscaped yards, and a landscaping strip between the pedestrian and vehicular rights-of-way. Although this home is located on a small lot, it fits into the character of the neighborhood. Other factors that contribute to the overall positive rating are the fact that the house and lawn are well-maintained. The front porch and pedestrian oriented neighborhood are also attributes of this image that are reflected in the positive rating.



Above: Highest Rated Images

Poorly rated attributes of residential developments

- Cookie-cutter design;
- Lack of street trees;
- No provision of sidewalks;
- Garages that dominate the residential buildings resulting in the “garage with attached house” effect;
- Excessively wide streets within residential areas;
- Housing sites that are clear-cut of existing vegetation;
- Housing where parked vehicles dominate the streetscape, but not the housing; and
- Poor placement of houses so that the privacy of neighbors is violated.

Score -2.65: The factors that contributed to the low rating for this image are as follows: the cookie cutter appearance of the houses, the lack of street trees, and an excessively wide residential street. Another factor was likely the fact that very little of the existing vegetation was retained on these home sites.

Score -2.6: While some might have considered the density of this development to be a concern, the factors that likely played a more important role in the negative rating of this development include: cookie-cutter units, garages that overpower the residential units, no provision for sidewalks, and the fact that there are no trees within this development.



Above: Lowest Rated Images

Highly rated attributes of the landscape

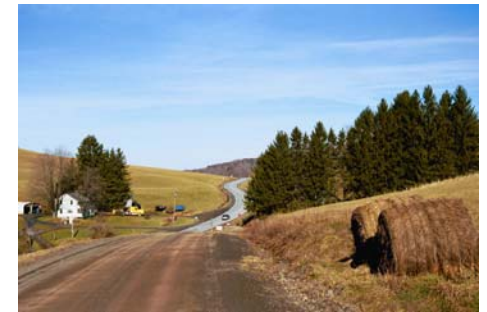
- Natural resources such as the Ouleout Creek;
- *Development that respects the rural character of the community;*
- Farmland and land in agricultural production;
- In more urban settings, places that were well-landscaped;
- Streetscapes free of the visual clutter such as billboards;
- Well-maintained streetscapes that were clear of litter and other debris;
- Buildings that are maintained; and
- Well-maintained Main Streets.

Score 4.1: The image of Ouleout Creek received the highest score of all the landscape images. The protection of natural resources is an important factor to consider in the future development of the Town. The photo captures the Ouleout Creek in a pristine setting. Ensuring that the man-made environment respects the natural resources of the Town is an important goal of this Plan.



Ouleout Creek

Score 3.5: This photo from Palmer Road captures the positive aspects of the Town's rural landscape. In general, any of the landscape images that showed agriculture and farmlands received very high ratings. In this image, the dirt road, hay bales, green fields, and winding road in the background work together to create the classic bucolic setting that many find visually appealing. Preserving such resources is a focus of this Comprehensive Plan.



Palmer Road Looking Toward CR 21

Score 3.4: This farm on County Route 16 leading into Treadwell captures the beauty of the farming industry within the Town of Franklin. Many of the photos that showed red barns in the context of active agriculture received a positive rating. Again, the country road, fences, green fields, and red barn with silos work together to create the classic bucolic setting that many find visually appealing. Farmland preservation is a focus of this Comprehensive Plan.



CR16 Looking Toward Treadwell

Above: Top Five Rated Images

Poorly rated attributes of the landscape

- Rural roadways with excessive off-premises advertising;
- Billboards that are poorly maintained;
- Development that does not respect the rural character of the community;
- Chain link fences;
- Poorly maintained chain link fences with barb wire on top;
- Make-shift billboards that are painted on structures and vehicles;
- Litter and debris on the side of rural roadways; and
- Storage of vehicles and equipment near the public rights-of-way.

Score -3.1: Take away the dilapidated chain link fence with barb wire along with the deteriorated tennis courts and this image of the rural landscape would have received a positive rating. If you look closely you can see the Catskills Mountains in the background. Unfortunately, the eye is attracted to those things that dominate the edge of the roadway. Instead of getting a sense of the rural countryside, a driver leaves with the sense that this is a place that has been abandoned and one that may be unsafe.

Score -2.8: This picture captures a seasonally used camper in a poor state of repair. There are a number of properties within the Town of Franklin where property owners have placed campers for seasonal use. In some instances that campers are used during the hunting season, in others for weekend and summer use. It is important that the Town have sufficient regulations in place to guide the placement and maintenance of seasonally used campers so that they don't become an eyesore within the community.

Score -2.5: This image of a rusting stretch of chain link fence received the third-lowest rating of landscape images. In general, images that conveyed poor property maintenance received low scores. Ensuring that property maintenance laws are enforced is an important tool in helping to keep up the appearance in the community.



Concorde Resort – Kiamesha, NY



Poorly maintained and placed camper



Chain link fence in disrepair

Above: Lowest Rated Images

2.3 Comprehensive Plan Survey

The third component of the Public Participation Process was the development of a written Comprehensive Plan Survey. With the assistance of the Delaware County Planning Department, a total of 2,569 **surveys** were mailed to all property owners in the Town and Village of Franklin. The County used a mailing list developed by the real property tax office and the voter registration list. A total of 387 surveys were completed for a response rate of 15.06%.

The purpose of the survey was to get public input on the development of the Comprehensive Plan and their insights on a variety of issues. The Town also welcomed the input from Village residents through the written survey. While the Village is not covered by the Comprehensive Plan, there is a symbiotic relationship between the Town and Village and the Town Board felt it important to include Village residents for this reason. Also included in the survey responses were second homeowners in the Town.

Overview of Survey Responses

The majority of respondents lived in the Town of Franklin –outside the Village (68.56%) followed by second homeowners (15.72%), and residents within the Village of Franklin (12.74%). The remaining 2.98% lived elsewhere in Delaware County. A total of 49.32% of the respondents were long-time residents who have lived in the Town of Franklin for more than 20 years.

When asked how they used their property, most respondents (75.61%) said as their primary residence followed by (17.89%) as their second-home. Agriculture and Forestry was another important use with (8.13%) of respondents citing that they operated a farm, (20.33%) conducting some farming, and (10.57%) having lands in forestry management.

Respondents were asked to rate various aspects of the community by their importance to them. The most often cited issue of importance was protecting private property rights (72.63%) followed by preserving the rural character of the Town (68.56%) and the provision of community services such as fire and highway (67.48%). Other very important issues for residents included: appearance of town (59.08%), protection of natural resources (61.52%) and preserving farming as an industry (52.30%).

When asked whether the Town should direct growth to existing centers (42.01%) said yes, (25.20%) said no, and (22.49%) had no opinion. Residents were asked whether the Town should adopt additional landscaping and design standards for new development (60.70%) responded yes, (20.33%) responded no, and (10.84%) had no opinion. When asked where they would prefer to see small-scale retail development (60.17%) answered the Village of Franklin or hamlet of Treadwell, (21.14%) anywhere along a County or State Road, (43.36%) in designated areas along County or State Roads and (22.49%) anywhere in Town.

“The most often cited issue of importance was protecting private property rights (72.63%) followed by preserving the rural character of the Town (68.56%).”

Respondents were permitted to check more than one response for this question which is why the totals exceed 100%. Still, the responses clearly show a preference by a solid majority of the residents to allow for new commercial growth but to provide some design standards and to limit the size of new commercial businesses

When asked where light industrial uses should be permitted, an overwhelming majority (77.78%) said within designated areas along County or State Road. The clear preference was to identify sites outside of the existing centers on County or State Road, but not to allow such uses in existing centers or just anywhere in the Town.

People were asked if the Town should improve local land use regulations with respect to certain activities. Eighty-three percent indicated that protecting the right to farm was an area that the Town should protect. Protecting natural resources was a close second with (82.66%) followed by the right to timber (80.49%). A summary of the responses follows:

▪ Right-to-farm	83%
▪ Natural resource protection	82%
▪ Right-to-timber	80%
▪ Regulate junk vehicles	80%
▪ Protection of historic resources	80%
▪ Placement of mobile homes	73%
▪ Cell tower regulation	69%
▪ Design of commercial buildings	68%
▪ Regulating wind power	65%
▪ Placement of campers	65%

Important Issues Related to Agriculture

Survey respondents were asked how concerned they were about farming and in particular the subdivision of large properties. Fifty-four percent of respondents indicated that they were very concerned, 25.2% somewhat concerned, 13.28% not concerned, with the remaining 1.98% having no opinion. When asked whether they agreed with the statement that “The Town should preserve and protect farms and prime farmland from non-agricultural development,” 57.45% of respondents strongly agreed, 24.93% agreed, and 11.65 strongly disagreed. The vast majority of respondents felt that the Town should take proactive steps to protect farmland. This community sentiment was also reflected in the Community Character Survey and Assets & Challenges exercise as well as through the Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings.

What Type of NEW land uses are Compatible with Franklin’s Existing Environment?

When asked about agricultural, residential and commercial development in the Town, the most appropriate type of land use cited was agriculture (84%) and single-family homes (84%) [total of very appropriate and appropriate]. Other land uses that respondents rated as appropriate included: small-scale retail stores, bed & breakfasts, wind farms to produce energy, golf courses, home-based businesses, campgrounds, restaurants and timber related processing. The survey responses are provided in Appendix B.

“Small-scale retail stores, bed & breakfast establishments, art galleries and recreational uses were among those NEW land uses most-cited as appropriate by respondents to the survey.”

Land uses that were cited by respondents as *inappropriate* to the Town of Franklin included: Townhouses and multi-family dwellings (over 50%), mobile home parks (69.65%), franchise hotel or chain stores (65.58%), mining operations (62.6%), junk yards (78.59%), strip retail centers (65.85%), big box stores (77.51%), and mini-storage units (52.85%).

Rating Aspects of the Community

When asked to rate certain aspects of the Town, respondents overwhelmingly rated as good to excellent; the appearance of farms (77.23%), the school district (76.97%), community services (85.09%) and the appearance of residential properties (84.55%). Attributes rated “poor” included: availability of senior housing (62.6%), transportation (56.91%), availability of shopping and restaurants (48.51%), design of new commercial development (39.57%), and public recreation facilities (32.52%).

Site Plan Review

The majority of respondents (70.73%) felt it “very important” that Planning Board consider the protection of nearby streams and hillsides in their review of new commercial and industrial developments. The impact on scenic resources (62.06%), potential impact on nearby farms (60.98%), potential impact on historic resources (56.84%), screening of nearby residents (52.57%), and driveway placement (52.30%) were rated as “very important” considerations.

Summary

The survey responses show a community that wants to protect its agricultural, natural, and historic resources within a framework that respects private property rights and allows for new economic opportunities. Clearly, there is a preference to encourage small-scale retail and light industry uses and to discourage big box development. While growth is encouraged, there is a general sense that commercial and industrial uses should be located within defined areas and that commercial uses should be located in existing centers. Resident’s were given the opportunity to provide general comments at the end of the survey. A summary of other issues cited by respondents is provided below:

Keep rural character of town	25
Better property maintenance [code enforcement]	15
Better road maintenance	14
Improve tax base [clean industry]	12
Support/preservation of Small Farms	11
More recreational activities	10
Small café in Town/restaurant/shops	8
Too much regulation - property rights	7
Better sign & landscaping standards	4
Historic preservation	3
No mobile homes	3
Active adult 55/senior housing	2
Better public transportation	1
More acreage for lots along CR/SR	1
Ridgeline protection	1
Improve Route 21	1
Oppose re-alignment of Route 21	1

“The survey responses show a community that wants to protect its agricultural, natural, and historic resources within a framework that respects private property rights and allows for new economic opportunities.”

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3.0 Historical & Regional Context

The Town is located in the north central portion of Delaware County with its northernmost boundary abutting Otsego County. The Town encompasses a total land area of 81.65 square miles, of which 81.45 square miles is comprised of land and the remaining 0.11 square miles is land under water.

The Dutch were the first Europeans to settle in the area now comprising the Town of Franklin. They settled in the Ouleout Valley or the land of “rapid waters” as it was called by Native Americans. During the 1790’s and early 1800’s there were three settlements in the Ouleout Valley: Leonta Corners; Franklin and Bartlett Hollow. Early travel routes to the Town of Franklin were through the Delaware River and Susquehanna River Valleys.

The Delaware River Valley was also a major transportation route to transport goods from the Catskills down the Delaware River via Walton and onto Philadelphia. One of the earliest exports was the large pine trees that were abundant in the Town. These were taken to Walton where they were then floated down the Delaware River to Philadelphia where they were used in the construction of ship masts.

Tanneries were another early industry in the Town. The abundance of forests, coupled with an abundance of water power, made the Town an ideal setting for the tannery industry. The next phase of settlement was influenced by the construction of the Catskills Turnpike in 1802.

“Early settlers in this area were families, often from Connecticut, who had crossed the Hudson River and journeyed through the Catskills Mountains. In wagons drawn by horses or oxen, they followed the *Catskill Turnpike*. The Turnpike connected Catskill to Wattles Ferry on the Susquehanna River in what is now Unadilla. The road was of great economic importance in the economic development of the region. Taverns and inns were opened along it to accommodate stage passengers and those who were transporting goods. East Franklin soon had a hotel at the crossroads.”¹

By the 1820’s there were thirty water-powered mills on the Ouleout Creek or its tributaries. As the settlers slowly cleared the forest, the timber industry gradually gave way to agriculture. “The earliest settlers grew just enough grain for their own use with little surplus, as surplus of grain was hard to get rid of.

¹ Source: Through the Years in the Town of Franklin 1792-1992. In 1895, East Franklin’s name was officially changes to Treadwell.

Land Area			
	Total Area	Water Area	Land Area Sq. Miles
Delaware County	1,468.04	21.67	1,446.37
Town of Franklin	81.65	0.11	81.45
Village of Franklin	0.34	0	0.34
Remainder of Franklin Town	81.21	0.11	81.10

“The Town of Franklin, New York was formed in 1792 from the Town of Harpersfield by an Act of the State Legislature.”

The nearest grist mills were in Schoharie, Cherry Valley, Harpersfield and Sidney and the lack of good roads made them inaccessible. However, with the building of distilleries, large amounts of grain were being harvested. Corn not only fed people and cows, but was used in distilleries. The Town exported thousands of gallons barrels of whiskey to Philadelphia.” Source: *Through the Years*.

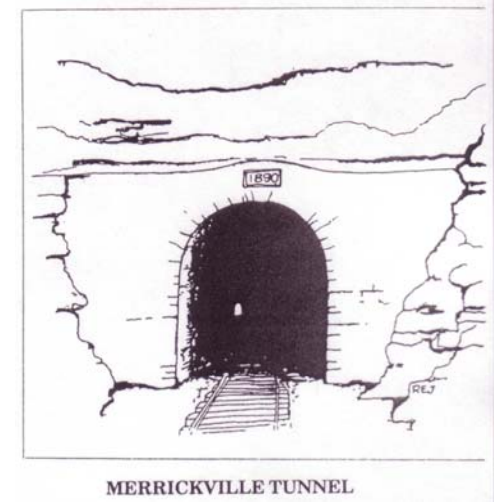
In 1836, the largest settlement in the Town - Franklin was officially incorporated as a Village and the Franklin-Oneonta Turnpike constructed. The Town of Franklin reached its peak population of 3,275 persons in 1860. With the decline in the distilleries and labor intensive horticulture, the Town’s population began a slow but steady decline.

After the Civil War, dairying became the major agricultural industry in the Town. In 1866, one of the first cheese factories in New York State was built in Bartlett Hollow. Creameries were also developed within the Town. By 1879, dairy became the major industry in the Town as evidenced by the local newspaper of the day *The Delaware County Dairyman*. With the arrival of the O&W railroad and completion of the Merrickville Tunnel in 1890, the dairy industry would gain an important transportation link to New York Metropolitan markets. This would further fuel growth in the dairy industry.

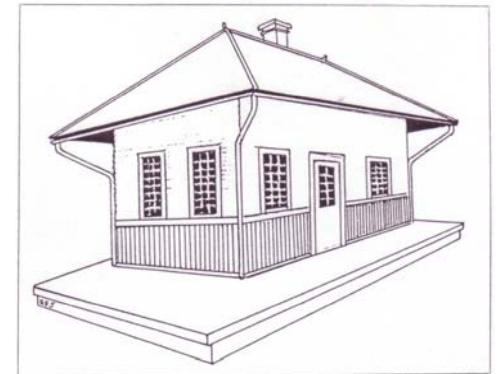
Dairy products from Franklin were transported to Merrickville where they could be picked up by the O&W’s milk trains and delivered to larger markets. Even with the growth of the dairy industry, the Town’s population would continue to steadily decline until 1940 when it dipped to 1,995 persons. By 1956, all operations would cease on the O&W railroad. From this point forward, the trucking industry would provide market access for farmers.

In the early part of the Town’s European settlement, the river valleys provided the main travel routes to markets. Later on, the Catskill and Franklin-Oneonta Turnpikes provided the primary means of access to the Town. By the late 1800’s passenger and freight rail improved access to the Town of Franklin. Today, roads once again are the primary means of access.

The Town of Franklin still enjoys an important position in the surrounding region and has retained much of its dairy industry. Today, New York State Routes 357 and 28, and County Routes 21 and 16 are the primary arterials that link the Town of Franklin to the surrounding region. The Town is also close to Interstate 88 with access via Oneonta or Unadilla. Unlike many communities across New York State, the Town of Franklin has managed to retain much of its historic and agricultural character.



MERRICKVILLE TUNNEL



MERRICKVILLE DEPOT

Source of Images: Through the Years in the Town of Franklin 1792-1992.

Evidence of its agricultural heritage can be seen in its historic building stock, its working farms, and bucolic landscape. The Village of Franklin created a Historic District in 1984 that is now part of the National Register of Historic Places. There are a variety of other properties in the Town that are listed on the National Register. There are also a number of beautiful working farms along the Route 357 corridor and elsewhere in the Town. The Ouleout Creek Valley provides one of the most picturesque settings within the Western Catskills. These are assets that can one again provide the foundation for prosperity.

For every season there is a change. Town of Franklin residents' can look fondly upon their past and learn from it as they plan for the future. There is a unique opportunity in the 21st Century to reconnect the community to its natural and historic resources – this time through heritage and agri-tourism. Developing niche value-added products for its dairy industry such as on-farm cheese production could strengthen both the dairy and tourism industry in the Town. Marketing products from home-based businesses like works-of-art, maple syrup, or honey is another.

4.0 Population & Housing

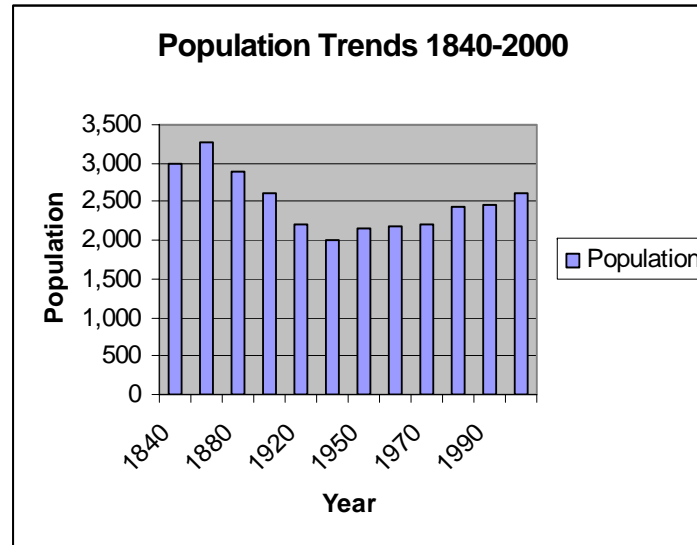
4.1 Population Characteristics

Since 1960, the Town of Franklin has experienced a period of moderate growth. During this time, the growth rate has averaged 4.74%, nearly double the 2.51% growth rate for Delaware County. Between 1960 and 2000, the population in the Town (including the Village of Franklin) increased from 2,202 persons to 2,621 persons, or a 419 person increase.

This increase reflected a healthy transition from a prolonged period of population decrease in the Town. In fact, the Town's peak population of 3,275 persons was reached a century before in 1860. Even today, 145 years later, the population is well-below the peak population.

The Town of Franklin represents 5.45% of the County's population, a percentage that has increased over time as the Town's growth rate has outpaced the County's. The 2004 Census, however, estimates that the Town's population has declined since 2000. The 2004 Census estimate places that Town's population at 2,543 persons, or a 2.97% decrease. The County's population was estimated to have decreased to 47,531 persons in 2004, a 1.08% decrease. Reversing the trend of population loss will require policies that strengthen the economic and social vitality of the community. Heritage and cultural tourism is one industry that is growing.

Year	Town of Franklin		Delaware County	
	Population	Percent Change	Population	Percent Change
1950	2,156	NA	44,420	NA
1960	2,183	1.25	43,540	-1.98
1970	2,202	0.87	44,178	1.47
1980	2,431	10.40	44,824	1.46
1990	2,471	1.65	47,225	5.36
2000	2,621	6.07	48,055	1.76
2004	2,543	-2.97	47,531	-1.08
Median Age 2000	41.1		41.4	



Year	Pop.	% Chg.
1840	3,000	
1860	3,275	9.17
1880	2,900	-11.45
1900	2,625	-9.48
1920	2,200	-16.19
1940	1,995	-9.32
1950	2,156	8.07
1960	2,183	1.25
1970	2,202	0.87
1980	2,431	10.40
1990	2,471	1.65
2000	2,621	6.07

Providing accommodations for visitors to stay within the Town of Franklin will help to maximize the benefit from growth in this industry. Bed & Breakfast establishments are, perhaps, the most appropriate way to create visitor rooms within the Town. B&Bs are small-scale businesses that would compliment the rural and historic character of the Town.

The median age of Town of Franklin residents in 2000 was 41.1 years. This was slightly lower than the County's median age of 41.4 years. Looking at 1980-2000 population trends reveals that the Town's population is growing older. In 1980, the median age was 32.2 years; by 2000 it had increased to 41.1 years. In 2000, the largest age cohort, the 25-44 year age group, accounted for 25.9% of the population. This represented a slight increase from 1980 when this age cohort comprised 25.5% of the population.

Between 1990 and 2000, the 45-55 age group, increased from 10.6% to 15.4% of the Town's population. This again shows an aging population in the Town. Both the 55-64 and 65+ age groups also increased as a percentage of the overall population of the Town. These trends again point to an aging population which mirrors regional and national trends.

With an aging population comes the need to plan for future services to serve this growing population. Such services may include healthcare, the creation of active senior and/or congregate care facilities, and public transportation for the elderly.

The age cohorts that are losing ground in the Town are the 0-4 and 5-14 age cohorts, which both decreased as a percentage of the Town's population. Continued decline in these age cohorts will translate into reduced school enrollment over time. There was also a decrease from 15.7% to 11.6% in the 15-24 age cohorts, reflecting young persons leaving the community.

It is interesting to note that the Village of Franklin's median age is 37.8 years, far lower than the Town or County.

Median Age of Population	2000
Delaware County	41.4
Town of Franklin	41.1
Village of Franklin	37.8

Population by Age 1980 & 2000 Town of Franklin, New York				
Age Cohort	1980		2000	
	Population	% Distribution	Population	% Distribution
0-4	213	8.8	139	5.3
5-14*	377	15.5	372	14.2
15-24	381	15.7	303	11.6
25-44	620	25.5	679	25.9
45-54	258	10.6	403	15.4
55-64	253	10.4	294	11.2
65+	329	13.5	431	16.4
Total	2,431	100	2,621	100
Median Age	32.2		41.1	
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1980 & 2000</i>				

The average household size in the Town of Franklin is slightly higher than that of Delaware County and the Village of Franklin. According to the 2000 Census, the Town had an average household size of 2.57 persons, the Village 2.47, and the County 2.39. Larger household sizes are common in rural farming communities and this probably explains the larger household size within the Town. Another factor relates to the presence of extended families on farms – grand parents, parents, and children. Although less common, this household relationship still exists in rural communities.

Like the County of Delaware, the Town of Franklin has a relatively homogeneous population. In 2000, Delaware County had a population that was 96.4% white with a minority population of 3.6%. The racial composition for the Town of Franklin was 98.5% white with a minority population of 1.5%.

The population density in the Town is comparable to Delaware County. In the Town, there are 32.2 persons per square mile versus 33.2 for Delaware County. Within the Village of Franklin, however, the population density is far higher with a density of 1,166 persons per mile. The total land area of the Village is .34 sq. miles with a population of 402 persons. The Town should allow for higher density development through clustering, however, the provision of central sewer and water may be necessary to achieve the higher densities.

	Density Sq. Mile		
	Year 2000 Population	Persons Per Sq. Mi	Housing Units
Delaware County	48,055	33.2	20
Town of Franklin	2,621	32.2	16.8
Village of Franklin	402	1,166.0	559.8
Remainder of Franklin Town	2,219	27.4	14.5

Average Household Size	2000
Delaware County	2.39
Town of Franklin	2.57
Village of Franklin	2.47

“The Village of Franklin had a population density of 1,166 persons per square mile. This density is higher than the Village of Delhi which had a population density of 812 persons per square mile.”

	Race and Hispanic Origin Year 2000					
	Delaware County		Town of Franklin*		Village of Franklin	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
Total	48,055	100.0	2,219	100.0	402	100.0
White		96.4	2,193	98.5	397	98.5
Black		1.2	18	0.7	3	0.5
American Indian		0.3	0	0.2	1	0.0
Asian		0.5	3	0.0	1	0.0
Native Hawaiian or PI		0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Some Other Race		0.5	5	0.7	3	0.7
Hispanic		2.0	16	0.2	3	0.7

* That portion of the Town excluding the Village of Franklin.
 Note: Race and Hispanic Origin are separate classifications. A person of any race might also be of Hispanic Origin

4.1.1 Years of Education

The 2000 Census indicated that 82.8% of the Town's population aged 25 years or more has at least a high school diploma. This represented an increase over 1990 when only 76.6% of the Town's population had a high school diploma. The educational attainment rate in the Town is also higher than that of Delaware County where 79.9 percent of the population had at least a high school diploma in 2000.

According to the 2000 Census, at least 9.4% of Town residents possessed an Associates Degree. This was an increase over 1990. Those residents with a Bachelors Degree comprised 11.3% of the Town's population over 25 years of age – a 49.6% increase over 1990.

The Town's educational attainment rate in 2000 with respect to those earning a bachelors degree or better was 18.2% slightly higher than the County rate of 16.6%.

All of these numbers point to improved educational attainment among persons 25 years or more in age. They also show, that overall, the Town of Franklin has a higher educational rate than that of the County overall.

Businesses looking to locate in a community will first want to know what the available labor pool is and its educational attainment. Those persons 25 years of age and over are also a major component of a community's workforce. The higher educational attainment in the Town is a competitive advantage that it can market.



A.L. Kellogg School – Treadwell, NY

Educational Attainment	Town of Franklin, NY Trends from 1990-2000				Delaware County Trends from 1990-2000				Percent Change	
	1990		2000		1990		2000		TOWN	COUNTY
		%		%		%		%		
<i>Persons 25 Years and over</i>										
Total	1,659	100.0	1,813	100.0	30,350	100.0	33,070	100.0	9.3	9.0
Less Than 9th Grade	86	5.2	65	3.6	2,620	8.6	1,885	5.7	-24.4	-28.1
9th-12th, no diploma	302	18.2	244	13.5	5,286	17.4	4,776	14.4	-19.2	-9.6
High school graduate	692	41.7	679	37.5	11,599	38.2	12,353	37.4	-1.9	6.5
Some college, no degree	205	12.4	324	17.9	4,268	14.1	5,600	16.9	58.0	31.2
Associates degree	149	9.0	171	9.4	2,580	8.5	2,956	8.9	14.8	14.6
Bachelors degree	137	8.3	205	11.3	2,367	7.8	3,139	9.5	49.6	36.9
Graduate or professional	88	5.3	125	6.9	1,630	5.4	2,361	7.1	42.0	30.0
Percent high school graduate or higher	76.6		83.0		74.0		79.9		8.4	8.0
Percent bachelors degree or higher	13.6		18.2		13.2		16.6		33.8	25.8
<i>Source:</i> U.S. Census Bureau										

4.1.2 Incomes

Census data gathered during the 2000 Census [1999 data] indicates that the Median Household Income for the Town of Franklin was \$35,417 compared to \$32,461 for the County as a whole. Within the Village of Franklin, the Median Household Income was considerably lower at \$30,486. By comparison, the State average in 2000 was considerably higher at \$51,691. These numbers demonstrate the need for economic development within the Town and County.

A similar pattern exists when we look at Median Family Income. In 1999, the County's Median Family Income was \$39,695, compared to \$44,519 for the Town and \$36,500 for the Village. There are a much higher percentage of renters in the Village of Franklin than in the Town which, in part, explains the discrepancy between the two municipalities.

Another indicator of economic need is a measure of the poverty level. In 1999, the Census recorded 10.4% of the Town's population as living below the poverty level. In 1999, this number for the Village of Franklin was 13.1%.

In 2000, the Town had 1,378 persons in the Civilian Labor Force consisting of persons 16 years of age and over. Of these, 1,300 were employed and 78 were not employed. In March 2006, the unemployment rate for the Oneonta Micropolitan Statistical Area was 4.9%, the County's rate 4.7% and the State 5.0%.

While there was clearly an economic downturn during the mid to late 1990's, the area has shown signs of economic recovery since 2000. That is reflected in new home construction and the growth in the second home industry. Still, the numerous vacant storefronts in the Village of Franklin and other hamlets in Town along with and high poverty rates point to the need to further advance economic development opportunities in the Town for area residents. Recommendations for doing this are discussed in Chapter 10 Economic Development.

4.1.3 Employment by Industry

In 2000, the largest industry in the Town was Educational & Health Services, representing 26.8% of all employment in the Town. This was comparable to the County at 26.1%. The leading industries in the Town were Retail Trade at 12.0%, Construction at 10.6%, Agriculture & Forestry 9.1%, Manufacturing 8.1%; and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation at 6.2%. There are some interesting trends between 1990 and 2000. For example, the fastest growing sectors of the Town's economy were found in Educational & Health Services, Construction and Public Administration. Declining industries included Retail Trade, Agriculture, and Manufacturing which saw the greatest loss in jobs. Manufacturing declined from 20.3% of the Town's employment base to 8.1%. Construction increased from 8.9% to 10.6%. There were, however, industries that saw growth within the Town between 1990 and 2000.

“In 2000, the Educational & Health industry comprised 26.8% of the Town's employment base.”

Median Household Income 1990	
Delaware County	\$24,132
Town of Franklin	\$23,950
Village of Franklin	\$27,500

Median Household Income 2000	
Delaware County	\$32,461
Town of Franklin	\$35,417
Village of Franklin	\$30,486

Travel Time to Work 2000	
	Minutes
Delaware County	29.3
Town of Franklin	24.8
Village of Franklin	20.1

The industry that gained the largest number of jobs between 1990 and 2000 was the Educational & Health Industry which increased from 269 to 349 persons, representing a 29.7% increase for the Town. With an aging population in the Town, there is an opportunity to grow this industry within the Town.

The Arts, Entertainment & Recreation industry saw the greatest percentage increase in employment. Between 1990 and 2000, persons employed in this industry increased from 2 to 80, yielding an astounding 3,900% increase. Understanding these trends is important as the Town plans for economic growth.

“The Arts, Entertainment & Recreation Industry was the fastest growing sector between 1990 to 2000.”

Employment Characteristics (Age 16 and over)	Town of Franklin, New York Trends from 1990-2000				Delaware County Trends from 1990-2000				Percent Change	
	1990		2000		1990		2000		TOWN	COUNTY
		%		%		%		%		
Total	2,471	100.0	2,621	100.0	47,255	100.0	48,055	100.0	6.1	1.7
Persons 16 Years and over	1,950	78.9	2,026	77.3	36,571	77.4	38,528	80.2	3.9	5.4
In Labor Force	1,332		1,386		21,900		22,230		4.1	1.5
<i>In Civilian Labor Force</i>	1,323	67.8	1,378	68.0	21,862	59.8	22,216	57.7	4.2	1.6
<i>Employed</i>	1,227	92.7	1,300	94.3	20,169	92.3	20,840	93.8	5.9	3.3
<i>Not Employed</i>	96	7.3	78	5.7	1,693	7.7	1,376	6.2	-18.8	-18.7
Not In Labor Force	618	31.7	682	33.7	14,851	40.6	16,298	42.3	10.4	9.7
Unemployment Rate	7.2		5.6		7.4		6.2		-22.2	-16.4
Industry	1,227	100	1,300	100	20,169	100	20,840	100	5.9	3.3
Educational & Health Services	269	21.9	349	26.8	3,967	19.7	5,420	26.1	29.7	36.6
Manufacturing, nondurable goods	249	20.3	105	8.1	3,679	18.2	3,018	14.5	-57.8	-18.0
Retail Trade	203	16.5	156	12.0	3,584	17.8	2,138	10.3	-23.2	-40.3
Agriculture, forestry and mining	147	12.0	118	9.1	1,396	6.9	1,284	6.2	-19.7	-8.0
Construction	109	8.9	138	10.6	1,876	9.3	1,611	7.7	26.6	-14.1
Professional services	51	4.2	71	5.5	1,176	5.8	1,038	5.0	39.2	-11.7
Other Services (except public admin).	51	4.2	52	4.0	1,298	6.4	1,069	5.1	2.0	-17.6
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	42	3.4	38	2.9	808	4.0	755	3.6	-9.5	-6.6
Public administration	32	2.6	67	5.2	808	4.0	1,239	6.0	109.4	53.3
Communications and Information	30	2.4	38	2.9	488	2.4	543	2.6	26.7	11.3
Transportation, warehousing & utilities	22	1.8	51	3.9	557	2.8	764	3.7	131.8	37.2
Wholesale Trade	20	1.6	37	2.8	341	1.7	501	2.4	85.0	46.9
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2	0.2	80	6.2	191	0.9	1,460	7.0	3,900.0	664.4
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</i>										

4.2 Housing Characteristics

The Town of Franklin has experienced a steady increase in the number of housing units. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of housing units increased from 1,223 to 1,371 or a 12.1% increase. This was far higher than the Village, where the number of housing units actually decreased by 1.5%.

Of all the housing units in the Town, 74.6% were identified through the 2000 Census as being occupied. This was lower than the Village rate of 84.5%. One explanation for the discrepancy is that the Town of Franklin has a higher rate of second-home ownership and seasonal dwelling units than the Village. These units, regardless of whether they are constructed for year-round occupancy, are counted as vacant. The County occupancy rate was 66.5%.

An analysis of tenure by occupied housing units also reveals some unique differences between the Town and the Village. Within the Town, 82.6%

of all occupied dwelling units are owner-occupied versus 65% for the Village. One reason for the distinction is that there are a greater number of rental units, including multi-family units, in the Village. Within the County, 75.74% of all occupied units are owner-occupied.

The Town has a relatively high owner occupancy rate compared to the Village and the County. This is also reflected in the differences in median household values. The Town median values in 2000 was \$79,900, the County's \$74,800, and the Village of Franklin's \$74,100. These numbers show the direct correlation between owner-occupancy and housing values.

Median Household Value 2000	
Delaware County	\$74,800
Town of Franklin	\$79,900
Village of Franklin	\$74,100

Median Household Value 1990	
Delaware County	\$67,000
Town of Franklin	\$67,800
Village of Franklin	\$72,200

Median Year Structure Built	
Delaware County	1964
Town of Franklin	1956
Village of Franklin	1940

Town of Franklin, New York Tenure by Occupied Units 1990 - 2000					Village of Franklin, New York Tenure by Occupied Units 1990 - 2000			
Year Round	1990		2000		1990		2000	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
Owner Occupied	759	82.0	847	82.6	111	66.5	106	65.0
Renter Occupied	167	18.0	179	17.4	56	33.5	57	35.0
Total	926	100	1,026	100	167	100	163	100

Housing Characteristics	Town of Franklin, New York Trends from 1990-2000				Village of Franklin, New York Trends from 1990-2000				Percent Change	
Housing Units	1990		2000		1990		2000		TOWN	VILLAGE
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%		
Total	1,223	100	1,371	100	196	100	193	100	12.1	-1.5
Occupied	926	75.7	1,026	74.8	167	85.2	163	84.5	10.8	-2.4
Owner Occupied	759	82.0	847	82.6	111	66.5	106	65.0	11.6	-4.5
Renter Occupied	167	18.0	179	17.4	56	33.5	57	35.0	7.2	1.8
Vacant	297	24.3	345	25.2	29	14.8	30	15.5	16.2	3.4
Seasonal	232	19.0	279	20.4	10	6.0	11	5.7	20.3	10.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The table below shows the makeup of housing units in the Town of Franklin from 1960 through 2000. The Town has seen a dramatic shift over time in the percentage of its housing stock that is comprised of single-family homes. In 1960, 97.3% of all housing units in the Town were single-family. By 1980, this number had decreased to 62.8%. The largest shift in the makeup of dwelling units during this period was the rapid increase in the number of mobile homes which comprised 18.8% of all dwelling units in 1980. By 2000, the pendulum had swung in the direction of single-family homes with 75.8% of the housing stock comprised of single-family homes. Both the number of mobile homes and the percentage of mobile homes dropped in the Town between 1980 and 2000, from 207 units to 206 units. Today, mobile homes comprise 15% of the Town's housing stock which is comparable to the Delaware County rate of 15.9%.

The percentage of multi-family units in the Town in 2000 was 8.8%, well-below the County rate of 12.0%. The majority of multi-family dwelling units in the County were comprised of 2-4 dwelling unit buildings. This was also the case in the Town of Franklin 7.5% of all dwelling units were within 2-4 unit structures.

Within the County, 33.7% of the dwelling units in 2000 were cited as being constructed in 1939 or earlier. Within the Town, this percentage was 44.1%. As of the 2000 Census, the median year that all housing units were built in Delaware County was 1964. For the Town it was 1956 and for the Village 1940. Generally speaking, the dwelling units in the Town are newer than units within the Village, reflecting historical settlement patterns. Overall, 40% of all housing units in the Town were constructed after 1980. This reflects the long-term trend of most new home construction occurring outside the Village.

Median Year Structure Built	
Delaware County	1964
Town of Franklin	1956
Village of Franklin	1940

“Overall, 40% of all housing units in the Town were constructed after 1980 reflecting recent growth patterns within the Town of Franklin.”

Town of Franklin, New York Housing Units In Structure 1960 - 2000											Delaware County	
Year Round	1960		1970		1980		1990		2000		2000	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
One-Family	659	97.3	572	74.3	691	62.8	876	71.6	1,039	75.8	20,609	71.2
Multi-Family	14	2.1	104	13.5	114	10.4	119	9.7	121	8.8	3,475	12.0
Mobile Home	4	0.6	55	7.1	207	18.8	228	18.6	206	15.0	4,599	15.9
<i>Seasonal</i>	NA		39	5.1	89	8.1		0.0	5	0.4	269	0.9
Total	677	100	770	100	1,101	100	1,223	100	1,371	100	28,952	100
<i>Median Value</i>							\$67,800		\$79,900		\$74,800	

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5.0 Natural Resources

The Town is located in the north central portion of Delaware County with its northernmost boundary abutting Otsego County. Surrounding Towns within Delaware County are Davenport and Meredith to the east; Delhi, Hamden and Walton to the south; and Sidney to the west. The Town encompasses a total land area of 81.56 square miles, of which 81.45 square miles is comprised of land and the remaining 0.11 square miles is land under water. The Comprehensive Plan includes an assessment of existing natural resources that represent various environmental systems which, through time, may be affected by human activities. Because of the sensitive natural balance of these systems, it is important that the planning process carefully analyze each system and consider what levels of development should occur within each.

5.1 Geology

The Town's geologic history began some 390 million years ago when the thick wedge of dark mud and sands of the Catskill Delta (along with a few fossil fragments) were deposited beneath the sea by rivers flowing westward from the mountains that were rising to the east of today's Hudson River. These became the gray/green/blue shale and sandstones that make-up the hills of Franklin. Locally, red muds and sands were deposited above sea level where worms and tree roots left their marks.

Sedimentation ended by 360 million years ago. After all these sediments turned to rocks, they were uplifted and faulted to form the Allegheny Plateau and Catskill Mountains while streams cut valleys down into them. Beneath Franklin there may be more than a mile of older sedimentary rocks with those at the bottom 450 million years old. Beginning 1.8 million years ago, successive glaciations scoured this landscape and removed existing soils and weathered rocks. Hundreds of feet below the surface, ice deposited patches of unlayered till (i.e. hardpan), a tough mixture of clay, silt, sand, and stones of all sizes. As the last glacier began melting away 21,000 years ago, water deposited layered clays, sands, and gravels in the valleys. Since then, physical and chemical weathering and plant action has developed inches of soil on top of tens to hundreds of feet of glacial sediments.

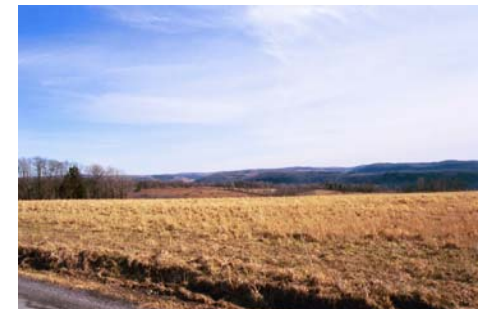
5.2 Elevation and Terrain

Topography is defined as the relief of land surface describing terrain, elevation and slope. An important measure of topography is range of elevation. In Franklin, the range of elevation is just over 1,160 feet. The lowest point is about 1,140 feet above mean sea level (msl) and is found in the Ouleout Creek where it flows into the Town of Sidney. The highest point is 2,300 ft above *msl* located off of Douglas Hall Road in the southeastern corner of the Town. Change in elevation can also affect local weather conditions at temperatures close to dew point or freezing.



**Merrickville Road
Looking Toward Bartlett Hollow**

“The range in elevation in the Town of Franklin is just over 1,160 feet above mean sea level. The lowest point is 1,140 ft and the highest 2,300 feet above mean sea level.”



**VanTassel Road
Looking Southeast**

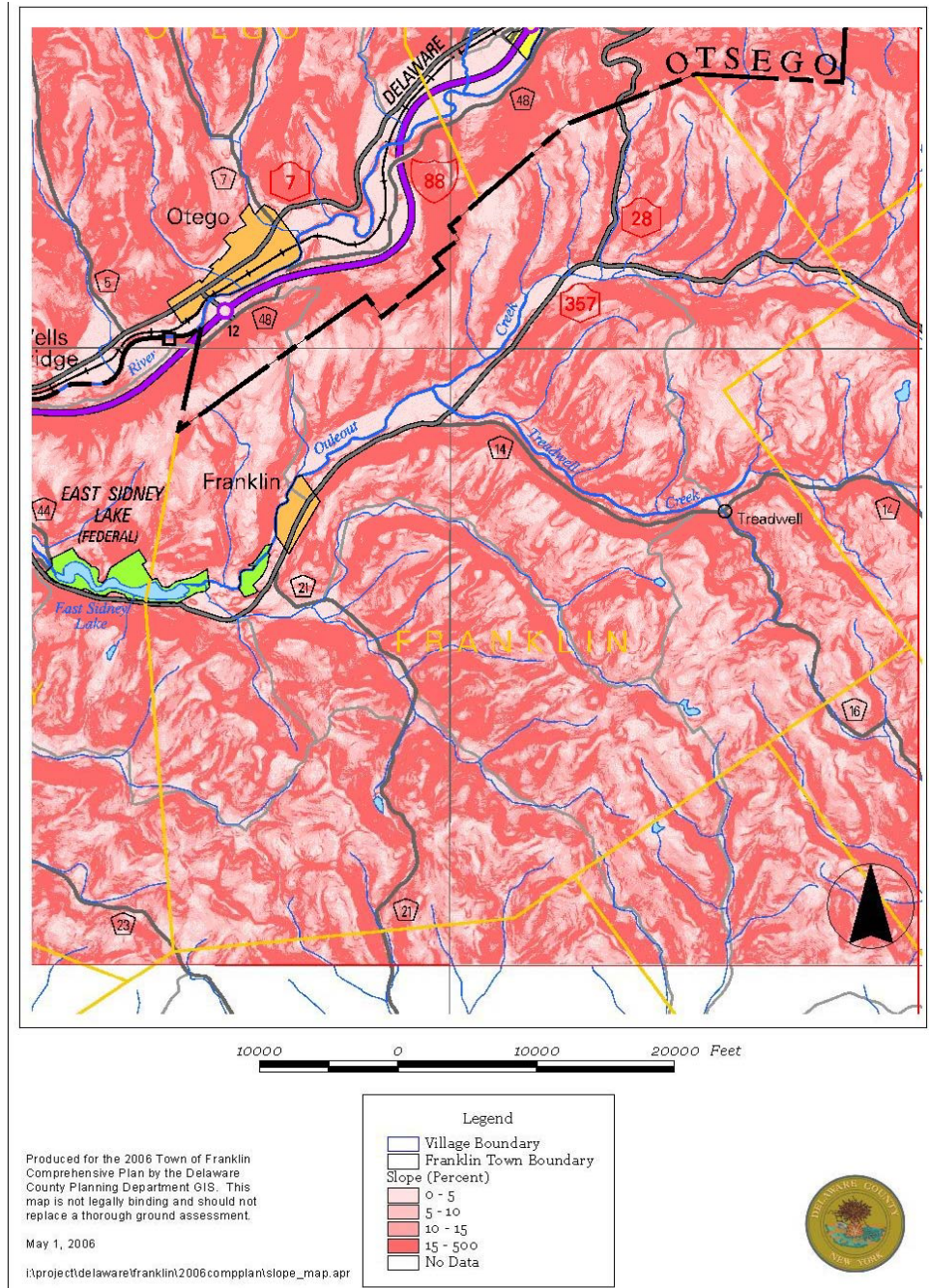
5.3 Steep Slopes

Comprehensive slope information is an essential element in the planning process. Relating land use to topography can help to minimize damage to the environment and to avoid extensive site alterations that can cause destabilization of banks and erosion.

Development on slight slopes usually presents the fewest limitations and can be developed with few engineering problems or harm to the environment. In contrast, development on steep slopes can mean higher construction costs, unstable soils, and sewage disposal problems. An area with a slope of 45° has a slope of 100% [Percent Slope = (Rise/Run) x 100].

The Delaware County Department of Planning developed a Steep Slope Map [to the right] using its Geographic Information System (GIS). Slope indicates the percentage of incline of the land. Those areas with a slope of greater than 8.5° or 15% are generally considered to have slopes too steep for development purposes. Three of the most common difficulties associated with steep slopes are:

- 1) Sewage disposal – soils on steep slopes are shallow, making it impractical to install subsurface disposal systems;

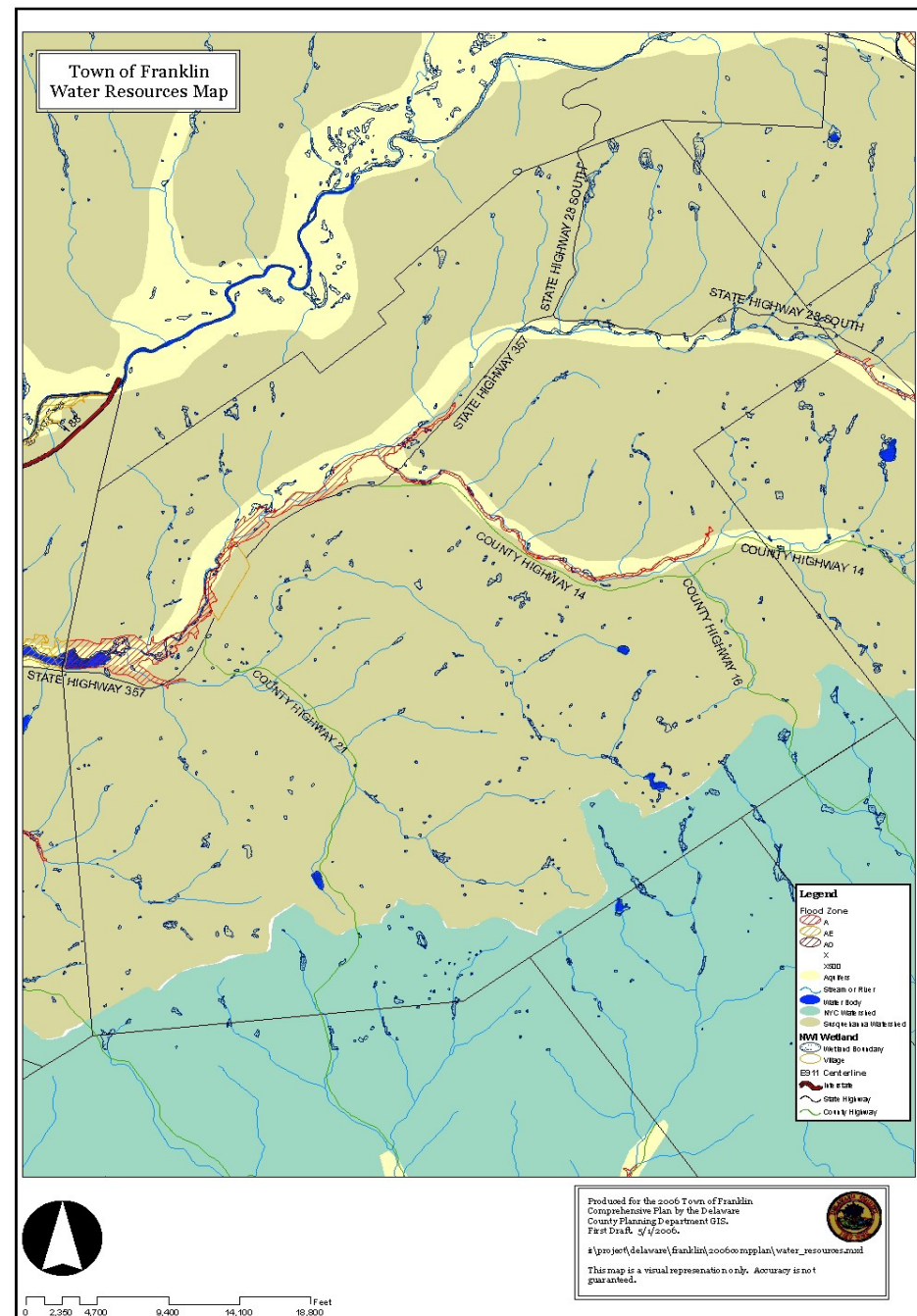


- 2) Drainage – the removal of trees, grading, and erection of buildings will destabilize the bank while increasing runoff. These factors contribute to erosion and sediment control problems; and
- 3) Driveway and street layout – as a general rule, the slope of driveways and roadways should not exceed 6.8° or 12%. Development on steep slopes makes alignments and safe intersections very difficult. They also may result in rapid runoff onto adjoining roads causing erosion and icing problems in the winter.

5.4 Drainage Basins

The Town of Franklin lies mostly within the Susquehanna River Basin. However, the southern edge of the Town is part of the Delaware River Basin which is within the New York City Watershed. No part of the Town drains directly into the Susquehanna, but into the Ouleout Creek and its secondary watershed: West and East Handsome Brooks, Treadwell Creek, and Roaring Brook.

The Susquehanna River Basin Compact, signed into law on December 24, 1970, created the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) as the agency to regulate water resources efforts in the Susquehanna Basin which lies within the states of New York, Pennsylvania, and



Maryland. The mission of the SRBC is to enhance public welfare through comprehensive planning, water supply allocation, and management of water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. To accomplish its mission, the SRBC works to: reduce damages caused by floods; provide for the reasonable and sustained development and use of surface and ground water for municipal, agricultural, recreational, commercial and industrial purposes; protect and restore fisheries, wetlands and aquatic habitat; protect water quality and in stream uses; and ensure future availability of flows to the Chesapeake Bay. On offshoot of the SRBC is the Chesapeake Bay Program.

The Chesapeake Bay Program was created in 1983 and represents a unique regional partnership that directs and conducts the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. In June 2000, the Bay Program partners adopted *Chesapeake 2000*, a Bay agreement intended to guide restoration activities throughout the Bay watershed through 2010. In addition to identifying key measures necessary to restore the Bay, *Chesapeake 2000* provided the opportunity for Delaware, New York and West Virginia to become more involved in the Bay Program partnership. These headwater states now work with the Bay Program to reduce nutrients and sediment flowing into rivers from their jurisdictions. Most of the Town of Franklin lies within the Upper Susquehanna River Basin which is affected by these policies.

In 2003, cap loads were established for phosphorous, nitrates and nutrients that could impact water quality within the watershed. Presently, local governments in Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, as well as the District of Columbia must amend their zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and comprehensive plans to incorporate water quality preservation programs that reflect unique local characteristics. It is likely that these requirements will ultimately apply to communities in the headwater states including New York State which would affect the Town of Franklin.

It is recommended that the Town of Franklin take proactive measures to reduce phosphorous, nitrates and other nutrients by employing strategies that are outlined in the Delaware County Action Plan II for Watershed Protection and Economic Vitality. It is further recommended that the Town participate in the activities of the Upper Susquehanna Coalition and the Delaware County Soil & Water Conservation District related to the Chesapeake Bay Program.

While most of the Town lies within the Susquehanna Drainage Basin, the southern edge lies within the Delaware River Drainage Basin. This area is also within the New York City Watershed. The New York City Watershed Agreement outlines the obligations on the part of New York City and watershed towns as it relates to the protection of water resource in the region.

The New York City Watershed rules went into effect in May 1997 and are designed to control sources of pollution including wastewater treatment plants, septic systems, and storm water runoff. The regulations include restrictions that reduce contaminants and prevent the degradation of the City's water supply. For the area of the Town of Franklin that falls within the New York City Watershed, the following aspects of the New York City Watershed Agreement shall apply:

- New York City DEP must approve all applications for septic systems installed, repaired or replaced within the Watershed;
- No septic systems are permitted within 100 feet of a watercourse or wetland or on slopes greater than 8.5° or 15% [these apply Statewide];
- No impervious surfaces (including parking areas or buildings) are allowed within 100 feet of a watercourse or wetland;
- Certain new commercial and/or industrial uses within the Watershed will require the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan;
- The construction of a new road is restricted –they are not allowed within 50 feet of intermittent streams or wetlands, or within 100 feet of year-round streams;
- The location of new petroleum tanks is restricted.

The County has prepared a comprehensive strategy called the *Delaware County Action Plan* that is designed to protect Watershed areas from contamination while still providing economic opportunities.

The Delaware County Action Plan covers stream corridor management, storm water & flood management, feed management practices for area farmers, and techniques town highway departments can implement to reduce pollution loads due to road maintenance and deicing procedures. The Plan is available at the Delaware County Planning Department and it is recommended that the Franklin Planning Board and Highway Department refer to this useful guide when reviewing development proposals that lie within the New York City Watershed.

5.5 Water Resources

The Town of Franklin's groundwater resources are located within both the unconsolidated stratified deposits [i.e. layered glacial sediments] and the bedrock that is found throughout the Town. The unconsolidated stratified deposits are located mainly along the streams and valleys of the Ouleout Creek and its tributaries. These deposits recharge by stream runoff caused by precipitation. The Town can take proactive measures to protect these resources through stream course buffers and the creation of wellhead protection zones.



Ouleout Creek

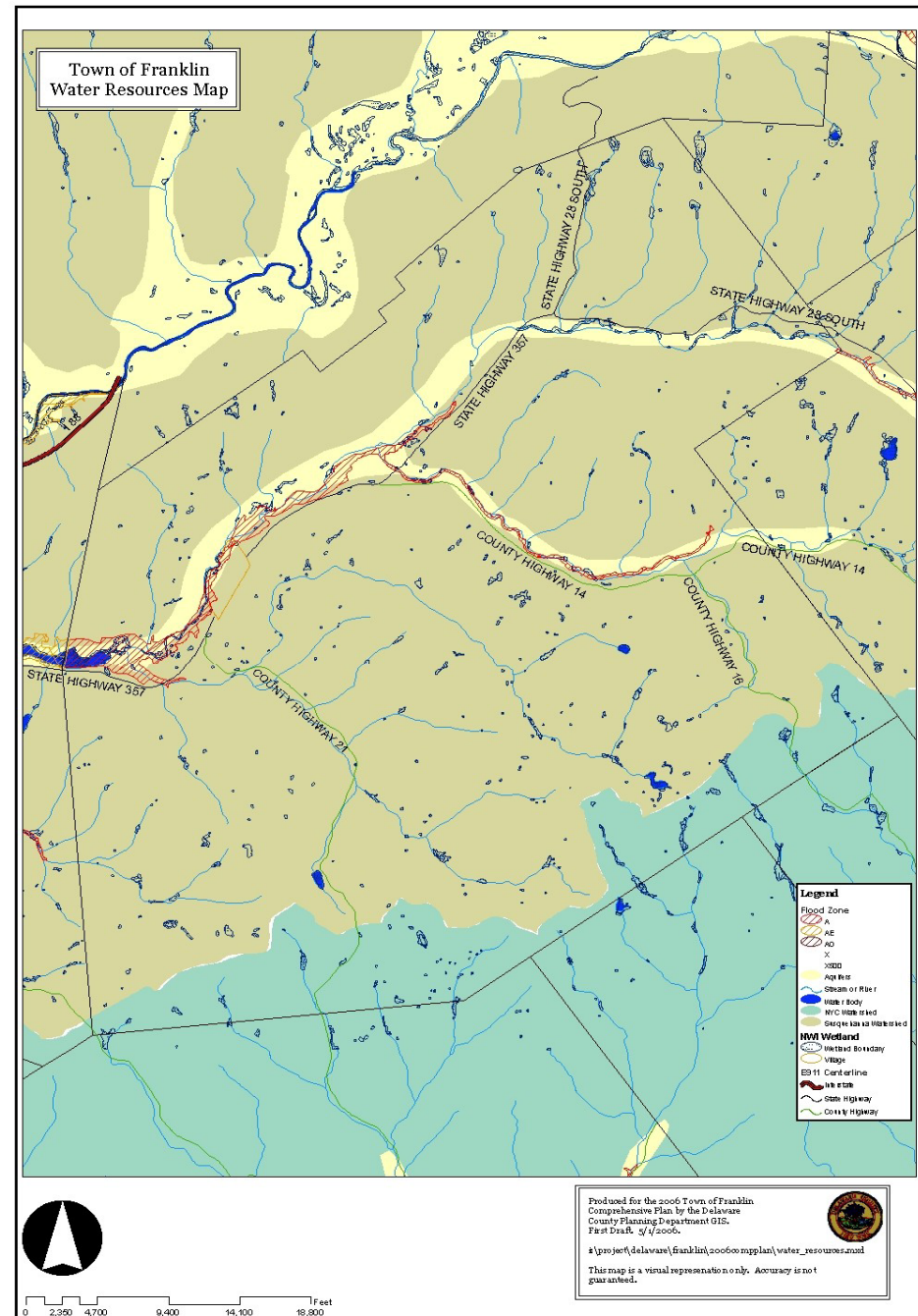
5.5.2 Wetlands

Wetlands are perhaps the most critical of all water resource considerations due to their extreme sensitivity to development. These areas are subject to periodic or continual inundation by water and are commonly referred to as bogs or marshes.

The Water Resources Map to the right shows wetland areas in the Town of Franklin that are 12.4 acres or more in size. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has mapped these resources and regulates these water resources.

In addition to NYSDEC wetlands, there are also Federal wetlands in the Town that are protected under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. These are regulated by the Federal Army Corps of Engineers and are shown on the National Wetland Inventory maps.

Wetlands serve an important function cleansing water. They also serve a vital function in retaining large amounts of runoff during the spring thaw or major storm events. In this respect, wetlands help to reduce peak flood flows and decrease flood damage. All proposed development within the vicinity of DEC and federal wetlands must comply with the regulation of the respective authority. The Planning Board must ensure that applicants adhere to these standards.



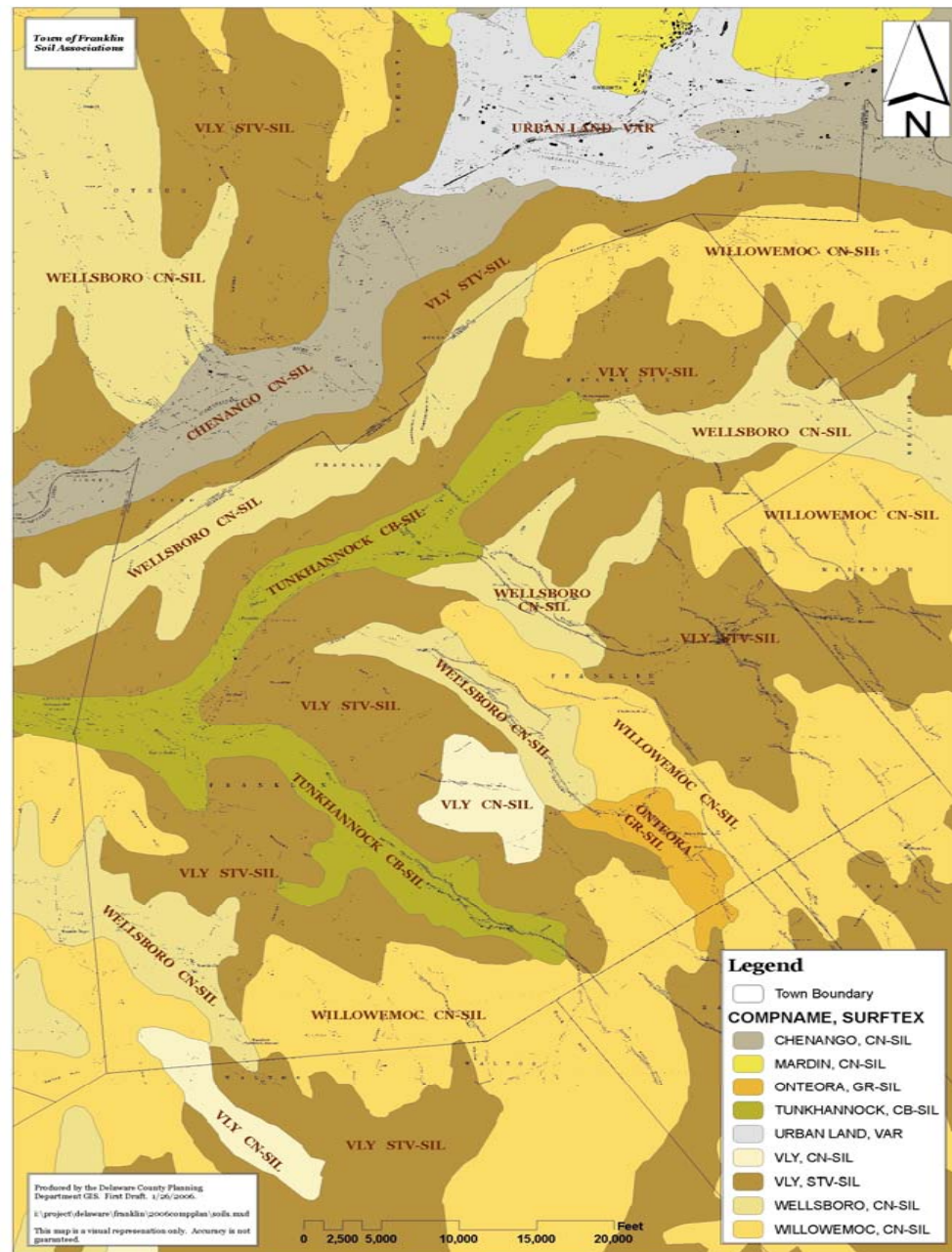
5.6 Soils

Proper siting of development must include an analysis of soil types within a community. Soils differ according to variations in composition, particle-size gradation, and compaction which control permeability, porosity and strength. Each of these factors and depth to bedrock is important in determining how much and what kind of development the land is capable of supporting. Factoring in the specific soil conditions in a community can be useful in directing growth to areas that can support development without high construction costs.

Soil porosity and permeability is a major consideration in determining development capability. This is particularly important when considering the feasibility of on-site septic systems. Such systems installed on soils with improper drainage may result in contamination of groundwater and runoff into public water supplies or bodies of water used for recreational purposes. In low-lying areas, where drainage occurs too slowly, certain types of development can result in flooded homes and roads.

The Town of Franklin's topsoil can be classified into two broad categories as follows:

Silt Loams – These soils tend to be characterized by inadequate permeability and seasonal high water tables.



Gravel Loams - These soils are characterized by permeability adequate for subsurface disposal but can be subject to a variety of limitations including flooding, slopes and seasonal high water tables.

A large portion of the Town contains the *VLY Series* of soils which consist of moderately deep, well-drained or somewhat excessively drained soils formed in till. These soils are on glaciated bedrock uplands with a depth to bedrock range from tens of feet on hillsides to hundreds of feet in valleys. These soils formed in till that is derived from sandstone, siltstone and shale.

Understanding the characteristics of soils is important in the placement of septic systems. New York State Department of Health standards suggest that soils with the following characteristics be excluded from consideration for subsurface sewage systems:

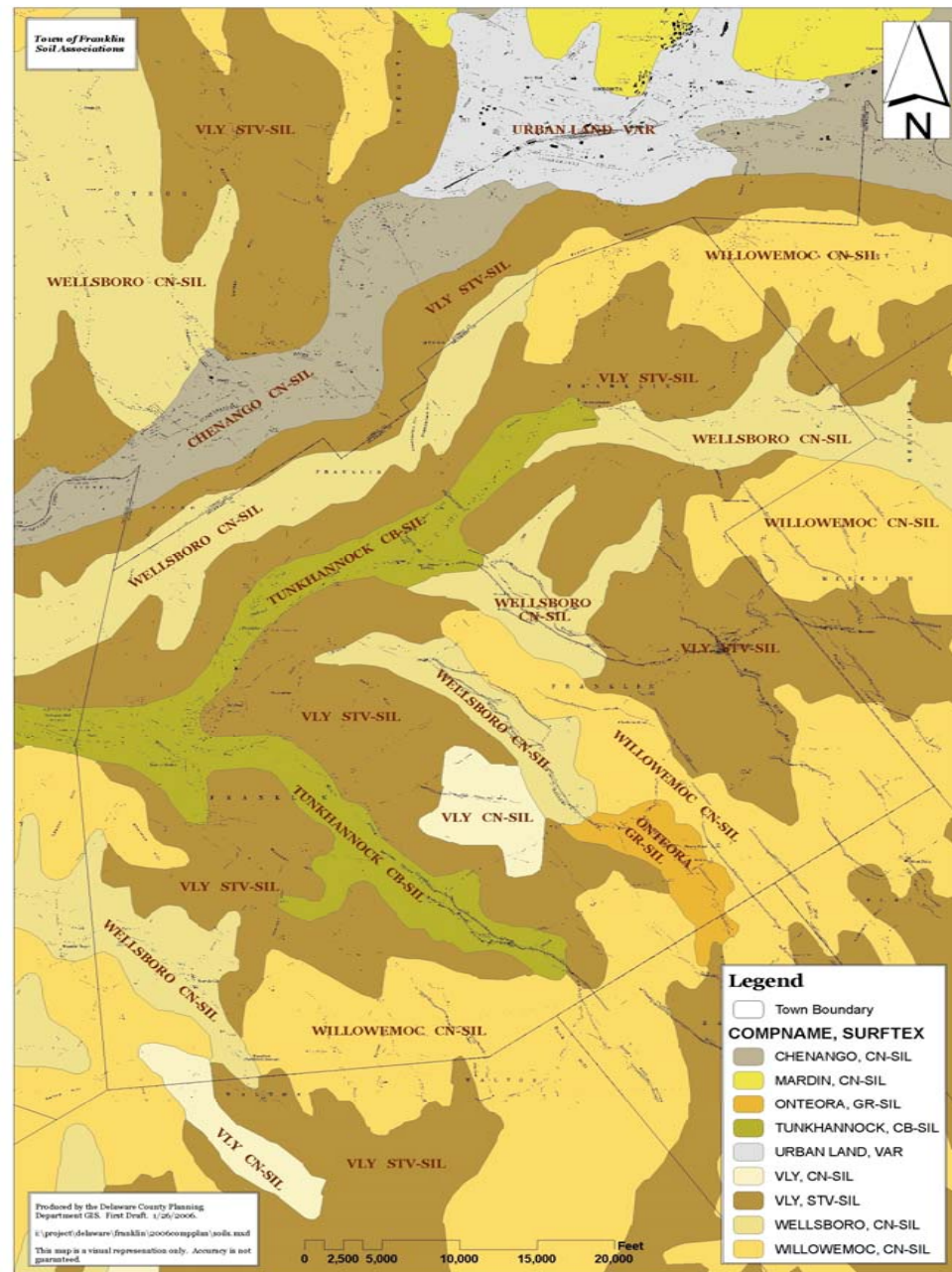
Soils with a depth to seasonal high water of less than 48 inches;

Soils with depth to bedrock or hardpan of less than 48";

Floodplain soils; and

Soils with slopes greater than 8.5° or 15%.

Soils associated with the Town of Franklin and their general characteristics are provided in the following pages.



Soil Association	Slope Range	Drainage Class	Agricultural Capability Class	Typical Uses and Characteristics
ONTEORA – Coarse-loamy mixed				Many areas are forested or idle; a few small areas are used for hay or pasture. Native trees include hemlock, red maple, birch, beech and spruce.
Very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils formed in till derived from sandstone, siltstone and shale.	0-15%	Somewhat Poorly	Onteora silt loam- <i>meadow</i> .	
TUCKHANNOCK – Loamy-skeletal				Most gently sloping areas are cleared and used for general farm crops and some truck crops. Wooded areas contain maple, black cherry, beech, ash, oak, hemlock and white pine.
Very deep well drained to somewhat excessively drained soils formed from water-sorted glacial material derived from reddish sandstone, siltstone and shale.	0-60%	Well Somewhat Excessively	Tuckhannock gravelly loam – <i>cultivated</i> .	
WELLSBORO SERIES - Coarse-loamy mixed				Many areas have been cleared and are used for growing hay, small grain, pasture, and potatoes. Some are idle. Woodlots contain sugar maple, American beech, red oak and white pine.
Very deep, deep, moderately well and somewhat poorly drained soils formed from till derived from reddish sandstone, siltstone and shale.	0-50%	Moderately well Somewhat Poorly	Wellsboro silt loam – <i>cropland</i> .	
WILLOWEMOC SERIES - Coarse-loamy mixed				Cleared areas are used for corn, hay and pasture. Many areas are forested or are idle. Native trees include sugar maple, red maple, beech, ash, birch, and hemlock.
Very deep to moderately well drained soils formed in till derived from sandstone, siltstone and shale.	0-35%	Moderately Well	Willowemoc silt loam – <i>idle</i> .	
VLY SERIES - Loamy-skeletal				Most of the soils are forested or used for unimproved pasture. Many steeper areas have never been cleared. Native vegetation is red maple, beech, white pine and black cherry.
Moderately deep, well drained or somewhat excessively drained soils formed from till.	0-70%	Well Somewhat Excessively	Vly channery silt loam – <i>pasture</i> .	

5.7 Recommendations

There are a variety of regulations that Town of Franklin can employ to protect its natural resources including the following:

Do not allow development on slopes that are greater than 15% (steep slopes). Development on slopes that are greater than 15% should be avoided. There are instances, however, where the creation a roadway or access driveway may involve the disturbance of steep slopes over a small portion of a site. If this occurs, a sediment & erosion control plan should be provided.

The New York State Forestry Best Management Practices Management Practices manual should be used as a guideline in protecting steep slopes during forestry operations. It is recommended that the Town require adherence to these guidelines with respect to forestry operations.

Where proposed development involves grading of the site or cutting and filling operations, require a Sediment & Erosion Control Plan. Generally, development on sites should work with the topography of the site and avoid excessive grading of the site. Where grading is proposed, a sediment & erosion control plan should be provided.

Require a SEQRA Long Form EAF for all major subdivisions.

Strictly enforce NYSDEC requirements to maintain a 100 foot setback between development and adjacent watercourses. While this is required under current DEC regulations, it is important that the Town ensure strict compliance with these regulations. During the site plan and special permit review process, applicants must be required to show existing watercourses and required setbacks on their site plans. Such features must also be shown on subdivision plats. Early identification of natural resources will help the Planning Board in its review and ensure protection of these resources.

Restrict the development of buildings and impervious surfaces within the 100-year floodplain. The Town must carefully review of applications for development on lands within the 100-year floodplain will help to prevent future loss of property and life due to flooding.

Provide a density bonus for subdivisions when greater than 25 acres of soils classified as prime and statewide importance are preserved for agriculture. There are many areas within the Town of Franklin where the soils are classified as prime or of statewide significance. The retention of even 25 acres of such soils could be sufficient to provide long-term opportunities for the growing of specialty crops in addition to preserving valuable open space. To encourage the preservation of such resources, the Town could offer a density bonus to developers who are will to keep such lands undeveloped.

Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) in accordance with the NYSDEC State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) general permit should be provided for commercial or industrial developments and major subdivision applications. Developers should be required to provide SWPPP for developments that are likely to have an adverse impact on water quality. SWPPP help to ensure that post-development runoff rates from a site do not exceed the rates that existed pre-development. Such plans also provide for the treatment of runoff and the release runoff at controlled rates to protect the quality of surface waters and prevent flooding from storm events.

It should be noted that New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regulations now require individual Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans and a permit for disturbance of greater than one acre. These provisions apply to house sites with the requirement that post-development runoff levels being close to pre-development levels.

Encourage the use of retention/detention basins that are an integral part of the overall site plan or subdivision plan. Detention basins are dry basins that fill with water during a storm event. They work by delaying the storm water so that it is released at a rate that mimics the predevelopment flow. Retention basins are different than detention basins in that they hold water in a pool rather than just during storm

events. The only outlet in a retention basin is through an emergency spillway that allows the basin to overflow in a controlled manner should it become too full. The Planning Board should require developers to mitigate post-development storm water runoff through the use of detention and/or retention basins. The detention/retention basin should be integral to the site plan layout or proposed subdivision plat.

One advantage of detention basins is that they require little maintenance while serving the purpose of controlling storm water runoff. Retention basins can be an attractive water feature if well-designed and maintained. Retention basins should include native wetland species in order to enhance water quality and to provide aquatic/wildlife habitat. This will allow pollutants to settle at the bottom of the basin, thus removing them from runoff. The activity of plants and other microorganisms within retention basins also help to remove toxins from storm water runoff. Developers should provide a long-term maintenance plan for retention basins.

Require a minimum of 30% of the total lot area to be set aside as open space to remain in its natural undisturbed state for commercial and industrial development. Maintaining as much of the site in an undisturbed state is the best way to control runoff and prevent erosion. The Planning Board should ensure that open space areas are not clear-cut during the development process.

“Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP) in accordance with the NYSDEC State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) general permit should be provided for all commercial or industrial developments and major subdivision applications.”

Work with DEC, NYCDEP and the Delaware County Soil & Water Conservation District to educate landowners about the natural functioning of streams and wetlands in order to mitigate damage to and protect water resources.

Limit the amount of impervious surfaces associated with commercial and light industrial developments. The Town Zoning Law sets the maximum permitted lot coverage for each zoning district as a means of limiting impervious surfaces. However, the definition of lot coverage provides a loophole that could result a very high percentage of the lot being covered with impervious surfaces including parking. As currently defined, “Lot coverage is the portion of a lot are, expressed as a percent, that is covered by the maximum gross section of a building or buildings at finished grade level.” It is recommended that lot coverage is redefined as follows: “That portion of the lot area, expressed as a percentage that is covered by buildings or other impervious surfaces.” The percentage of maximum lot coverage should be redefined accordingly.

Require that 20% of all off-street parking areas are landscaped. Landscaping within parking areas reduces impervious surfaces, provides shade that helps to regulate temperatures, and enhances the aesthetics of the development. As part of the site plan review process, well-designed landscaping plans for off-street parking areas shall be provided.

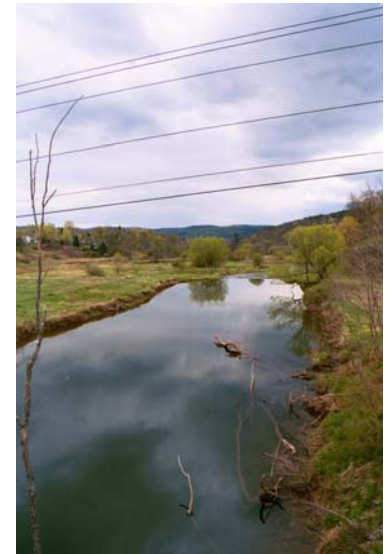
Ensure full compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act for all development proposals.

Ensure strict compliance with The New York City Watershed rules went into effect in May 1997. These rules are designed to control sources of pollution including wastewater treatment plants, septic systems, and storm water runoff. The specific provisions of the agreement that the Town should follow are described on page 35 of this Comprehensive Plan.

Work with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to designate public access points to the Ouleout Creek. There are several sites in the Town of Franklin that lend themselves to the creation of DEC public access points such as this site on Otego Road to the north of the Village of Franklin. Having DEC public access sites in the Town will help to attract fishermen which is good for local businesses. The provision of off-street parking also enhances roadway safety.



“Ensure strict compliance with The New York City Watershed rules went into effect in May 1997.”



Above: Ouleout Creek looking south from Otego Road.

Left: View of Potential Public Access Point to Ouleout Creek from Otego Road looking south toward the Village.

Encourage property owners with 50 or more acres of woodlands to participate in the New York State 480-A Forestry Management Program. New York State offers a tax reduction through Section 480-A of the Real Property Tax Law for owners of woodlands over 50 acres that keep their properties in a forestry management program. Under a forestry management program, cutting of timber is permitted within limits that ensuring a sustainable harvest of timber into the future. Participation in the program will help to ensure the preservation of valuable open space and wildlife habitat within the Town.

Adopt Water Supply Protection Overlay Zones. The purpose and intent of establishing water supply protection overlay zones is to assist in the preservation of public health, general welfare, and safety of the residents of the Town of Franklin. An Overlay Zone will help to ensure the adequate provision of potable water through the elimination or prevention of groundwater contamination in the vicinity of wells that supply public water and other public water supplies.

Do not allow water and sewer line extensions into prime farmlands. The Town should not allow water line extensions into prime farmlands [or if developed in the future sewer line]. Without water & sewer, farmland will be less attractive for residential development – helping to preserve the land for agricultural uses while preserving the natural resource.

Coordinate with a land trust to help acquire and manage conservation easements within the Town of Franklin. A land trust is a not-for-profit organization that plays an important stewardship role with respect to managing lands subject to conservation easements. There a variety of existing land trusts such as the Catskill Center or Open Space Institute that could work with the Town to acquire and/or manage conservation easements. Conservation easements might be sought for linear parks, farmland preservation or the protection of ridgelines which are important view sheds. The Town could also encourage the development of a local land trust organization that could take the lead in monitoring conservation easements that might result from the purchase of development rights, participation in the NYS Conservation Tax Credit Program or other conservation programs.

For minor and major subdivisions, require applicants to show all sensitive environmental features [delineation of wetlands, steep slopes, etc.] on subdivision plat and ensure that such features are protected.

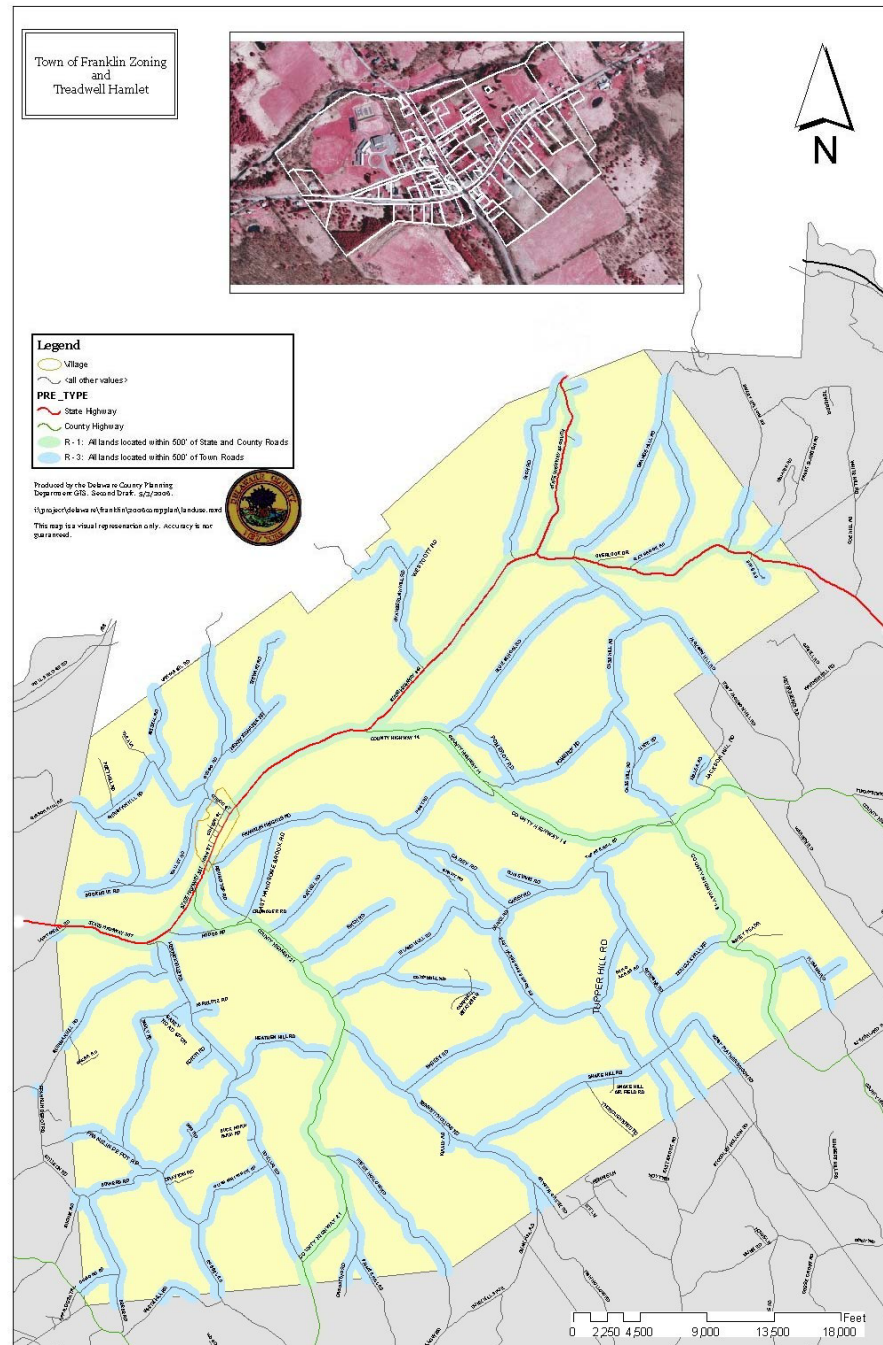
Ensure that soil tests are performed on all lots that are created through the subdivision process to ensure that they can support septic systems while ensuring sufficient separation between septic and wells.

6.0 Transportation

Transportation corridors influence the overall growth as well as the location of specific commercial, industrial and residential developments. As was discussed in Chapter 3.0 Historical and Regional Context, the first phase of the Town's development was influenced by the Ouleout Creek and other waterways that served as major transportation routes as well as sources of water power. Early settlements were clustered along the river valleys.

The Catskill Turnpike was another important transportation corridor affecting the Town's settlement pattern. The Village of Franklin and hamlet of Treadwell grew along this transportation corridor. In 1836, the Franklin-Oneonta Turnpike opened giving the Town important access to the City of Oneonta. The hamlet of North Franklin developed along this route. With the arrival of the O & W Railroad in the 1870's, the density of development within the Town shifted to the hamlets with train depots along the O&W railroad such as Merrickville. The fourth phase of development in the Town of Franklin is now defined by the Town's highways and roadways.

Each and every road or highway in the Town of Franklin plays a part in moving people and goods within and through the Town. Some roads are more important than others and, therefore, it is necessary to assess the future role and function of each road as the Town continues to develop.



6.1 Roadway Classifications & Highways

Highways are generally described by their functional classifications. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) has created a functional classification system for roadways which is described on the next page.

Interstate Highway: This type of highway moves large volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds to and from locations outside the region. Such highways have limited access via designated exits with no at grade intersections. An example is Interstate 88.

Arterial: The function of an arterial is to carry medium-to-heavy volumes of traffic at moderate to high speeds and provided access to major traffic generators. Examples include NY Routes 357 and 28 and County Routes 21 in Franklin.

Major Collector: Provide connections between arterials and local roads at relatively higher speeds [e.g. CR 14/16].

Minor Collector: These roads provide connections between arterials and local roads at comparatively slower speeds and carry moderate volumes of traffic. These include Bennett Hollow, Merrickville, East Handsome Brook and Franklin Heights Roads.

Local: This type of road provides direct access to abutting properties and channels local traffic to collector roads.

Understanding Franklin's roadways in the context of the ITE system is helpful when analyzing transportation needs.

For the purpose of this Comprehensive Plan, we have analyzed the major roadways within the Town of Franklin from the perspective of the Town's existing land use regulations in order to ascertain whether zoning amendments or revisions to subdivision regulations are warranted. The goal is to ensure that specific land uses are directed to roadways that can meet their transportation needs.

It is noted that one of the primary arterials in the Town, Route 21, is currently part of a comprehensive study being conducted by the County DPW and New York State Department of Transportation. Recommendations from the study are being factored into the policies of this Comprehensive Plan.

6.2 Level of Service

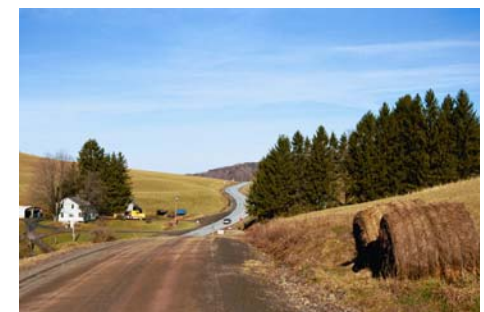
The ITE Highway Capacity Manual provides a description of how well traffic flows along highways and roadways which is referred to as Level-of-Service (LOS). The LOS on roadways is described in accordance with a six-step scale from A-F. A LOS A represents the free flow of traffic and LOS F represents traffic congestion on an area roadway. A brief explanation of each is provided below:



County Route 21 – Arterial Road



State Route 357 – Arterial Road



Palmer Hill Road – Local Road

LOS A: A condition of free traffic flow, with low traffic volumes and speeds at the local speed limit.

LOS B: Is in the zone a stable traffic flow, with operating speeds beginning to be restricted somewhat by traffic conditions, however, drivers still have reasonable freedom to select their speed and lane of operation.

LOS C: Is in the zone a stable traffic flow, but speeds and maneuverability are more closely controlled by higher traffic volumes.

LOS D: Approaches unstable flow, with tolerable operating speeds being maintained though considerably affected by changes in operating conditions due to higher traffic volumes.

LOS E: Level of service E cannot be described by speed alone, but represents operations at even lower speeds than Level D, with volumes at or near the capacity of the highway. Flow of traffic is more frequently interrupted with more stop and go motion.

LOS F: Describes forced flow operation at low speeds, frequent stop and go motion, with high traffic volumes at capacity of the roadway. It should be noted that traffic flow is not dictated by the number of travel lanes alone.

The arterials in the Town are meant to carry large volumes of traffic over long distances. Because these are the better maintained roads they invite development, sometimes to the point where the original purpose of the road is compromised. For example, the number of driveways along the roadway directly affects traffic flow. As a driver enters a roadway they cause oncoming traffic to slow down. A person in a vehicle making a left hand turn may have to stop until the travel lane is free of oncoming traffic. In the latter example, cars behind the vehicle making the left hand turn are required to stop, interrupting traffic flow.

Requiring joint access between adjacent commercial developments is one way to reduce the number of driveways onto a highway thereby ensuring smoother traffic flow. Another is to maintain a minimum distance between such uses. Most existing retail establishments in the Town are small-scale retailers that are located along County or State Highways. Traditionally, these activities have been dispersed throughout the Town which limits local congestion on area roadways. Still, driveway access, provision for off-street parking and sight distance must be considered in the review of all commercial uses to ensure area roadways are not adversely impacted. Additional recommendations for maintaining the level-of-service on the Town's arterials is provided latter in this chapter.



Walker Country Store – CR 21



Ouleout Golf Course on Route 357



Used Car Dealer – State Route 28

6.3 NYS Route 357 – Primary Arterial

New York State Route 357 is the primary arterial that serves the Town of Franklin. Presently, the roadway serves its intended function of carrying large volumes of traffic at high speeds through the Town linking the Town to Unadilla to the west and Oneonta and Delhi [via Route 28] to the east. Care must be taken to ensure that commercial and residential development along this corridor does not reduce the level-of-service on the roadway. The NYSDOT has to approve all curb cuts onto the road and the Town should strive to reduce the number of curb cuts onto Route 357. Where feasible, access to local roads that feed into Route 357 should be encouraged. Adjacent commercial establishment should be encouraged to develop joint access driveways to reduce the number of curb cuts.

Route 357 is a characteristically winding and rolling highway which limits sight distance. Ensuring proper sight distance for all driveways is necessary to maintain traffic flows and to ensure safety. Reducing the volume of traffic that is generated by commercial businesses will also help. This Plan recommends that commercial establishments within the Town be limited to **10,000 square feet** or less. This provision not only ensures that commercial uses fit into the rural landscape of the Town, but also limit the amount of traffic that is generated from such uses. This will help to ensure that the level-of-service on the Town's arterials is maintained to acceptable levels.

6.4 NYS Route 28 – Primary Arterial

New York State Route 28 is the primary arterial that links the City of Oneonta to the Village of Delhi carrying up to 4,550 vehicles per day. It also is the primary link for Town of Franklin residents to these communities. There are a variety of small commercial business presently located along this arterial including a landscaping business, used car dealership, farm implementation dealership and other commercial uses. As was discussed in Section 6.3, the Planning Board should review all requests for commercial businesses along this roadway with an eye toward ensuring the primary function of the roadway [carrying high volumes of traffic at high speeds] is maintained.

It can do so by ensuring that sufficient sight distance and off-street parking is provided to serve new businesses. The Town must also continue to coordinate with NYSDOT to monitor traffic volumes to ensure that an acceptable level-of-service is maintained.

“Route 357 is a characteristically winding and rolling highway which limits sight distance. Ensuring proper sight distance for all driveways is necessary to maintain traffic flows and to ensure safety.”

Route	2002	2005	Percent Change
	Average Daily Traffic	Average Daily Traffic	
State Highway 357 [Del. Co. Line to CR 21]	1,800	1,900	5.50%
State Highway 357 [CR 21 to Leonta]	3,550	3,650	2.80%
State Highway 357 [Leonta to SR28]]	2,500	2,550	2.00%
State Highway 28 [CR 10 Meridale to Route 357]	1,750	1,800	2.85%
State Highway 28 [Route 357 to Otsego County Line]	4,400	4,550	3.45%
County Route 21	2,087		
County Route 16	803		
County Route 14	1,004		

6.5 County Route 21 – Primary Arterial

As was mentioned in Section 6.1, County Route 21 is the topic of a major transportation planning study that is being jointly undertaken by the New York State Department of Transportation and the Delaware County Department of Public Works. The Comprehensive Plan Committee identified a number of issues along this heavily traveled roadway that are being studied within the scope of the Route 21 Study. To begin, the realignment of Bennett Hollow Road with CR 21 is critically important due to the poor roadway geometry and accident history at this intersection. County DPW has identified this as a priority project and initial improvements are slated for spring of 2006. This Plan supports the realignment of this intersection as a means of improving safety. Other intersections that need improvement include Freer Hollow Road and Klug Road with County Route 21.

6.6 Pedestrian Policy

The Village of Franklin and hamlet of Treadwell have a well-connected system of sidewalks that provide for a pedestrian friendly environment within these centers. In some cases, the sidewalks are in need of repair and a capital improvement plan to gradually bring these sidewalks up to current standards should be pursued. Sidewalks provide pedestrians with a well-defined walkway that is separate and distinct from vehicular roadways which enhances public safety.

6.7 Bicycle Policy

Where ever feasible, the Town should explore opportunities to develop designated bike touring routes. There are numerous local roads in the Town that lend themselves to the development of bike touring routes. The Town could work with the County and other entities to create a local bike route guide that visitors could use to travel the local dirt roads in the Town. Such routes could attract eco-tourists and also provide recreational opportunities for area residents.

There may also be an opportunity to designate a rail-trail along the former O&W right-of-way. The segment in Franklin is privately owned by four property owners, but there may be opportunities to obtain conservation easements from property owners to allow for a rail-trail. With a recreation easement from owners, Transportation Enhancement Program funding could be obtained to build a rail-trail along the O&W. A local match would be required.

6.8 Public Transportation

There are existing transportation services for seniors within the Town of Franklin provided through the County Office for the Aging and Social Services. The expectation of providing extensive public transportation in the Town of Franklin, especially the rural, sparsely populated areas, is unrealistic. However, the Town should coordinate with the County to explore public transit options for Town residents.



Bennett Hollow Road – CR 21



Cor-ten Steel Guardrail

6.9 Air Transportation

The Town of Franklin is within 15 minutes of the Oneonta Airport and about 10 miles to the Sidney Airport. These are regional airports that support private, charter, and corporate aviation needs. There are also two private landing strips within the Town. Albany Airport, with commercial passenger service is about one and half hours from Franklin. The reasonable accessibility to these airport centers suggests that the Town need not develop air travel resources of its own.

6.10 Recommendations

- Continue to coordinate with the NYSDOT and County DPW to identify and address functional and safety deficiencies and subsequent solutions for State and County highways;
- Require joint access between adjacent commercial developments to limit the number of driveways onto the highway;
- Ensure sufficient sight distance for all proposed driveways onto roadways to ensure smooth traffic flow and traffic safety;
- Land uses which generate traffic that could ultimately cause road surface problems to existing highways need to be encouraged to locate where roads are adequate to handle such uses;
- Work with County sheriff and NYS Troopers to patrol areas with speeding and/or accident problems;
- The Town should coordinate with County DPW to monitor speeds on County Roads and to assess where adjustments in speed limits may be necessary to improve safety;
- Consider the adoption of rural road standards for *Low Volume Roads*;
- Ensure that new roads are built to Town standards;
- Limit the length of cul-de-sacs to **1,400** linear feet;
- Encourage the State and County to use Cor-ten steel guide rails along highways to protect the rural character of the Town;
- Establish standards for the minimum separation between driveways;
- Limit the maximum permitted size of single retail establishments to **10,000 square feet** to mitigate traffic generation onto area roadways;
- Adopt new road specification standards as part of the revision of the Town's Subdivision Regulations.