

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Introduction

The community services and facilities element of a Master Plan should take into consideration the on-going and future needs of buildings and other types of facilities in order to meet the growing demands of the municipality. The document provides two critical pieces of information for future planning: an inventory of properties and facilities owned by the Town; and a report about the services provided by the Town. The facilities and services section in the Master Plan is required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In accordance with state laws this section identifies and analyzes existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.

Public services, facilities and infrastructure are at the heart of community life. The Town of Franklin does its best to ensure that everyone has a safe and healthy place to grow by providing essential public services. The fire and police departments work to protect the community and provide safety. By building, maintaining, and funding public schools, the Town ensures that children in the Town have access to education. The Town's infrastructure provides safe drinking water and wastewater management. It also provides pathways for transportation and mobility. The community facilities such as the historical museum, senior center, and athletic fields provide thousands of residents with recreational opportunities and support Franklin's quality of life (see Map CS & F-1: Community Facilities).

Public services are resources provided to citizens of the Town by their government directly or indirectly. Public services include the work of the various legislative bodies, officers, departments, boards, and committees that constitute the municipal government. Public facilities provide the space for the administration and implementation of Town services and also serve as community gathering and educational spaces.

A public facility is any Town property that has been developed for a particular purpose, for example; Town hall, library or school. It also includes local utilities such as public water and sewer systems, along with parks, playgrounds and athletic facilities. Together, a Town's buildings, land, and infrastructure allow municipal employees and volunteers to provide basic services. The adequacy of the Towns' facilities for functions they serve depends on many factors. The form and size of local government, the community's land use policies, and most importantly the residents expectations. Providing adequate facilities depends on the communities' ability to raise revenue to support local government operations.

Perhaps one of the biggest challenges of maintaining the facilities and infrastructure and providing public services is funding them in a way that the public supports. The Franklin Town government has actively been seeking ways to decrease the costs of providing municipal services; they have centralized several administrative functions for the facilities, human resources, technology, and accounting departments and implemented an automated payroll system using information technology (IT).⁴⁶ The Town has been proactive in making its buildings energy efficient and has regionalized certain services in order to make them more cost effective.

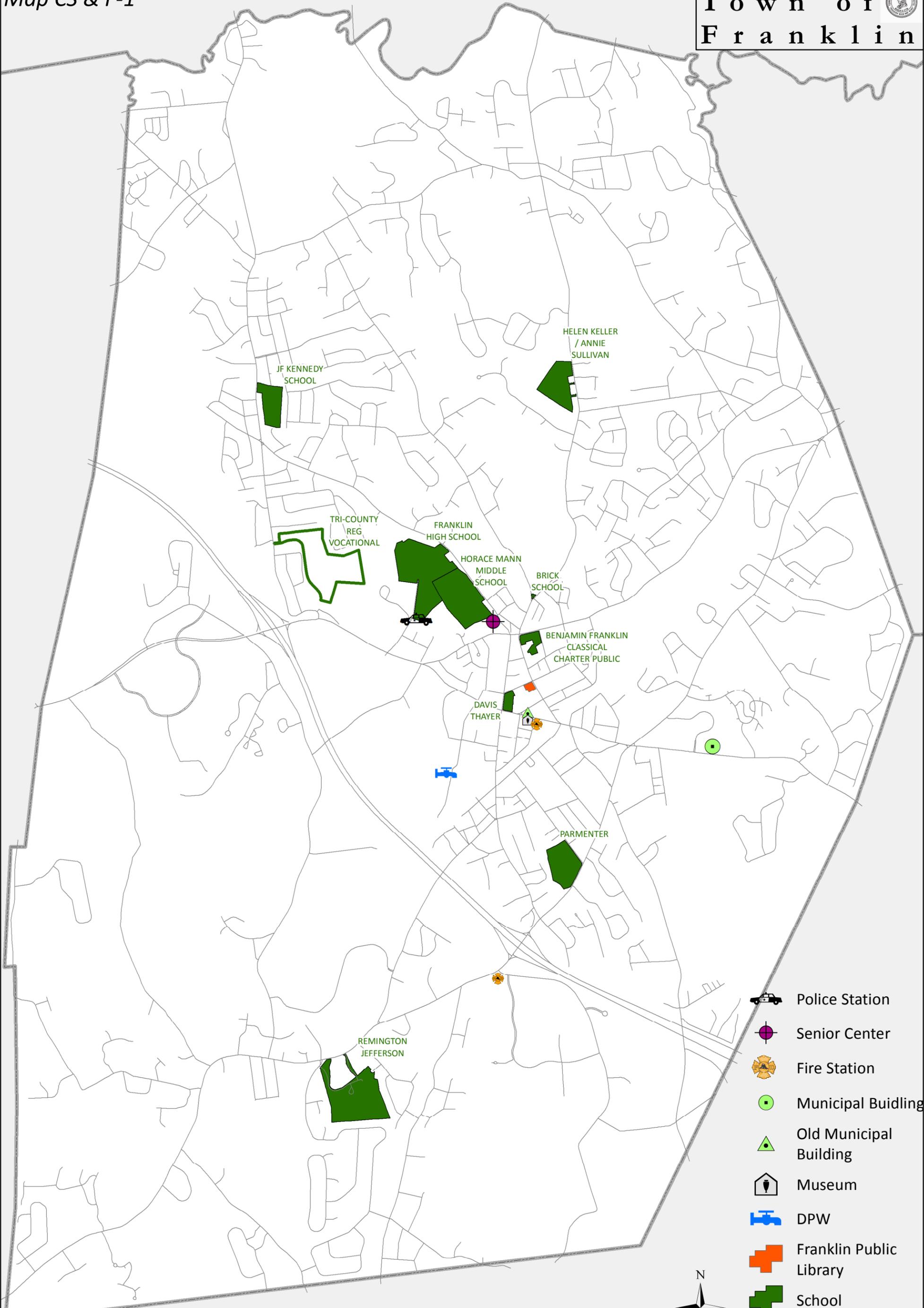
In October of 2009, the Long-Range Financial Planning Committee produced a comprehensive report about the expected need and costs for municipal services over the next five years. The full report is available on the Town website. The Committee's findings have serious implications for the future of municipal services in Franklin.

⁴⁶Franklin Long Range Financial Planning Committee. "Five Year Financial Outlook."

Public Facilities

Map CS & F-1

Town of
Franklin



- Police Station
- Senior Center
- Fire Station
- Municipal Buidling
- Old Municipal Building
- Museum
- DPW
- Franklin Public Library
- School
- Tri-County Reg. Vocational School



It concluded that Franklin residents benefit from relatively high state aid and low property taxes in comparison to similar Towns. The Committee notes that the strong cash reserves, a moderate debt burden, and a relatively low level of spending compared to similar towns are evidence of resourcefulness on the part of the Town. However, it also notes that the Town has been experiencing a steady erosion of services for years because of a structural budget deficit. The funding required to maintain structural services has not kept pace with annual revenue growth. Part of the increasing cost of providing municipal services is due to federal and state mandates regarding maintenance of Town buildings, discharging stormwater runoff, and education requirements. More examples are included in the Committee's report. Although the Committee does not give an expected timeframe, it warns that if Franklin follows its present course, residents should expect the negative impact on education, public safety, roads and buildings, Town reputation, and property values to be visible and significant. However, the Committee stresses that if Town leaders, citizens, local businesses, and employees commit to addressing this problem in a thoughtful, multi-faceted way, the Town will be able to preserve the qualities that have long made Franklin a desirable place to live.

Town Government Structure

In any town, it is important to understand the structure of the government because it affects how the government functions. There are usually three key roles in any Town government: the legislative body that makes the laws, the policy board that sets the direction for the Town, and the chief municipal officer that handles the day-to-day administrative tasks. The Town's Home Rule Charter defines Franklin's structure as a Town Council – Town Administrator form of government. A nine-member Town Council serves as the legislative body as well as the policy board for the Town. The council members are elected at large from the Town every two years. They are not compensated for serving as council members; however, the Town covers the expenses incurred in the performance of official duties. The Town Council is responsible for appointing the Town Administrator (TA) who acts as the chief municipal officer. The TA is responsible for keeping the Town Council informed about matters of the Town including departmental operations, fiscal affairs, general problems, long-range needs, practices and governmental trends of other communities, as well as state laws and regulations. Among other responsibilities, the TA oversees the Town's operating and capital budgets, serves as the Town's purchasing agent, and appoints leaders for many of the Town-run services (Police Chief, Fire Chief, Library Director, etc.).⁴⁷ The complete duties of the TA can be found in the Town's charter.

There are benefits to the Town Council – Town Administrator form of government. Having a nine member Town council limits the power that any one council member can have, allowing for greater efficiency and effectiveness because the administrator can focus on making sure the Town runs smoothly and the Town Council focuses on policy. Franklin's Town Council has four subcommittees: economic development, capital improvement, budget, and senior outreach that focus on these specific areas; other matters of policy are generally discussed by the council as a whole rather than by a few select members.

Departments, Boards, and Committees

The majority of services provided for the Town's residents are performed by its departments, boards, and committees. Many of the members of the boards and committees listed below are volunteers. The majority of these organizations have web pages with contact information and resources on the Town's website. More specific information about some of these organizations is included in the latter portion of this report.

⁴⁷ http://www.town.franklin.ma.us/Pages/FranklinMA_TownCharter/index

Departments	
Administrator Affordable Housing Animal Control Board of Assessors Board of Registrars Building Commission/Inspections Department/Zoning Comptroller Conservation Department of Public Works Economic Development Engineering Facilities Department Fire Department Health Department Highway Department Housing Authority	Human Resources Library Planning & Community Development Police Department Purchasing Parks and Recreation Purchasing Schools Senior Center/Council on Aging Technology Department Town Clerk's Office Town Council Treasurer/Collector's Office Veterans Services Water/Sewer Department

Boards and Committees	
Board of Health Cable Advisory Committee Charles River Pollution Control District Conservation Commission Cultural Council Design Review Commission Finance Committee (Long-Range) Financial Planning Committee Commission on Person with Disabilities School Committee	Historical Commission Housing Authority Insurance Advisory Committee Planning Board Public Land Use Recreation Advisory Board Recycling Committee Zoning Board of Appeals

Accessing Information

Town Website

The Town website serves as an information portal between the Town government and the Town's residents. Whether, it's looking up contact information, downloading a permit application, or looking up the rules for the new recycling procedure, the Town website is available as a resource for quick and easy access to public information. The website is frequently updated by various departments, boards, and committees thus helping the Town run more efficiently and effectively. Of course, information can also be accessed by calling the Municipal Building.

Annual Report

The Annual Town Report is a great resource for the citizens of Franklin. It includes updates from each department about work completed and initiatives undertaken during the year. It also includes lists of births, marriages, deaths, department contact information, and Town employee salaries.

Public Databases

The Town of Franklin retains a Geographic Information System (GIS) that is used to meet the needs of departments, boards, committees, professionals and citizens by providing easy access to property and land use information such as zoning and the location of water and sewer lines. The GIS system is a series of maps that are searchable online. Since all the information is stored in online databases, the viewer is able to create maps that show specific features of interest. The Town is committed to expanding the information available to the public with a simple and economical approach. The GIS databases make technical and data related information about the Town easily accessible to the public. The databases are maintained by

the Town's GIS specialist. Franklin also supports a real estate database called Patriot that proves quick and complete information about properties in the Town. The Assessors Department is responsible for maintaining the Patriot database.

Direct Access to Town Departments

The Franklin Municipal Building serves as the Town Hall and houses most of the Town's government functions including the School Department. The municipal government moved into its current location at 355 East Central Street from the former municipal building at 150 Emmons Street in 2005. The move provided more adequate facilities for municipal administration, and enough space to allow the majority of municipal administrative services, including the School Department's administration. Being located in one building enables more efficient communication between departments since information and materials can be exchanged more quickly. The building was specifically organized to ensure that the departments that regularly work with the public are on the first floor. Having most municipal services that the public regularly use in one place is convenient for residents because they can visit most offices in one stop.

Town Properties

The Town of Franklin maintains properties in order to provide the public services. An inventory complete with descriptions of the buildings and assessment of their current uses can be found on-line at the Town of Franklin's Master Plan web site.

The Role of Regionalization

As costs increase and budgets are cut Towns in Massachusetts are looking towards regionalization in order to continue offering quality services. In Franklin, there are several services that are regionalized in order to increase efficiency. For instance, Franklin shares a Dog Pound and Animal Control Officer with the Town of Bellingham, MA, the Library Director Position is shared with the Town of Medway, and the Franklin Police Department (FPD) has access to specialized services through the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council. FPD is also looking to construct a new regional dispatch center. The Town continues to look into the effectiveness of regionalizing certain services while keeping Franklin's best interests in mind.

Public Schools

Franklin has eleven traditional public schools, one charter school, and a regional vocational technical high school that serve to educate the children of Franklin (see Table CS & F-1: Public Schools in Franklin).

Table CS & F-1: Public Schools in Franklin

Franklin High School
Annie Sullivan Middle School
Helen Keller Elementary School
Remington Middle School
Jefferson Elementary School
Gerald M. Parmenter Elementary School
David Thayer Elementary School
Oak Street Elementary School
Horace Mann Middle School

Source: Franklin School Administration

Traditional Schools

The traditional school facilities include a high school, three middle schools, six elementary schools and an early childhood development center. In the 2009-2010 school year Franklin's public schools housed 6,147 students according to the 2010 Town of Franklin Annual Report. This is the first decrease in student populations that the Town has seen in nearly 15 years. Enrollment continued to decline slowly, falling to 6,046 in the 2010-2011 school year, 5,981

students in the 2011-2012 school year, and then 5,923 in the 2012-2013 school year⁴⁸. This may suggest a longer term stabilization of the student population.

All of the elementary schools in Franklin, except Davis Thayer, are neighborhood schools, meaning that schools are located in the area of Town where the students live rather than in one central location. In general, the neighborhood model is considered a desirable attribute because it promotes community since the families whose children go to school together also live closer together. Theoretically, students are also able to walk to school, which promotes exercise.

Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School

Public charter schools were created to provide educational diversity and innovation that would enhance the public school system. Charter schools operate with freedom from many of the regulations that apply to traditional public schools and are independent of local school districts and local government. The schools are evaluated every year by the state Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. If the schools do not meet the standards established by the state, then their charter may not be renewed and they can be closed. Charter schools are open to all students eligible for the public schools.⁴⁹ There is no selection process for admission and students do not have to live in the town where the school is located. In the case where there are not enough available spaces in the school to meet demand, the school holds a lottery to determine enrollment.

The Town of Franklin has one charter school; the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School. Its mission is, "To assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing the children with a classical academic education coupled with sound character

Table CS & F-2: BFCCPS Enrollment by Town

Town	Number of Students
Bellingham	7
Blackstone	2
Franklin	417
Mansfield	5
Medway	14
Milford	2
Millis	1
Wrentham	2
Total	450

Source: The Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School: Enrollment. <http://www.bfccps.org/main/Enroll/Default.asp>

development and community service." The school is located adjacent to the Town Common. The building and grounds are owned by the Roman Catholic Church and are not maintained by the Town.

Students at BFCCPS come from many of the neighboring Towns, but most come from Franklin. Enrollment is done by lottery and there is no set percentage of students taken from any single Town. The enrollment

numbers by town for the 2012-2013 school years can be found in Table CS & F-2: BFCCPS Enrollment by Town.

Tri-County Vocational Regional Technical High School

The Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School is also located in Franklin, Massachusetts. It is not a charter school; rather, it is a regional school. The provisions regarding its operations are described in M.G.L. chapter 70. The high school serves approximately 1,000 students from Franklin, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Norfolk, North Attleborough, Plainville, Seekonk, Sherborn, Walpole, and Wrentham. Although the facility and grounds are located in Franklin, it is financially supported by the region. It is not owned by the Town and the Town does not maintain the grounds or the facility.

⁴⁸ Information from Franklin Public Schools Enrollment Figures

⁴⁹ M.G.L. Chapter 71, section 89.

Public School Renovations

Since the last Master Plan was initiated, the Town of Franklin has begun construction on a new High School. The debt exclusion in March, 2012 overwhelmingly approved by Franklin voters provides funds for a fully furnished and equipped facility based on a Massachusetts School Building Authority model school design. The budget also includes demolition of the current building and the construction of new athletic fields.

The new Franklin High School will feature 20 percent more core academic space, but the building's total footprint will be 6,000 square feet smaller than the current facility. Upon completion of the facility and its opening to students in the fall of 2014, the New England Association of Schools & College is expected to remove Franklin High School from accreditation warning status.

The Town has engaged Kaestle Boos Associates to complete an existing condition report and feasibility study of the Davis Thayer Elementary School. The final report for Kaestle Boos should be available by July, 2013. Once reviewed, the Town will determine what renovations may take place at this site.

Public School Funding

Franklin has had comparatively little financial burden for its schools compared to cities of similar size. This is mostly due to the way a certain state formula for funding public schools (see M.G.L. Chapter 70) is calculated that resulted in Franklin receiving a disproportionately high amount of state aid compared to other towns in Massachusetts. State policy also specifies a formula for calculating the minimum that Franklin must spend on education, the target range being 10-15% over the minimum. Recently, the Town has cut funding for certain positions in the public schools. The Long Range Financial Planning Committee warns that if funding for schools continues to be cut the Town of Franklin will risk not meeting the state's minimum education spending requirements. Figure CS & F-1 below depicts the Town of Franklin's net school spending as a percentage of the state minimum.⁵⁰ As long as Franklin's net school spending is higher than the minimum spending required, the Town is in compliance with state law.

Franklin schools spend less per pupil than the state average in every category (teacher compensation, etc.) of spending reported by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, see Table CS & F-3: School Spending Per Pupil by Category. School officials consider teacher compensation a strategic priority due to the link between quality instruction and student performance.

Accordingly, "classroom and specialist teacher" spending per pupil is closer to the state average even though it still remains below the average. Most categories are below by double digit percentages. While the Franklin school district is currently categorized as a high-performing district by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, unfortunately, with trends in school spending as they seem, one might predict that achievement may be negatively impacted in years to come due to lack of adequate resources.

⁵⁰ Franklin Long Range Financial Planning Committee. "Five Year Financial Outlook."

Net School Spending: Actual over Proscribed Minimum

Chapter 70 proscribes the minimum education contribution for each town. Most towns exceed the minimum by low double digit percentages. Franklin has averaged 11%, but the funding shortfall has led to a sharp downward trend. Local funding levels withing 5% of the proscribed minimum pose a compliance risk and threat to education quality.

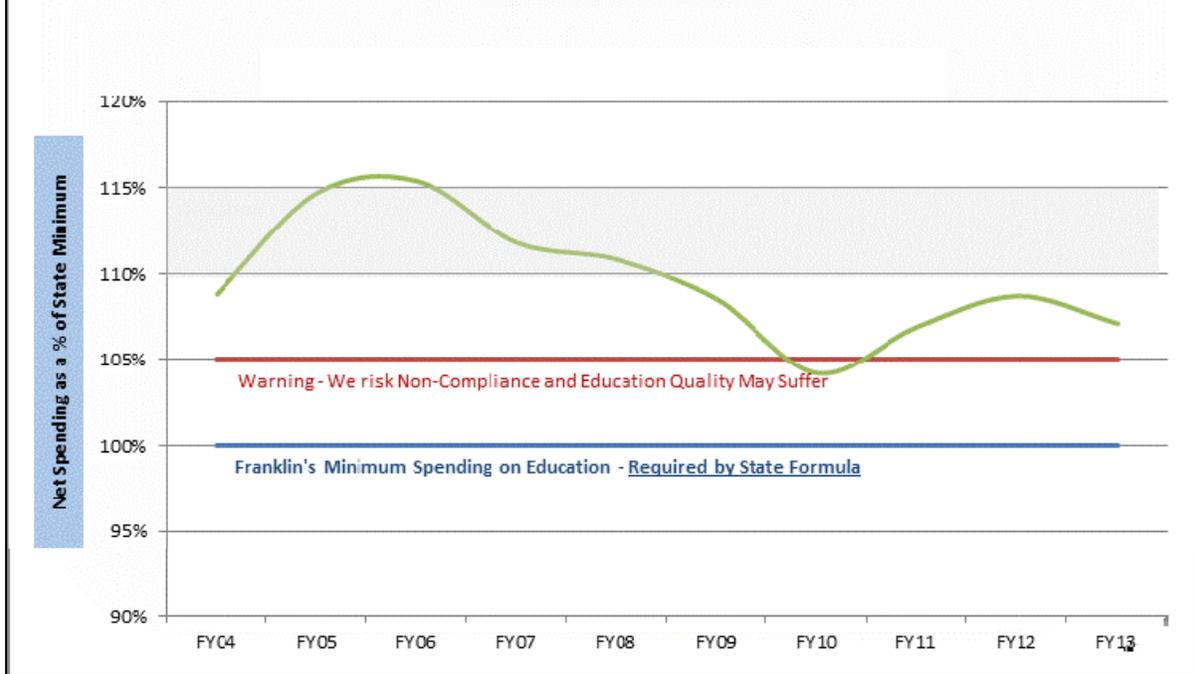


Figure CS & F-1: Net School Spending: Actual over Proscribed Minimum

(Source: Franklin School Administration)

Table CS & F-3: School Spending per Pupil by Category

Category	Town of Franklin	State Average	Excess (Deficit)	Percentage
Administration	232	472	(240)	-50%
Instructional Leadership	527	851	(324)	-38%
Classroom and Specialist Teachers	4,720	5,121	(401)	-8%
Other Teaching Services	792	1,030	(238)	-23%
Professional Development	208	236	(28)	-12%
Instructional Materials, Equipment and Technology	274	378	(104)	-28%
Guidance, Counseling and Testing	297	386	(89)	-23%
Pupil Services	960	1,262	(302)	-24%
Operations and Maintenance	1,006	1,040	(34)	-3%
Insurance, Retirement Programs and Other	1222	2,369	(1,147)	-48%
Total Expenditures per Pupil	10,238	13,146	(2,907)	-22%

Source: MA Department of Education

Additional evidence for concern about Franklin’s school spending is that in 2009 school staff deferred scheduled pay increases in order to keep positions from being eliminated. While the decision by the school staff is commendable, it is unrealistic to expect that such measures can continue in the long-term. The Franklin school system gained approximately 1,500 students from 1997 to 2008. With the growth in student population as well as an increase in state mandates for special education came more teachers. From fiscal years 2006 to 2008 teacher headcount was reduced by approximately 15% while student enrollment increased 1.5%. From fiscal years 2000 to 2008 schools eliminated a total of 95 teaching positions and 17 administrative positions overall. In 2008 another 32 positions were eliminated.⁵¹ Figure CS & F-2 below depicts student and teacher headcounts since 1997.

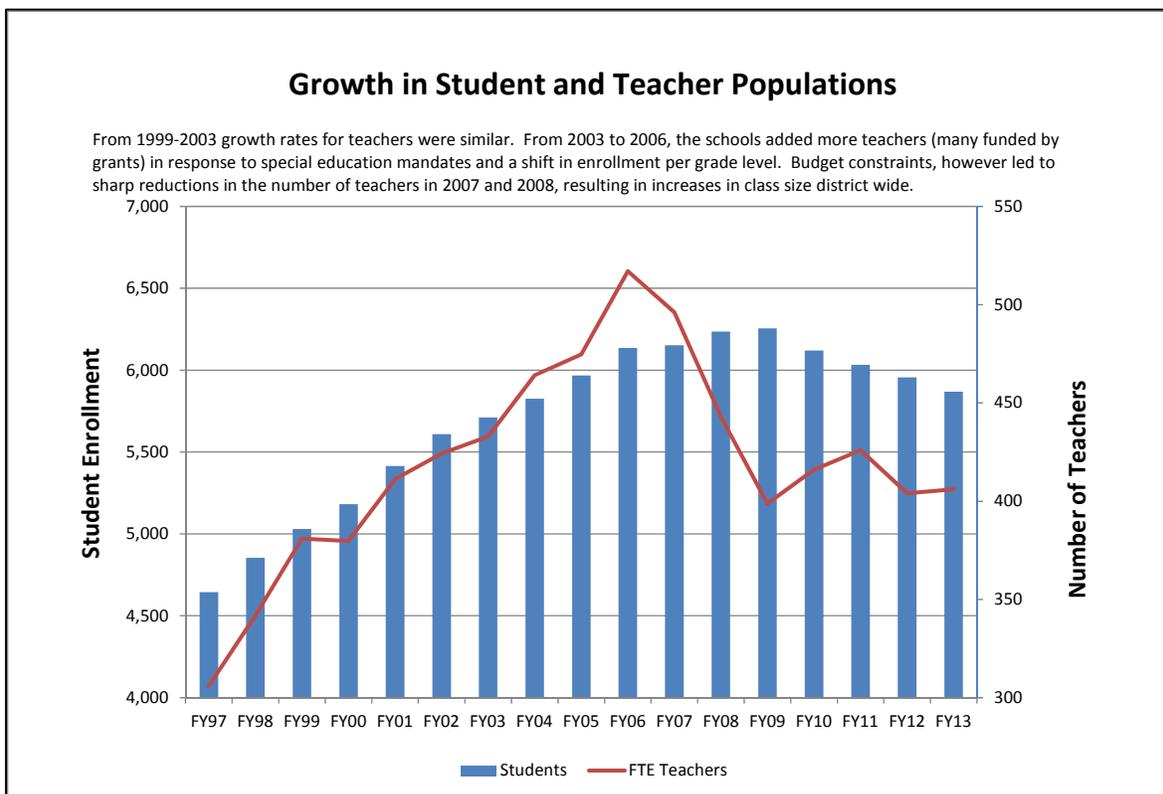


Figure CS & F-2: Growth in Student and Teacher Populations

Source: Franklin School Administration

In 2009 the schools had more students than they ever had before, however the number of teachers decreased to approximately 2000 levels. During that time the student population increased by nearly 1,200 students. As a result, there was a desire to increase the number of teachers. However, funding for these positions was limited. The teacher increase for the 2009-2011 school years comes from 18 positions funded by stimulus and grant money that is not a part of the school budget. From 2010-2013, the school district relied heavily on local aid and revolving funds to maintain some consistency in staffing levels.

Regional and Charter Schools

Funding for charter schools comes from a portion of the public school district’s educational spending budget. The amount of money that charters receive reflects the amount of money districts spend on each student. Charter finances are reviewed by independent auditors and

⁵¹ Franklin Long Range Financial Planning Committee. “Five Year Outlook.”

are subject to additional audits by the State Auditor. When a school district increases spending on charter schools, the state reimburses the district for 100% of the costs for the first year and 25% of the costs for the next five years to ensure that the school district has time to adapt their budgets for the decreased enrollment.⁵² More information about charter schools is available in M.G.L Chapter 71 Section 89 as well as on the web at www.uscharterschools.org.

The Red Brick School

The Red Brick School is a historical, one-room schoolhouse in Franklin. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Town leases the schoolhouse to BFCCPS and therefore does not assume responsibility for maintaining it. The Town will, however, pay for major repairs such as a new roof or furnace should the occasion arise. The Red Brick School Association is passionate about preserving the school and plans to assist the Town with energy and repair costs if deemed necessary. Several Town Councilors stated that it is good for the building to remain a school as it has been since the 1800's. In 2008 the Town Council voted to lease the Red Brick School to BFCCPS for up to ten years. As indicated by the commitment of the Red Brick School Association, the school remains one of the Town's most treasured historic sites.

Public Safety

One of the most important functions of any town government is providing for public safety. While many residents may be lucky and never have to use these services, the fact is that these services are needed. Indeed, many members of the community call on Franklin's police, fire, and animal control services every year. As the Town has grown so has the need for public safety services to deal with traffic issues, respond to calls, and take proactive measures to protect the public.

Police Department

In FY 2012, Franklin dispatchers processed 5,471 emergency 911 calls and made 28,891 entries into their records management software program. While they continue to provide quality services, their resources are limited. The Town currently has 43 sworn officers, somewhat less than in 2009. Most of the Department's funding comes from the Town. Some of it comes by pursuing grants to offset programs related to alcohol, traffic, the elderly, and Franklin youth. For example the Alcohol Grant Awards have helped offset costs for the Department's program to reduce underage drinking.⁵³ The Franklin Police Department has 7 divisions: Uniform, Communications, Safety, Detective, Honor Guard, MetroLEC, and Records.

Fire Department

The Franklin Fire Department is divided into two divisions: Operations and Maintenance as well as Administration and Support. The Operations and Maintenance division is the largest division and it is responsible for dispatch, emergency medical services, fire suppression and hazardous materials response. The Administration and Support division is responsible for personnel, budget and finance, training, code compliance, and coordinating the Town's emergency preparedness.

⁵² <http://www.masscharterschools.org/schools/index.html>

⁵³ 2009 Annual Report



Franklin Fire Station – 40 West Central Street Photo by: Robert Wierling, Franklin Resident, 2012

The mission of the Franklin Fire Department is to:

- Have a positive impact in the lives of citizens and visitors of Franklin in their time of crisis by providing compassionate, contemporary, community driven services.
- Safeguard human life from the perils of fire, sudden illness, injury or other emergency medical condition, natural and man-made disasters as well as preserve the environment and property from ensuing destruction.
- Be responsible for a safe, productive and pleasant work environment for our employees, and provide them opportunities to gain new skills and advance their personal career goals.

The Fire Department also works to ensure that the students of Franklin are educated about fire safety through the SAFE (Student Awareness of Fire Education) initiative of the Commonwealth. They also provide educational opportunities for department members and maintain “best practice” information to ensure that the department performs optimally and ensures public safety.

Two fire stations have been built since 2000. These two facilities are able to meet Franklin’s current safety needs. In terms of emergency services, quick and efficient response is a predictor of positive outcomes for citizens experiencing an emergency event. To this end, the department benchmarks on two critical emergencies; sudden cardiac arrest and building fires. National standards indicate an initial response rate or on-scene time of 8 minutes for 90% of the incidents from initial onset, with follow up of all needed resources within 10 minutes for 90% of the incidents are desirable to provide the best probability of a positive outcome.

In current terms, Franklin’s two fire stations provide substantial 8-minute response coverage to a large portion of the population and the geography of the community.

As reflected above, nearly 90% of the Town's population is within 8 minutes travel time of a fire station. However, fire station locations do not provide for rapid deployment (5 minutes or less) to a substantially large segment of the population. The downtown district and areas of immediate surroundings, having been traditionally the center and most densely occupied areas of our community, enjoy the most rapid response in terms of both initial unit response and total complement response for all on-duty personnel.

The northern part of Franklin (adjacent to the Medway Town Border) has long been identified as an area under served by on-time response for fire-rescue services. Given the relatively new age of construction and sparse population density, response times have not been a substantial concern for this area. However, the fire department has begun to observe a higher incidence of emergency responses to this area, spurred in part by on-going residential development. Accordingly, as the areas along both Pond Street and Lincoln Street continue to develop and age, there will be an increasing demand for station deployments to reduce first unit response and total complement response times to these areas. A time-in-motion study completed in conjunction with a parcel of land at the Dacey Recreation fields showed overall gains in these response times (see Table CS & F-4A, B).

Table CS & F-4A: Fire Station Number of Calls and Response Times

Current Population & Area Served		
West Central Street & King Street Station		
Response	Gross Number (Residents)	Percentage (%)
4 Minutes	15,180	46
5 Minutes	19,470	59
6 Minutes	22,440	68
7 Minutes	26,730	81
8 Minutes	29,370	89

Response	Land Area Served	Percentage (%)
4 Minutes	12.9 sq. mi.	48
5 Minutes	17.7 sq. mi.	66
6 Minutes	20.6 sq. mi.	76
7 Minutes	22.9 sq. mi.	85
8 Minutes	25.1 sq. mi.	93

Source: Franklin Fire Department

Table CS & F-4B: Fire Station Number of Calls and Response Times

Current Population & Area Served		
West Central, King Street & Proposed North Station		
Response	Gross Number (Residents)	Percentage (%)
4 Minutes	25,080	76
5 Minutes	28,050	85
6 Minutes	30,690	93%
7 Minutes	33,000	100%
8 Minutes	33,000	100%

Response	Land Area Served	Percentage (%)
4 Minutes	21.8 sq. mi.	81
5 Minutes	24.1 sq. mi.	89
6 Minutes	26.2 sq. mi.	97
7 Minutes	26.8 sq. mi.	99
8 Minutes	27 sq. mi.	100

Source: Franklin Fire Department

In addition to traditional Fire and Emergency Medical Services, the department also provides technical rescue and hazardous materials response capacities through participation in regional response teams. Franklin's convenient location within New England has proven fertile for the development of warehousing and truck terminals within the community's two industrial parks. Warehousing and truck terminals combined with increased service stations, commercial and residential petro-chemical deliveries, validate the high risk rating cited in the Town's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

According to the Environmental Protection Agency’s “Envirofacts,” Franklin has 85 facilities, which are regulated by the EPA. There are 13 additional unique sites with underground storage of flammable materials listed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These fixed facility hazards in combination with the Town’s major transportation routes of Interstate 495, State Route 140 and commuter and freight rail lines, combine to place nearly the entire community at risk from a sudden release of hazardous materials.

Franklin’s frequency rate for incidents related to the release of hazardous materials is fairly static. During fiscal year 2012, the department responded to a total of 213 emergencies involving hazardous materials. These incidents included motor vehicle crashes (176 occurrences), and hazardous conditions (45 actual releases). Given the small frequency of occurrence, the department participates in the State-wide Hazardous Materials Response Program. In the event of a spill, department personnel isolate the area and await personnel with higher levels of training and equipment to respond for safe entry into the hazard area. Partnering with other Norfolk County Fire Departments is a reasonable, cost effective means to manage the technical rescue risks faced by the citizens of Franklin.

Animal Control

Franklin’s Animal Control officer and dog pound are shared with the Town of Bellingham. The dog pound facility is located near Franklin’s DPW garages. The Animal Control Officer is responsible for picking up animals including, but not limited to dogs, cats, and dead animals in the street. All cats and dogs that are unclaimed from the pound after 10 days go to animal shelters. The officer is also responsible for investigating animal complaints and issuing citations for animal related infractions. Other duties are mentioned in the list below (see Table CS & F-5: Animal Control, Inspection Activity, and Bite Incidents FY 2011). The Animal Inspector is responsible for inspecting livestock, responds to reported animals bites, and is responsible for quarantining animals and ordering rabies tests.

Table CS & F-5: Animal Control, Inspection Activity, and Bite Incidents FY 2011

Animal Control Activity FY 2011	Animal Inspection Activity FY 2011
Complaints received and investigated: 2,034	Barn count and inspected:
Citations issued: 201	Dairy cows: 0 Mini horses: 3
Dogs picked up, not claimed: 5	Beef cattle: 1 Goats: 3
Dogs picked up, claimed by owner: 59	Sheep: 20 Swine: 2
Dogs found off leash: 109	Horses: 59 Ponies: 2
Cats picked up: 24	Chickens: 185 Waterfowl: 100
Other animals picked up: 12	Game birds: 0 Rabbits: 40
Dead animals picked up: 246	Mule: 1
Wild animals euthanized: 33	Llamas: 4
Animals taken to Vet: 26	Animal Bites: 30 animal bites were reported, all were quarantined for a period of ten days, and none were found to have rabies.
Source: Franklin Animal Control Department	Animals Tested: 7 animals were taken to the state lab to be tested for rabies, all tested negative.

Board of Health

The Franklin Health Department and the Franklin Board of Health is charged with ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the community in accordance with federal, state and local public health law/regulations. In order to carry out this mandate, the Health Department administers a comprehensive multi-faceted public health inspection program. The primary components include food service, septic system installations/repairs/percolation testing, housing code enforcement, nuisance/odor/noise complaint investigation. In addition the Franklin Health Department conducts regular inspections of semi-public swimming pools and spas, children's recreational camps, manicure/pedicure and tanning establishments.

Aside from the routine inspectional duties, the health department also has a pivotal role in safeguarding the public health by responding to new and/or emerging threats such as novel pandemic influenza events, mosquito-borne illness and natural and man-made disasters. The Franklin Board of Health is responsible for implementing policy designed to protect and promote the public health of the community.

As the Town of Franklin continues to grow, the responsibilities of the Health Department also grow; coupled with increasing state environmental and public health agency program divestment, Franklin's public health infrastructure faces substantial challenges. Much of Franklin's development is in the form of restaurants or other food service/retail food establishments. New or proposed senior living facilities with large kitchen and dining facilities require regular inspections and new housing developments whether apartments or condominium units are a potential source for complaints to the health department.

The challenge for the Franklin Health Department is to maintain high quality, time sensitive public health services in the face of continual growth, while remaining vigilant and fully prepared to confront emerging and unexpected public health emergencies as they develop, whether it is a local food-borne illness outbreak, or a full scale influenza pandemic.

Cultural and Recreational Resources

The Recreation Department works hard to ensure that athletic and recreational programs are available to the residents of Franklin. Recently, the Town agreed to share its recreational services with the Town of Medway in order to make running the programs more affordable. The Recreation Advisory Board helps to ensure that the recreational needs of the

community are met. The Board works closely with the Director of Recreation, the Town Administrator, the Department of Public Works, as well as the School Facilities Department, and the Athletic Director. The Recreation Advisory Board is responsible for issues pertaining to youth recreation, development of additional playing fields, field dedications, and spring/fall field allocations. It also advises the Town Administrator, Finance Committee and Town Council regarding the expenditure of monies from the Fletcher Fund. Furthermore, the Board has initiated a review of all the recreation facilities and is working to ensure that they meet ADA accessibility requirements.⁵⁴

In recent years, the Recreation Advisory Board worked on a wide range of projects including: the completion of a needs assessment for youth athletic fields based on current and future

Athletic and Recreation Areas in Franklin

Beaver Pond Recreation Area
Dacey Community Field
Henry "Ski" Faenza Park (Nason Street Tot Lot)
Fletcher Field
Pisani Field
King Street Memorial Park
Meadowlark Lane Complex

⁵⁴ "Recreational Advisory Board." 11 June 2010. Town of Franklin, Massachusetts Official Website. 29 July 2010 <http://franklinma.virtualtownhall.net/Pages/FranklinMA_BComm/recreation>.

participation numbers in youth sports; completion of a feasibility study regarding natural grass vs. synthetic turf at future athletic facilities; implementation of a field and facility use policy addressing profit organizations; completion of phase II of the signage project at all recreation sites; and the monitoring of capital projects at Lincoln Street "Dacey's Field" and Beaver Pond Recreation Area.⁵⁵ A complete list of recreation areas can be found in Table OSR-3: Town-Owned Park and Recreation Areas. They are also discussed in the Open Space and Recreation section of the 2013 Master Plan.

Franklin benefits from its many public and private areas for recreation. There are 15 recreation areas with athletic fields in Town, including those located at Franklin Public Schools. Most of the people who responded to the 2008 Open Space and Recreation Survey Plan said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the recreation facilities in Franklin. Several mentioned that the Town should focus on upkeep of the existing sites before expanding services.

While the Town does not have a public pool, Beaver Pond Recreation Area provides a handicapped accessible public swimming area known as Chilson Beach. Residents who wish to swim may also join private recreation facilities including the YMCA, the Adirondack Club, or the Franklin Country Club. Golf is available at the Franklin Country Club as well as the Maplegate Country Club. Additional recreational opportunities for Franklin's residents are mentioned within the Town's 2008 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Residents in Franklin also have access to several cultural opportunities including the Public Library, the Historical Museum, the Senior Center and the Town Common. The grounds of these sites as well as all the Town recreational and athletic facilities are maintained by the Department of Public Works Parks and Grounds Division.

Public Library

Franklin Public Library was founded in 1778 and is considered America's first public library. At this time the Town's name was changed from Exeter to Franklin in honor of Benjamin Franklin. To thank the Town, Benjamin Franklin donated a set of books to the Town. The townspeople voted to lend the books to all Franklin inhabitants free of charge, which effectively established the first free public library in the United States. The original Franklin collection is still housed in a book case in the library's Reading Gallery.



Franklin Public Library – First Public Library in America
Photo by Robert Wierling, Franklin Resident, 2012

The library building consists of the original Ray Memorial Building built in 1904 and a children's wing that was built in 1988. The Ray Memorial fund helps provide some of the financial resources necessary to maintain the building. The library maintains a collection of many books, digital books, journals, and audio visual records. Its collection and others are searchable via the library's online database. The library periodically offers special programs for children and adults as well as a wide variety of museum passes.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

The Library Director is responsible for the oversight of the library. The Franklin Library Board of Directors, who are appointed by the Town Administrator and accepted by Town Council, act in an advisory capacity to the Library Director and the Town Administrator.

Historical Museum

Franklin has a beautiful, newly refurbished Historical Museum. The Franklin Historical Museum moved downtown to the former Senior Center in May of 2010. The new museum displays were aided by students at the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical School who helped finish the interior and built display cases and bookshelves. The outside has also been newly landscaped with benches, flowers, and a statue called "Hats Off to Franklin," which draws on the memory of Franklin's straw hat industry.⁵⁶

Senior Center

The Franklin Senior Center, also known as Franklin's Council on Aging, seeks to improve health status, reduce health disparities, increase economic security, decrease caregiver stress, and increase the independence of older and disabled adults. A National Council on Aging survey found that, compared with their peers, senior center participants have higher levels of health, social interaction and life satisfaction, even those with lower levels of income. NCOA research has demonstrated that older adults who participate in senior center programs can learn to manage and delay the onset of chronic diseases and experience measurable improvements in their physical, social, spiritual, emotional, mental and economic well-being.

The Senior Center offers a variety of programs, services and activities for all Franklin residents aged sixty or older and disabled residents. By offering vital community support services and infrastructure, the Senior Center helps older and disabled residents remain independent in the community.

In recent years, the Senior Center has seen substantial increases in the fitness programs, Café meals, and the Supportive Day Program utilization.

Currently, the Senior Center is at capacity most mornings resulting in insufficient space in our parking lot. We are booking more activities and events in the afternoon and expect to reach capacity at these times in the near future.

Given projected demographics and overall increase in use of the Senior Center, continued and consistent growth and diversity in our users and increased interest in Senior Center programs, services, and activities is anticipated in the coming decade.

When the Senior Center was built in 2007, a second level with approximately 3,000 square feet was "roughed in" with an eye toward future expansion of the building. The additional space is needed for fitness activities / equipment, recreational activities (e.g. arts and crafts, darts, ping-pong, etc.), educational lectures / presentations / classes, and meetings.

The Franklin Senior Center is supported through the Town budget, public and private grants, and funding from the Friends of Franklin Elders, Inc. Volunteers are also a great asset. The Senior Center's cafe and gift shop are run by volunteers as are the Supportive Day Program, computer classes, and many other programs, services and activities.

⁵⁶ Reynolds, Warren. "Franklin MA Historical Museum Opens in New Downtown Location." 16 May 2010. www.02038.com.
<<http://www.02038.com/2010/05/franklin-ma-historical-museum-opens-in-downtown/>>.



Franklin Town Common – Photo by: Robert Wierling, Franklin Resident,

Franklin Town Common

The Franklin Town Common is a historical treasure located near Franklin's center. Decorated with war memorials, a gazebo, and lit by dedicated lamps, the Town Common serves as a gathering and celebration space for the people of Franklin. Each year Franklin holds an Independence Day celebration that attracts between 2,000 and 5,000 people.⁵⁷ During the summer it is also the venue for musical performances, fairs, and a farmer's market. Like other Town facilities, the common is maintained by the Department of Public Works.

Public Works and Infrastructure

Public works and infrastructure are some of the most important services provided by the Town. However, they are also some of the most easily overlooked. As long as everything works – the tap water is clean, the roads are in good condition, and the snow is plowed there is little reason to think how all these things are accomplished. But when something goes wrong it becomes very clear, very quickly just how important these services are.

Public Works

The Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining the landscapes on all the Town-owned properties as well as maintaining Town infrastructure, which includes the water and sewer systems, streets, sidewalks, and drainage. The Department of Public Works is organized into six divisions: Administration and Billing, Engineering, Water and Sewer, Highway, Parks and Grounds, and Recycling and Solid Waste. The DPW has 47 year round employees, 15 summer-time workers for athletic field maintenance and around 6 winter-time workers for snow plowing. The responsibilities of each division are described in the respective sections below.

⁵⁷ Perry, Krista. "Happy Fourth of July: Franklin celebrates holiday." 4 July 2009. [www.wickedlocal.com](http://www.wickedlocal.com/franklin/homepage/x488825549/Happy-Fourth-of-July-Franklin-celebrates-holiday). 20 July 2010 <<http://www.wickedlocal.com/franklin/homepage/x488825549/Happy-Fourth-of-July-Franklin-celebrates-holiday>>.

The budgets for the DPW come from the general Town budget along with water, sewer, and solid waste enterprise funds.

Waste and Recycling

The DPW Solid Waste Division manages waste and recycling, implements waste reduction initiatives, and oversees the Beaver Street Recycling Center. The trash budget is supported entirely by user fees. This means that any changes to these budgets do not affect the general fund budget.

Utilities

Franklin operates its own Water and Sewer Departments. The remaining utilities including light and cable are managed by private companies or by commercial organizations that are supervised by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.⁵⁸ The water and sewer budgets are supported entirely by fees.

Water

The DPW Water Division is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Town water distribution system. They also are committed to protecting the future of the water supply through water-efficient practices, products, and services. Water for the Town of Franklin is supplied from twelve groundwater sources. In addition to the 12 water supply wells, the Town operates 7 booster pump stations, 6 water storage tanks, over 2,000 hydrants, 157 miles of water main and approximately 9,000 water services.⁵⁹ The location of pump house and utility buildings are shown on Map CS&F-1. Approximately 90% of the Town is serviced by the public water supply. Current water use averages 2.6 million gallons per day (mgd). The Town has a water storage capacity of 12.1 million gallons of water.

Sewer Service

The Town's sewer system consists of the collection system and the treatment facility. Franklin is a member of the Charles River Pollution Control District (CRPCD) which operates the sewage treatment facility that supports the Town's sewer system. The collection system includes gravity and force sewer mains as well as sewer pumping stations. The Town of Franklin sanitary sewer system is comprised of 137 miles of sewer pipe, over 3,400 manholes and 23 pump stations.⁶⁰

Approximately 75% of the Town has public sewer. There are still a number of undeveloped parcels in the Town that are eligible for extension or tie-ins to the sewer system. The existing sewer infrastructure is considered to be in good condition. The Town has identified a few areas including one of its main interceptors that will need maintenance in order to maintain the capacity of the system. The Charles River Pollution Control District operates an advanced, nutrient removal treatment facility that can process up to 4.6 million gallons of wastewater per day. The facility treats the combined wastewater and domestic septage from Franklin and seven other communities.⁶¹ At approximately 2.8 mgd, Franklin is by far the largest user of the CRPCD with 67.5% of the plant capacity reserved for the Town. Some of the increased costs for the Town come from CRPCD's necessary capital improvements, some of which are attributable to more stringent requirements for NPDES permitting.⁶² (See Map CS & F-2: Water & Sewer Features).

⁵⁸ Infrastructure and Facilities. Master Plan Community Services and Facilities Section. Franklin, 1997.

⁵⁹ http://franklinma.virtuالتownhall.net/Pages/FranklinMA_DPW/water_sewer

⁶⁰ http://franklinma.virtuالتownhall.net/Pages/FranklinMA_DPW/water_sewer

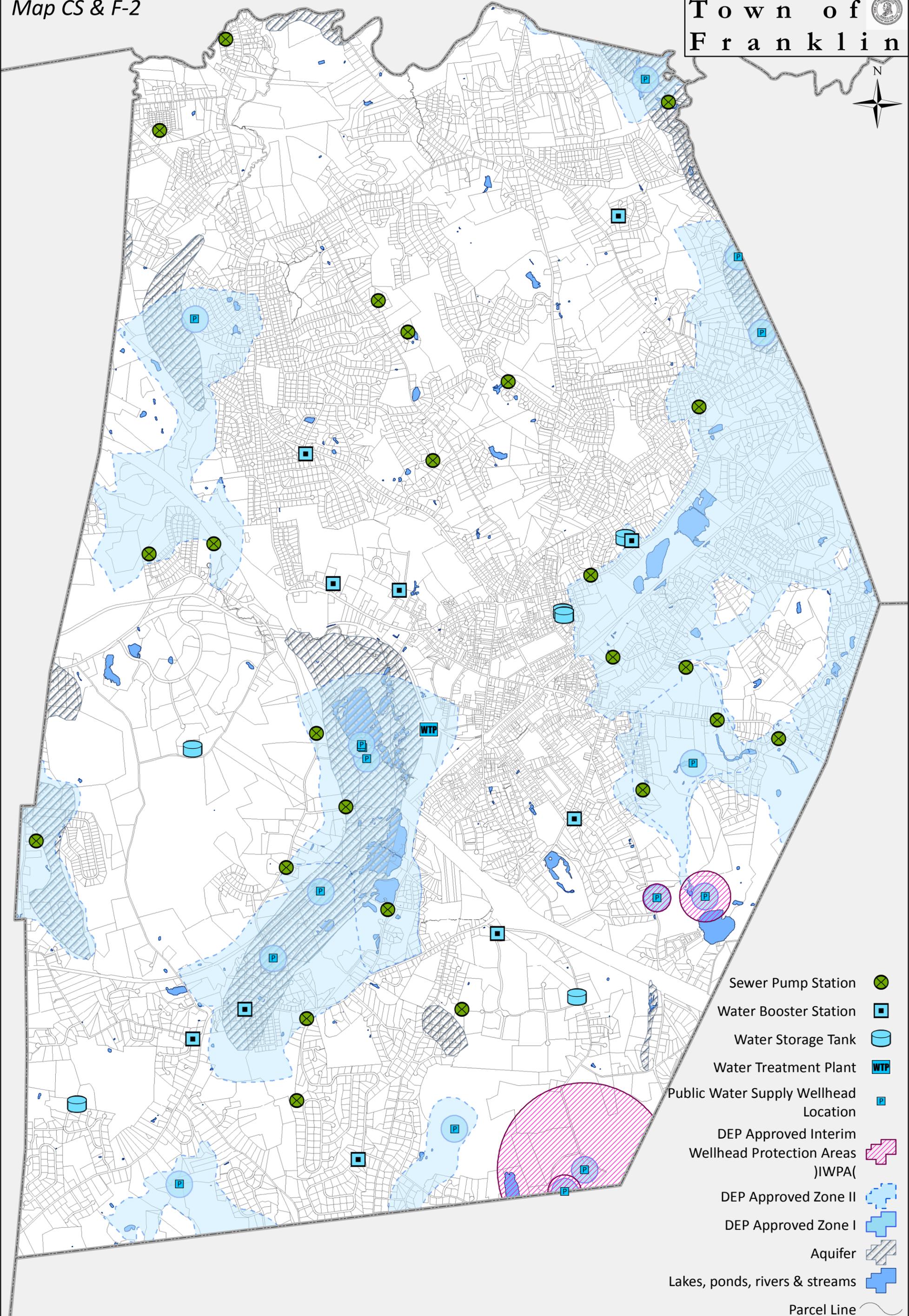
⁶¹ DEP, Massachusetts. Water, Wastewater & Wetlands, 28 7 2010 <<http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/wastewater/empilot.htm#cr>>.

⁶² "Charles River Pollution Control District." February 2009. www.slideshare.net. <<http://www.slideshare.net/shersteve/charles-river-pollution-control-district-presentation-2509>>.

Water & Sewer Features

Map CS & F-2

Town of Franklin



- Sewer Pump Station
- Water Booster Station
- Water Storage Tank
- Water Treatment Plant
- Public Water Supply Wellhead Location
- DEP Approved Interim Wellhead Protection Areas (IWPA)
- DEP Approved Zone II
- DEP Approved Zone I
- Aquifer
- Lakes, ponds, rivers & streams
- Parcel Line

Roads

The DPW Highway Division is responsible for roads, sidewalks and drainage systems. Please see the Circulation Element for road and sidewalk related issues.

Stormwater Management and Drainage Systems

Drainage systems are critical for protecting property from storm damage, ensuring maximum useful lifetimes for roads and pavement, and for adequately managing stormwater. Franklin's stormwater management bylaw Chapter 300 Section 11 of the Town Code has strict requirements that new developments must maintain the same or better rates of groundwater infiltration as existed on the site prior to development.

To assist in meeting this requirement, the Town has created a Best Development Practices Guidebook (BDP Guidebook), which is accessible on the Town website. It details best practices in design and development and the cases in which these practices must be used. The Guidebook codifies these practices as official Town policy, and provides a single-source reference book for designers and reviewers working in Franklin.

All redevelopment projects must meet the stormwater standards to the maximum feasible extent, and, if they fail to meet the standards, shall retrofit or expand existing stormwater management systems to improve existing conditions. All new development projects in Franklin must meet the following three stormwater management performance standards:

1. Post-development peak discharge rates from the site shall not exceed pre-development peak discharge rates from the site.
2. Annual groundwater recharge from the post-development site shall approximate annual recharge from the pre-development site.
3. The stormwater management system shall remove at least 80% of the average annual load of total suspended solids (TSS) from the post-development stormwater created on developed site.

Additionally, the BDP Guidebook states that non-structural stormwater management systems should be used wherever site conditions allow. Drain pipe/catch basin systems may also be used, in part or in whole, only if the applicant can demonstrate that other systems are not feasible due to site conditions. While all new construction must comply with current codes, many of the Town's old roads still have inadequate drainage systems.

Upcoming Projects

In August 2013, the Department of Public Works (DPW) presented to Town Council a list of water, highway, and sewer improvements, and other administration and engineering projects in 2013, as well as upcoming projects for 2014-2015. Below are the water, sewer, and other non-roadway related improvement projects found in said list. The highway and roadway improvements from this list are mentioned in the Circulation section of the Master Plan, under the heading, "Pavement Management Initiative and Other DPW Upcoming Projects."

The water system improvements scheduled in 2013 include replacing the waterline and improving the stormwater drainage systems at Lincoln Street and Daniels Street. Other water system improvements in 2013 include: improving the waterlines at Kathleen Drive, Fannie Way, Harborwood Drive, Betten Court and Corrine Road; cleaning the water tanks at Franklin Industrial Park and Forge Hill and equipping them with new agitators; and writing a new Water System Master Plan.

Sewer improvements for 2013 include: installing new grinder pumps at Jefferson Road and Milliken Road; metering the Beaver Street interceptor; and proposed reconstruction of the Charles River Pollution Control District Sewer Treatment Plant.

Administration and Engineering projects scheduled in 2013 include: finishing reconstruction at the Delcarte Dams on Pleasant Street; construction of a new DPW entrance on New Hayward Street; a town wide sign inventory and creation of a signage plan; and construction of a new building for storage at 247 Fisher Street.

Other DPW wide projects scheduled in 2013 include: finishing the construction at Panther Way Park and improvements at the Recycling Center; designing and constructing a new playground/parking/walkway at the Delcarte playground on Pleasant Street; the Public Works Touch-A-Truck and Library Book Sale(s) open house at 257 Fisher Street; and Public Outreach for Earth and Arbor Days at the Beaver Street Park.

For 2014, DPW projects include: replacing the waterline & improving stormwater at Anthony Road, Conlyn Ave, Carmine Drive, Summer Street, and Lewis Street; stormwater improvements on roadways proposed for reconstruction; and demolition of the old DPW garage at 257 Fisher Street.

Inspections and Building Department

Currently, the Building Inspection Department is staffed with Building, Mechanical, Office and Zoning Personnel. The Department takes pride in its customer service in all of its many official duties, which include but are not limited to: manning the phones; field inspections; issuing and taking permits; and zoning interpretations. The commercial property based duties include inspection of existing food and liquor establishments periodically for safety compliance. All public, private and child care schools are inspected yearly. Multi-unit residential properties are inspected every five years. The mission statement of the Building Department is to promote public awareness of the Department's role in Franklin. This is accomplished through the internet, with updates on the Building Departments Page on Franklin's Website. The only other activity available online is a one-on-one question answering service with the Building Department Staff. Other online activities are being developed to make life easier when applying for permits.

Planning and Community Development

The DPCD's mission is to plan and implement policies and initiatives that work to fulfill the land use related goals of the people of Franklin. The DPCD's activities and services include zoning by-law and subdivision regulation development, and providing technical and administrative support to the Town's Planning Board and Conservation Commission.

Wetland Protection

The Conservation Commission is the official Town agency specifically charged with the protection of Franklin's natural resources. The Commission also advises other municipal officials and boards on conservation issues that relate to their areas of responsibility. The first powers given to the Commission (ref Conservation Commission Act of 1957 - MGL Ch.40 sec. 8C) focused on "promotion and development of natural resources...and protection of watershed resources". In 1972 Conservation Commissions were authorized to administer the State Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Ch 131 sec. 40). The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act prohibits any filling, excavation, or other alteration of the land surface, water levels, or vegetation in wetlands, floodplains, riverfront areas or other wetland resource areas regardless of ownership without a permit from the local Conservation Commission. Additionally, the

Conservation Commission is charged with administering the Town's Wetland Protection Bylaw listed in Chapter 181 of the Town Code.

Watershed Protection

Charles River Management Area

The Town of Franklin lies directly at the headwaters of the Charles River and is partly responsible for its pollution and consequently its protection. While Franklin may not experience many of the effects of pollution in the Charles River, communities downstream in the Lower Basin do. One of the biggest issues facing the Charles River today is phosphorous pollution.

In recent years, phosphorous pollution in the Charles has become so serious that in the summers of 2006 and 2007, the Lower Basin of the Charles River experienced a bloom of toxin-producing photosynthetic cyanobacteria, also known as blue-green algae, these toxins persist in the water for some time after the algae bloom is gone, making the risk invisible. As the bacteria dies the decomposition process takes up oxygen in the water. This depletes the amount of oxygen available for other organisms, causing them to die. This is especially noticeable when the process causes fish to die.

Phosphorous itself is not harmful. It is a commonly occurring element in the land. Some of this phosphorus naturally erodes into water bodies. However, the greatest contributor to high phosphorous levels in the Charles today is not land erosion, but human activities. Phosphorous is found in many everyday products including lawn fertilizers, pesticides, household cleaners, detergents, soaps, and automobile exhaust. Stormwater runoff carries traces of these products in the river. Other phosphorus sources include wastewater treatment facilities, illegal connections of sanitary sewer lines to stormwater drainage systems, and combined sewer outflows (Charles River Watershed Association).

Normally, phosphorous would be filtered out of the water by filtration through soil. However, as development has increased so has the amount of impervious surfaces due to building and road footprints. Water that flows off these surfaces flows faster than water that hits natural ground and thus is able to carry more pollutants with it. Impervious surfaces do not allow water to be filtered and kept onsite. Instead, the water quickly runs offsite and into the nearest water body, which contributes to high levels of pollution in the river and rapid flooding problems. Residential sources are by far the largest contributors to phosphorous in the lower Charles River basin. To address this issue the EPA is developing a new set of stormwater regulations.

EPA Stormwater Regulations

The EPA has issued new draft stormwater regulations for the Charles River watershed, affecting the Towns of Bellingham, Franklin, and Milford. These "Residual Designation Draft General Permits" (Draft RD permits) rolled out in late 2010. The new regulations require municipalities to reduce phosphorus discharges by approximately 50% overall and are not restricted by the type of property (includes both public and private). Reductions on private properties will be credited to the Town. The new regulations are described in great detail because they could have significant impacts on the municipal government and property owners of Franklin.

There are two categories for requirements: a Stormwater Management Plan (SMP) with baseline performance standards and Phosphorous Reduction Plan. Under the new regulations, all permittees would be required to create an SMP. The EPA suggests that SMP's are better than lot-by-lot approaches since some properties can reduce phosphorous loading more efficiently than others.⁶³

⁶³ (Voorhees, Draft Storm Water General Permit for Residually Designated Discharges)

Permits will be required for properties with impervious surfaces greater than or equal to 2 acres, including contiguous properties under common ownership and properties with common structures aggregated (Voorhees). These properties are referred to as Designated Discharge (DD) sites and are likely to include office complexes, condominiums, shopping plazas, and car dealerships due to the size of their impervious surface areas. Although Franklin has already done a lot of work in recent years related to implementing Best Management Practices, these new regulations would apply to older sites whose stormwater runoff would need to be addressed.

Municipal Stormwater Permits

The North Coastal permit affects all municipalities in the Charles River watershed, and requires municipalities to “enhance” the work that was required under the 2003 permit (Voorhees). Municipalities must also develop a “Phosphorous Control Plan” (PCP) within 4 years and complete implementation of that plan within 10 years.

Financing Municipal Services

Overview of Town Budget

The Town’s Comptroller put together several tables and graphs depicting the revenues and expenditures of the Town. Figure CS & F-3 shows Franklin’s Operating Budget Revenues for the past six years as well as projections into the following year. It is important to note that Franklin receives approximately one third of its municipal funding from state aid and the Town has very little control over fluctuations in the State budget. If the State budget is reduced, the Town of Franklin may be more adversely impacted than other Towns that receive less state aid.

The total budgeted revenue for 2013 is \$95,702,892. Revenues, however, are only one side of the equation. Since 2007, Franklin’s operating expenditures, amounts actually spent on public services, increased by 12.3%, from \$78.3 million to \$89.3 million. Fixed costs have grown 19.8% over that same eight year period. As a percent of the total budget fixed cost has grown from 11% to 12.5%. The education budget has seen a growth of 20.4% and municipal budgets have grown 12.3%. Of that 12.3%, fixed costs comprise almost 32% of the municipal budget. Fixed costs continue to put great pressure on the budget (see Figure CS & F-3: Eight Year Operating Budget).

Eight Year Operating Budget Revenue Summary								
	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>FY 2010</u>	<u>FY 2011</u>	<u>FY 2012</u>	<u>FY 2013</u>	<u>FY 2014</u>
	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Projected</u>						
Property Tax	41,437,694	43,679,576	48,270,245	50,303,727	52,266,278	54,099,090	56,327,438	58,600,829
New Growth	1,176,527	713,346	806,561	687,763	513,322	854,509	844,102	700,000
Prop 2 1/2 override		2,700,000						
	42,614,221	47,092,922	49,076,807	50,991,490	52,779,600	54,953,599	57,171,540	59,300,829
State Aid	29,742,506	30,681,519	33,069,057	31,401,068	29,903,868	29,819,987	30,129,463	30,129,463
Local Estimated Receipts (LER)	7,525,483	7,878,387	7,452,000	6,999,305	6,852,000	6,700,000	7,050,000	7,150,000
Other Available funds	2,067,361	1,290,000	315,000	220,000	226,000	365,000	358,889	240,077
Transfer from Enterprise Indirects (from 2005-2009 indirects in LER)	881,000	884,500	927,000	955,000	956,000	966,000	993,000	997,500
total revenues	82,830,571	87,827,328	90,839,864	90,566,863	90,717,468	92,804,586	95,702,892	97,817,869
budget(less MSBA/Debt exclusion)	78,317,274	83,262,778	85,967,254	85,814,901	85,718,218	86,745,145	89,321,121	92,221,164
balance to fund assessments	4,513,297	4,564,550	4,872,610	4,751,962	4,999,250	6,059,441	6,381,771	5,596,705
vote to stabilization/projects						665,000	814,405	-
overlay/other	707,109	574,397	764,002	565,512	513,449	679,478	696,317	680,000
state assess	644,159	746,227	713,218	749,265	718,042	712,739	725,141	748,677
charter school	3,131,480	3,201,370	3,375,475	3,422,629	3,732,262	3,992,883	4,112,316	4,166,974
	4,482,748	4,521,994	4,852,695	4,737,406	4,963,753	6,050,100	6,348,179	5,595,651
	30,549	42,556	19,915	14,556	35,497	9,341	33,592	1,054
unused levy	-30,549	-42,556	-19,916	-14,556	(35,496)	(9,341)	(33,592)	-
diff	0	0	-1	0	1	(0)	-	1,054
Property Tax %	51.45%	53.62%	54.03%	56.30%	58.18%	59.21%	59.74%	60.62%
State Aid %	35.91%	34.93%	36.40%	34.67%	32.96%	32.13%	31.48%	30.80%
Local Estimated Receipts %	9.09%	8.97%	8.20%	7.73%	7.55%	7.22%	7.37%	7.31%
Other Available Funds%	2.50%	1.47%	0.35%	0.24%	0.25%	0.39%	0.38%	0.25%
Enterprise Indirects %	1.06%	1.01%	1.02%	1.05%	1.05%	1.04%	1.04%	1.02%

Figure CS & F-3: Eight Year Operating Budget
(Source: Franklin Comptroller)

The Town of Franklin has experienced tremendous growth. The Towns' population has increased by 9.5% over the past 10 years, and by 38% over the past 20 years. The Schools population has grown from 3,979 in 1994 to 5,923 in 2013, a growth of 33%. In 2007 the student population was of 6,152, the high being 2009 with a population of 6,255. It is interesting to note from Table CS & F-3 that in 2009 at the height of student enrollment the school budget increased by 2%, in 2010 it was level funded, and in 2011 the budget was reduced, although it was offset by ARRA funds from the federal government.

Fixed Costs History	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	% growth
	Budget	Projected	over 8 years						
Liability Insurance	405,000	435,000	390,000	275,000	290,000	385,000	410,000	400,000	-1.2%
Employee Benefits:									
Pensions	2,603,776	2,661,890	3,250,290	3,430,350	3,558,923	3,341,223	3,506,741	3,662,597	40.7%
Health/Life Insurance/non school	1,909,000	1,893,000	2,110,104	2,040,000	2,080,000	2,423,000	2,275,000	2,335,000	22.3%
Retired Teacher Health Ins	1,460,758	1,275,000	1,300,000	1,079,000	1,144,000	1,240,000	1,230,000	1,175,000	-19.6%
Workers Compensation	240,000	270,000	360,000	295,000	315,000	300,000	330,000	375,000	56.3%
Unemployment Compensation	100,000	210,000	210,000	205,000	185,000	185,000	185,000	185,000	85.0%
OPEB	-	-	-	-	1,000	68,000	100,000	200,000	
Medicare	175,000	195,000	230,800	210,000	215,000	200,000	220,000	226,000	29.1%
Total Emp Benefits	6,488,534	6,504,890	7,461,194	7,259,350	7,498,923	7,757,223	7,846,741	8,158,597	25.7%
General Fund Debt (less debt funded through override or MSBA funds)	2,085,444	2,333,302	2,208,114	3,293,433	2,993,430	2,935,586	2,939,593	2,864,588	37.4%
Total Fixed Costs	8,978,978	9,273,192	10,059,308	10,827,783	10,782,353	11,077,809	11,196,334	11,423,185	27.2%
Total Operating Budget	78,317,274	83,262,778	85,967,254	85,814,902	85,718,218	86,795,145	89,321,121	92,309,231	17.9%
Fixed Costs as % of Total Budget	11%	11%	11.7%	12.6%	12.6%	12.8%	12.5%	12.4%	7.9%
Total Operating Budget	78,317,274	83,262,778	85,967,254	85,814,902	85,718,218	86,795,145	89,321,121	92,309,231	17.9%
less Education appropriation	(45,092,931)	(49,221,336)	(50,297,820)	(50,297,820)	(49,875,000)	(51,060,000)	(52,710,000)	(54,310,000)	20.4%
less Regional Schools appropriation	(1,299,432)	(1,349,359)	(1,411,370)	(1,141,979)	(1,688,082)	(1,730,992)	(1,871,415)	(2,146,638)	65.2%
Municipal Appropriation	31,924,911	32,692,083	34,258,064	34,375,103	34,155,136	34,004,153	34,739,706	35,852,593	12.3%
Fixed costs as % of Municipal appropriation	28%	28%	29.4%	31.5%	31.6%	32.6%	32.2%	31.9%	

Figure CS & F-4: Fixed Costs History

Source: Franklin Comptroller

improvements to the Library, and new high school turf fields have minimal impact on the Town operating budget. They further advise that cutting Town services to avoid budget deficits or comply with minimum net school spending requirements would only cause the Town to remain near the bottom compared to similar Towns. School spending in Franklin is already 22% less than the state average.

The cost of financing municipal services has been rising faster than revenues for many years not only in Franklin, but across the country. While revenue growth and property tax growth are capped by Proposition 2 ½ there is not a cap on the increase in operating costs. Five-year average annual inflation is 3.3%. Healthcare, pension, and energy costs have risen at double digit rates. Federal and state mandates increase the burden on local government's limited resources. The new mandates for special education have increased from 15.5% to 21.2% of the school budget from 2000 to 2008. Furthermore, since Franklin's teacher population is relatively young there are fewer retirees to offset the market-based raises that must be given to junior teachers in order for the Town to remain competitive.

Other pressures on the Towns budget include roads, sidewalks and drainage improvements; storm water mandates and OPEB funding (See Figure CS & F-4: Fixed Cost History).

Franklin ranks #22 out of 31 Towns (including the state average) in per capita municipal spending. The 31 Towns were selected by the Long Range Financial Planning Committee as having similar characteristics to Franklin. These Towns were designated as "comparable Towns." The Committee stresses that capital expenditures such as the new Senior Center,

The Town of Franklin has sought to increase municipal revenues by centralizing administrative functions (Facilities, HR, IT, Accounting), automating systems (Payroll), increasing employee medical co-pays, increasing volunteerism, leasing space on water tanks for cell towers, increasing fees for services (sports participation, bus service), and regionalizing services. Residents also passed a \$2.7 million override in 2007. The Town has also delayed road and sidewalk repairs, deferred scheduled pay increases, reduced teacher headcount, and denied Department recommendations to increase headcount (Police). The Town also used some of its cash reserves for the operating budget which resulted in lower debt, but if the practice is continued it may ultimately increase interest costs. Many of these measures are not economically sustainable in the long term. Figure CS&F-5 below shows how the headcount for municipal staff has changed in comparison to the Town's population growth.

Population Growth versus Headcount

As town population and school enrollment have grown, headcount related to public safety and public works have either grown proportionally or remained flat. Headcount at the schools and general government have lagged behind or fallen because of headcount reductions since 2005.

	1999	2008	Change	%
Demographics				
- Town Population	28,878	32,287	3,409	12%
- School Enrollment	5,030	6,236	1,206	24%
Headcount ¹				
- Police officers	46	46	-	0%
- Firefighters	45	51	6	13%
- DPW staff	29	32	3	9%
- General Government	64	45	19	(30%)
- Teachers	381	443	62	16%

Headcount data provided by Town Administrator's office and is presented on a full time equivalent basis to adjust for factors such as part time employment.

Figure CS & F-5: Population Growth versus Headcount

The Long Range Financial Planning Committee makes it clear that even had the economy remained strong, the Town would still be dealing with a structural deficit because the cost of existing services exceeds annual revenue increases. Unfortunately, the Town is also not immune from the impacts of the financial crisis. State aid decreased in FY 2010 and may be decreased in the future. Since state aid makes up approximately one third of Franklin's budget, this will have serious impacts on the Town.

County run pension funds lost significant value and will likely require more significant Town contribution in the future. Thankfully, the combined revenue from property taxes and new growth has increased every year since 2007, and is projected to keep increasing. Also, economic stimulus funds have been earmarked for Franklin. Salary freezes and layoffs in the private sector may help the Town and Schools control payroll costs. Lastly, health care and pension reform if passed may help slow the rate at which those costs are increasing. Although

the Town has taken measures to increase general revenue as listed above, the Town's ability to raise revenue for financing municipal services is limited by state laws, specifically Proposition 2½ and the Home Rule Act of 1966.

State Influences

Proposition 2½ is a Massachusetts law that states that municipalities may not issue a property tax that is greater than 2½ percent of the property's value. Proposition 2½ applies to all Towns equally, meaning that it does not take into account the make-up of the tax base for which the Town must fund services. For instance, communities with a high percentage of commercial properties in their tax base would have more money to put towards public services than communities with a high percentage of residential properties leading to higher education costs. Since it often costs more to provide services to residential units than commercial units communities across the state have adopted pro-commercial development policies and sought to limit residential development where possible.⁶⁴

For many municipalities, if local expenditures were calculated independent of revenue, the resulting tax rate would exceed the levy limit set by Proposition 2½. At the same time, unfunded state mandates establish an initial expenditure budget not locally chosen. State control over revenue and expenditures thus turns municipal budget calculations into an algebra equation that squeezes out local discretion. The only variables in the equation that municipal authorities can use to adjust revenue and expenditures are the local services and programs that are not controlled by state regulations. In the end, much of a municipality's actual power over its finances involves cutting these locally initiated programs.

Towns that do not need to tax property owners up to the levy limit of 2½ percent in order to fund municipal services are able to adapt more quickly to economic changes. Their municipal governments effectively have a built-in economic buffer since they can raise taxes up to the limit if they need to increase municipal funding. Or municipalities can continuously keep taxes above what they need to provide services and save the difference for emergency funding.⁶⁵ Towns that need more than the levy are not as fortunate. But whether or not a town needs to tax at or above the levy limit has little to do with how well the town is run. It has much more to do with the existing composition of the Town's tax base.

In the case where towns need more funding to provide services than is provided by the maximum 2½ percent levy, the towns can ask the voters for an override. An override would mean an increase in property taxes. Not surprisingly, overrides can be difficult to pass and are frequently voted down (Barron, Frug and Su). Indeed in 2007 and again in 2010, Franklin voters turned down an override that would have increased funding for municipal services. Since it costs a significant amount of money to put an override vote on the ballot, many municipal governments no longer ask for them especially in communities where they are likely to be turned down (Barron, Frug and Su). "Even some of those [officials] who have successfully used the override said that asking voters, year after year, to override the legal limit for the property tax levy to balance their budget is a very inefficient way to run a government (Barron, Frug and Su)."

Franklin's ability to increase revenue is further limited by the Home Rule Act. The Home Rule Act states that the state of Massachusetts has the sole authority to set and regulate taxes. Municipalities may not levy taxes. The key issue here lies in what constitutes a tax. Franklin sought to increase municipal revenues by implementing a development impact fee.

⁶⁴ Barron, Frug, and Su. "Dispelling the Myth of Home Rule." Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston. <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/rappaport/research/homerule1.htm>

⁶⁵ Barron, Frug, and Su. "Dispelling the Myth of Home Rule."

Massachusetts challenged the Town saying that this fee constituted a tax. The State won the case.⁶⁶ The current judicial distinction between taxes and fees is as follows: “Municipalities can seek “fees” from an individual for benefits provided to that individual, but they cannot, without state authorization, seek “taxes” from such an individual for the harm that his or her actions causes the municipality.⁶⁷” Consequently, this means the Franklin cannot implement fees to offset the additional costs to the Town for providing services to the new developments.

Since the passage of Proposition 2½ in the early 1980’s state aid has become a more important part of local municipality’s budgets. Proposition 2½ caused overall municipal revenues to fall by 13% since 1982. This was compensated by a more than 20% increase in state aid.⁶⁸ Barron, Frug, and Su note that “By limiting a municipality’s control over its own revenue, Proposition 2½ thus increased financial dependence on the state and, thereby, replaced local fiscal independence with local dependence on the power of the state.” This has increased the State’s role in influencing municipal budgets.

The state may only offer funding if a municipality has complied with certain mandates (that may be effectively unfunded) or participates in certain programs. Municipalities also have no say in whether the state continues to fund or cuts a program. This leaves communities at risk for insufficient funding. Theoretically, all mandates should be funded according to Proposition 2½. In reality, the state often sets minimum quality or spending levels that are difficult for towns to finance on their own.⁶⁹ For instance, the new EPA regulations to improve stormwater runoff and the minimum required school spending levels impose costs that the Town may not be able to fit within their budget if current tax revenues remain the same.

Franklin has not been immune to the financial stress of having a limited tax base that does not cover the cost of services. Indeed, the residential growth over the past two decades has increased the cost of providing services. The Town’s unique character and proximity to Boston have attracted young families and new schools have been built, whose teachers must be funded and school buildings maintained. More water must be treated to service these facilities and more wells must be maintained. Soon, stormwater improvements will need to be made to many of these sites. All of this comes with additional costs. It is worth noting that public school

⁶⁶ *Greater Franklin Developers Association Inc. v. Town of Franklin. Appeals Court of Massachusetts, Norfolk. No. 98-P-1032. 2000. <http://caselaw.findlaw.com/ma-court-of-appeals/1409778.html>*

⁶⁷ Barron, Frug, and Su. “Dispelling the Myth of Home Rule.”

⁶⁸ Barron, Frug, and Su. “Dispelling the Myth of Home Rule.”

⁶⁹ Barron, Frug, and Su. “Dispelling the Myth of Home Rule.”

Town Spending: Franklin versus Comparables

Franklin spends less per capita on municipal services* than two-thirds of comparable towns. The Town's overall ranking is #22 out of 31 (including the state average). Franklin spends 27% less than neighboring towns, 22% less than its peers, and 22% less than the state average.**

Category	Our Rank	Category	Our Rank
General Government	#20	Culture & Recreation	#19
Police	#21	Debt Service	#22
Fire	#18	Fixed Costs	#23
Public Safety	#21	Intergovernmental*	#11
Public Works	#22	Education	#17
Human Services	#23	Other	#9

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue Data Bank. Municipal Actual Revenue & Expenses. FY 2008.

* Includes payments to the State for the Charter School; relatively few MA towns have charter schools.

** See table comparing Franklin with peers, neighbors and state average at Appendix K.

Figure CS&F-6: Town Spending versus Comparables

funding makes up the largest portion of the Town's budget. The Town has been pursuing commercial and other economic development initiatives to diversify the tax base and help offset the costs of providing these services.

Franklin has been doing its best to provide these additional services within its limited financial resources. As Town population and school enrollment have grown, headcount related to public safety and public works have either grown proportionally or remained flat. Furthermore, headcount reduction in 2005 has meant that headcount at the Town's schools and in the general government have lagged behind or fallen.⁷⁰ In order to see how Franklin's spending on services compared to that of similar towns, the Long Range Financial Planning Committee conducted a study of 31 comparable communities. Their findings, which are included below, show that Franklin is generally spending less on services than comparable towns. This leads to the conclusion that the financial deficit is not likely due to any kind of financial mismanagement or overspending, but rather to incoming revenues not being attuned to the cost of financing municipal services.

Capital Improvement Plan

The Town budget has two components: the operating budget and the capital budget. Operating costs include insurance, debt repayments, utilities, and salaries and similar expenses that generally occur regularly every year. The capital budget, on the other hand, is usually used for large and infrequent purchases such as a new fire truck or the renovation of a school building. These major capital projects are usually financed through debt in the same way that a consumer would finance a large purchase through debt. Capital projects are paid back over a long period

⁷⁰ Long-Range Financial Planning Committee. "Five Year Financial Outlook." 2009.

of time. The annual repayments on that debt become part of the operating budget. Town policy requires that if the Town's debt is going to be more than 3.5% of the operating budget then it must be approved by local voters. Funds from the capital budget cannot legally be used for the operating budget because it is not an economically sustainable or advantageous way to fix operating budget. This means that if there is a surplus in the capital budget and a deficit in the operating budget the surplus cannot be put into the operating budget.

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is used for creating the capital budget. It is entirely separate from the Town budget. It is funded through the operating surplus at the end of each fiscal year. This way capital improvement projects such as school renovations and other improvements to public facilities do not depend on the passage of the Town budget. The Town of Franklin has actively sought to ensure that the Town's facilities are up to date and adequate for the Town's needs. Several new buildings have been constructed and some renovations are planned, notably the renovation of the high school.

Structural Deficit

Over the next five years, Town expenses are expected to grow faster than revenue by \$7 million to \$10 million. As Barron, Frug and Su mention in their report about "Dispelling the Myth of Home Rule" most people agree that they want to have good schools, a clean environment, and a safe community. But when it comes to footing the bill for teachers, schools, roads, and policemen it can be difficult to strike a balance. The Long Rang Financial Planning committee urges residents to address this looming problem by "coming to an agreement about the root cause of the problem; and then by developing a comprehensive, multi-year plan for achieving a service neutral budget. They also provide some scenarios for what the budget may look like depending on a change in state aid.

Goals and Objectives

Policy Statement: Provide adequate and appropriate facilities and infrastructure necessary to accommodate current and future community needs by maximizing use of existing resources and adding new assets in an economically prudent manner.

Goal 1: Regularly utilize the Master Plan in developing annual budgets and prioritizing capital improvements, programs and services.

Objective 1.1: Annually assess the Master Plan's goals, objectives and actions while prioritizing infrastructure and facilities expenditures for inclusion in the Town's Capital Improvements Plan.

Objective 1.2: Annually assess the Master Plan's goals, objectives and actions, while developing departmental work programs and operating budgets.

Goal 2: Obtain sufficient resources to implement the Master Plan's priority capital improvements, programs and services.

Objective 2.1: Regularly research alternative sources of resources needed to fund the Capital Improvements Plan.

Goal 3: Maintain, update and expand the Town's utilities, infrastructure and facilities to satisfy the demands of the Town into the future, without infringing on previously established plans for conservation or preservation.

Objective 3.1: Maintain and continue to update the Town's potable water facilities as appropriate to ensure high water quality standards, and to meet current and future State and Federal regulatory requirements.

Objective 3.2: Investigate increasing the recharge of aquifers in the Franklin area, and ensure the health of aquifers by improving the treatment of runoff water before releasing it back into the ground.

Objective 3.3: Maintain and update the Town's storm water and roadway drainage systems to meet future State and Federal regulatory requirements.

Goal 4: Superb delivery of public services.

Objective 4.1: Continue to improve the quality of customer service provided to the Town's residents and other customers utilizing Town services and facilities.

Objective 4.2: Utilize technology where possible to improve the quality of municipal services, cut costs, and simplify routine processes.

Objective 4.3: Regionalize services to reduce costs and improve customer services where appropriate.

Objective 4.4: Launch Commonwealth Connect App which allows residents to report quality of life problems, such as graffiti and potholes, in real time directly to Franklin government officials for resolution.

Goal 5: Maintain the quality of Franklin's Municipal buildings, Public School facilities, and all other town owned properties, and utilize facilities as effectively as possible.

Objective 5.1: Develop and evaluate reuse alternatives for the former municipal site at 150 Emmons Street.

Objective 5.2: Relocate the Recreation Department out of 150 Emmons Street into a more appropriate facility.

Objective 5.3: Improve Fire emergency response times in the northern portion of Town, where population and development has increased.

Objective 5.4: Continue to work with National Grid to improve the power infrastructure in the community.

Objective 5.5: Implement actions from the Public Library improvement study.

Objective 5.6: Develop a plan to preserve the former Historic Museum's facade.

Objective 5.7: Expand the parking lot and finish the 2nd floor of the Senior Center to support projected levels of service.

Goal 6: Implement the School Department's Strategic Plan.

Note: The Master Plan Committee recognizes and incorporates herein the strategic planning already undertaken by the Franklin School system.

Objective 6.1: Provide resources to implement the District Improvement Plan, and related individual School Improvement Plans. The District Improvement Plan sets forth the following system-wide goals:

- a) Instructional Leadership. The district promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.
- b) Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment. The district promotes the learning and growth of all students by providing high-quality and coherent instruction, designing and administering authentic and meaningful student assessments, analyzing student performance and growth data, using this data to improve instruction, providing students with constructive feedback on an ongoing basis, and continuously refining learning objectives.
- c) Learning Environment. The district promotes the learning and growth of all students through instructional practices that establish high expectations, create a safe and effective classroom environment, and demonstrate cultural proficiency.
- d) Family and Community Engagement. The district promotes the learning and growth of all students through effective partnerships with families, caregivers, community members, and organizations.
- e) Professional Culture: The district provides promotes the learning and growth of all students and staff through ethical, culturally proficient, skilled, and collaborative practice.

Objective 6.2: Study school attendance projections for upcoming years in order to plan for and utilize the Town's Public School facilities as efficiently as possible.

Objective 6.3: Develop a plan to increase or improve the school space in the Davis Thayer Elementary School if school attendance projections increase.

Objective 6.4: Develop a plan to utilize the Davis Thayer Elementary School if school attendance projections decrease.

Objective 6.5: Develop a plan to utilize the Red Brick School building in case it ceases to be leased by the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School.

Goal 7: Support sustainable development, renewable energy, recycling, low impact development, and other "green" initiatives.

Objective 7.1: Investigate sustainable development improvement strategies in the areas of circulation, traffic calming, streetscape improvements, parking, pedestrian and bicycle connections, and enhanced transit (See Circulation Element).

Objective 7.2: Encourage investment in green technologies as part of all Town sponsored development or redevelopment projects.

Objective 7.3: Seek Green Communities designation by achieving as many requirements for designation as practicable.

Objective 7.4: Encourage use of low impact development drainage systems, including rain gardens, green roofs, rain barrels, and similar concepts.

Objective 7.5: Modify zoning to allow commercial alternative energy production.