

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## *Community Setting*

### History

Franklin's past is rich in industrial history. Once a thriving manufacturing community during the industrial revolution, Franklin's landscape was covered with mill buildings and prospered as a manufacturer of textiles and straw hats, the oldest industrial operation in Franklin. While the mill buildings of Franklin's history are only landmarks of an era past, today, Franklin's two large industrial parks, Franklin Industrial Park (265-acres) and Forge Park (360-acres) have the potential of housing over 5.3 million square feet of manufacturing, industrial, warehousing and office space combined with several smaller office and industrial parks along the Grove Street Corridor and elsewhere. Franklin currently finds itself in the midst of a new manufacturing era.

### Labor Force Characteristics

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Franklin's population is 31,635 persons, of which 17,082 (54%) are in the labor force (16 year and older); of these, 93% are employed. The division of available male and female workers in Franklin is close to being even, with 54% male and 46% female.

Franklin is part of the Tri-Center Cohesive Commercial Statistical Area (CCSA) which includes the Towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Foxboro, Franklin, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Norfolk and Wrentham. Labor force and unemployment data from the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) indicates that Franklin has the largest labor force of all the Towns in the Tri-Center Cohesive Commercial Statistical Area (CCSA) and that it is two to three times larger than a majority of the Town's labor forces in the CCSA, see Table ED-1: Tri-Center Cohesive Commercial Statistical Area Labor Force 2000 and 2012.

**Table ED-1: Tri-Center Cohesive Commercial Statistical Area Labor Force 2000 and 2012**

Year	Bellingham	Blackstone	Foxboro	Franklin	Medfield	Medway	Millis	Norfolk	Wrentham
2000	9,188	5,072	9,161	15,856	6,083	7,022	4,524	4,705	5,587
2012	9,771	5,179	9,428	16,857	5,893	7,080	4,481	4,995	5,723

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Labor Market Info; Labor Force and Unemployment Data.

Employment and Wages data reported by The EOLWD indicates that in the third quarter of 2012 Franklin's leading employment industry was the Manufacturing Industry with an average monthly employment of 3,999 followed by the Trade, Transportation and Utilities Industry employing an average of 3,736 persons per month. Franklin's third largest employment sector is the Education and Health Services Sector, employing 2,282 persons monthly. Other notable employment sectors in Franklin include: Professional Business and Services, Construction and Financial activities.

## *Employment & Wages*

### Employment

Franklin's unemployment rate has steadily increased in recent years, just as it has in many communities in Massachusetts. The Town's unemployment rate fluctuated from 3.8% to 3.9% between 2005 and 2007 before suddenly increasing to 4.4% in 2008 and climbing to a high of 7.5% in 2009. The unemployment rate declined in 2010 through 2012. For the most part, Franklin's unemployment rate has remained below both the State and County averages since

2005. However, in 2007 was it the same as Norfolk County when it was 3.8%, and it was 0.1% above Norfolk County in 2010 and 2011. Since 2005, Franklin's unemployment rate has been around 1% below that of the State's average, except in 2007 when it was .6% less than the Commonwealth's rate. (See Table ED-2: Unemployment Rate - Franklin, Norfolk County, Massachusetts).<sup>1</sup>

**Table ED-2: Unemployment Rate – Massachusetts, Norfolk County & Franklin**

Year	Franklin				Norfolk County (%)	Massachusetts (%)
	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Area Rate (%)		
2012	16,929	15,975	954	5.6	5.6	6.4
2011	16,764	15,708	1,056	6.3	6.2	7.4
2010	16,836	15,594	1,242	7.4	7.3	8.3
2009	17,195	15,901	1,294	7.5	7.6	8.4
2008	17,142	16,384	758	4.4	4.7	5.3
2007	16,739	16,106	633	3.8	3.8	4.4
2006	16,591	15,955	636	3.8	4.1	4.7
2005	16,391	15,756	635	3.9	4.1	4.8

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Labor Market Info; Available from < <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/LMIDataProg.asp>>, Labor Force/Unemployment, access Labor Force and Unemployment Data. Internet.

According to the EOLWD Employment and Wages (ES-202) data, there are 902 business establishments in Franklin as of the third quarter 2012 with the largest number of business establishments concentrated in the Trade, Transportation and Utilities industries, 200 establishments. This industry includes services such as wholesale trade, retail trade as well as transportation and warehousing. Other industries that have a significant number of establishments within Franklin are the Professional and Business Services, with 180 establishments and the Construction Industry, with 117 establishments.

Between 2005 and 2009 Franklin experienced an increase in its unemployment rate which may be attributed to a loss of employment opportunities available for Franklin's labor force in leading employment industries.

Between 2005 and 2009, Franklin experienced a 10% decrease in average monthly employment in the Trade, Transportation and Utilities industry. This may corresponds to their 5.1% loss in business establishments during that time. Additionally, the construction industry experienced a 32.2% loss in monthly employment and a 17.9% decrease in the number of construction related establishments.

The largest increase in employment has been in the Education and Health Services sector (6.7%), and the biggest employment downturn has been in the Financial Activities sector (-58.5%). The reason for such a drastic decrease in the Financial Activities sector is likely because of the loss of a major employer in Franklin in 2010; Putnam Investments.

Putnam investments started decreasing their workforce in 2006, and left the Town of Franklin in 2010. In 2006, Putnam Investments provided 1,015 jobs in Franklin, slowly decreasing to 661 jobs in 2009, and leaving completely the next year, taking with them the financial sector jobs that made the industry among the top employment industries of Franklin.

<sup>1</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Workforce Development, Labor Market Info; Available from < <http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/LMIDataProg.asp>>, Labor Force/Unemployment, access Labor Force and Unemployment Data. Internet.

## Leading Employers

As of July 2012, the most recent information available on this topic, Franklin's top 15 employers (see Table ED-3: Largest Employers in Franklin) are responsible for providing over 4,930 jobs, having increased the number of employees from just over 3,870 persons at these same companies since 2010.

**Table ED-3: Largest Employers in Franklin**

RANK	COMPANY	NATURE OF BUSINESS	(As of July) 2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
			Number of Employees						
1	EMC Corporation	Computer Storage/ Manufacturing	1,876	1,876	1,500	1,602	1600	933	947
2	Garelick Farms	Dairy	620	620	620	637	600	675	660
3	Thermo Fisher Scientific	Scientific Instruments and Equipment	385	385	385	385	384		
4	Dean College	College	318	200	91	200	298	274	300
5	Tegra Medical	Precision Grinding Medical Physicians & Surgeons	312	250	200	200	191	189	196
6	Owens & Minor, Inc.	Equipment & Supplies	308	308	270	323	320	290	275
7	Stop & Shop	Supermarket	190	175	200	200	191	189	196
8	Shaw's Supermarket	Supermarket	169	189	184	200	175	185	215
9	BJ's Wholesale Club	Wholesale Foods, etc.	145	120	130	130	119	130	140
10	Dynisco	Pressure Temperature Transmitters and Gauges	120						
11	Plansee		113						
12	Vacument Corp	Metalized Plastics	100	100	100	93	119		
13	Forge Hill Senior Care Facility		94						
14	Alpha Grainger	Manufactures screw machine products	92	118	92	93	153		
15	Jaco	Electronics	90	90	105	132	145		

Source: Town of Franklin, Office of the Town Treasurer, March 2012 \*Excludes Town of Franklin Employees, \*\* Includes Full and Part-time Employees

Of Franklin's top 15 employers, 10 are located in Franklin's industrial parks, Forge Park and Franklin Industrial Park. Franklin's largest employer is EMC Corporation located in the Franklin Industrial Park, and employs 1,876 people. The other leading employers not located in the Industrial Parks include dairy manufacturer Garelick Farms and the Stop & Shop and Shaw's supermarkets.

Half of all the leading employers that have been in Franklin for more than a year have reduced their employment levels since 2006. Garelick Farms, Franklin's second largest employer, employs 620 persons and has reduced their workforce by 6% since 2006. Jaco, an electronics manufacturing company, lost 38% of their staff, and Shaw's Supermarket and Vacument Corporation lost 21% and 16% of their staff respectively.

While some leading employers have decreased their employees, others, like EMC Corporation, increased their workforce by 98%, and Tegra Medical's workforce increased by 59%. Other growths include Owens & Minor Inc. at 12%, Dean College at 6%, and BJ's Wholesale at 3.5%.

## Wages

While many leading employment industries experienced losses in establishments and employment, none saw a loss in average weekly wage rates. The largest increase being in the construction industry, which went from a weekly average of \$845 in 2005 to \$1,257 in 2012; a 49% increase. The Financial Activities industry provided the second highest increases in wages, 45%, and the Information industry was the third highest at a 44% increase in wages. The Manufacturing Industry increased wages by 36% and the Leisure and Hospitality Industry increased wages by 22%.

Experiencing the least wage increase was the Professional and Business Services industry, showing only a 1% or 0.09% increase in average weekly wages between 2005 and 2009. Within the Manufacturing industry, Electronic Instrument Manufacturing wages increased the most, at a \$664 or 32% increase.

**Table ED-4: Average Weekly Wage Rates for all Industry - 2012**

Town	Average Weekly Wage Rate
Foxboro	\$1,289
Franklin	\$1,315
Medway	\$960
Norfolk	\$992
Medfield	\$792
Blackstone	\$692
Millis	\$650
Bellingham	\$714
Wrentham	\$632

Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Labor Market Info; Available from <<http://lmi2.detma.org/Lmi/LMIDataProg.asp>>, Labor Force/Unemployment, access Es-202 Data. Internet.

**Table ED-5: Median Earnings in 2010 by Sex for the Population 16 Years and Over with Earnings**

Town	Median Earnings, 2010		
	Total	Male	Female
Bellingham	41,285	49,985	34,735
Blackstone	37,102	50,197	28,599
Foxboro	46,934	59,915	33,941
Franklin	43,505	60,047	32,884
Medfield	54,107	82,369	36,672
Medway	49,022	66,985	39,467
Millis	41,812	55,333	32,423
Norfolk	51,194	70,824	32,482
Wrentham	48,146	58,474	36,853
Norfolk County	43,089	52,972	35,720
Massachusetts	35,703	42,993	29,827

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Census 2010

Compared to surrounding communities, Franklin's average weekly wage rate for all industries is the highest at \$1,315, and the majority of surrounding communities pay an average weekly wage rate below \$1,000, with Wrentham's average weekly wage rate being only \$632. Franklin's competitive wages make it attractive for workers to stay in Franklin to work rather than go to surrounding communities (see Table ED-4: Average Weekly Wage Rates for all Industry-2012). Franklin's average weekly wage rates are likely higher than surrounding communities because of the fields in which its labor force are employed. The Manufacturing industry, which is a leading employment sector in Franklin, tends to have higher weekly wage rates than industries such as accommodations and food services or the retail industry, which are leading employers in many of the Town's that surround Franklin.

The median earnings in Franklin come in sixth among the Towns in Norfolk County, yet they're higher than the average for Norfolk County and the state of Massachusetts. Earnings for males and females are drastically different in Franklin, as the median earnings for males in Franklin are just under two times as much as females. Median earnings for females are higher

than the state but not the county (see Table ED-5: Median Earnings in 2010 by Sex for the Population 16 Years and Over with Earnings).

## Location Quotients

A location quotient is an economic analysis method used to compare local economy to that of a larger economic region, such as the nation, state, county or other geographic area. By looking at location quotients, a community can ascertain whether they are too dependant upon one industry or group of industries for employment or production of goods. For example, if a location quotient is greater than 1.0 it may mean a community relies too heavily on one industry compared to the larger economic region while a low location quotient may be indicative of not enough representation of an industry in the community. One consideration that should be taken when looking at a low location quotient is if that industry is needed in the community. For example, Franklin's mining industry has a location quotient of 0.00, indicating mining jobs are not present in Franklin. However, there are no mining facilities in Franklin; therefore, a location quotient of 0.0 is not an alarming statistic.

Table ED-6: Location Quotients- 2009 shows a comparison between the Town of Franklin, Norfolk County and the State regarding industry in Franklin. In 2006, the Financial Activities sector had a location quotient of .94 showing that while there was not a dependence on jobs in this sector, there were many jobs within this sector in Franklin. In 2009, the Financial Services sector had a location quotient of .59, showing a significant loss of employment in this sector since 2006. One reason for this loss may be explained by the elimination of jobs in the Financial Sector offered by Putnam Investments, the number one employer and leading employer in the Financial Services sector in Franklin in 2006.

Putnam was once a critical employer in Franklin and was likely a provider of a majority of the jobs that represented the location quotient for this industry in 2006. Between 2006 and 2009, Putnam Investments slowly eliminated jobs at the Franklin location, finally leaving the Town all together in 2009. In 2006, the Financial Services Sector in Norfolk County had an average monthly employment of 1,067 persons (at this time, Putnam Investments employed 1,015 persons), while in 2009, after Putnam Investments left Franklin, Financial Services had an average monthly employment of 582 persons. This is a very good example of reliance upon one industry for employment. The elimination of the majority of jobs in a leading employment sector occurred with the loss of a single company, Putnam Investments.

**Table ED-6: Location Quotients- 2009**

INDUSTRY CLASS	AVERAGE MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT Franklin	LOCATION QUOTIENTS		
		Norfolk County to State	Franklin to State	Franklin to Norfolk County
Total, All Industries	14,559	1.00	1.00	1.00
Goods-Producing Domain	4,355	0.97	2.41	2.48
Natural Resources and Mining	22	0.33	0.61	1.87
Manufacturing	3,834	0.84	3.19	3.80
Service-Providing Domain	10,205	1.00	0.80	0.80
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	3,741	1.12	1.41	1.26
22 – Utilities	0	0.40	0.00	0.00
42 – Wholesale Trade	1,408	1.34	2.38	1.77
44-45 – Retail Trade	1,623	1.16	1.04	0.90
48-49 – Transportation and Warehousing	709	0.80	1.60	2.00
Information	90	1.25	0.21	0.17
Financial Activities	582	1.39	0.59	0.42
52 – Finance and Insurance	361	1.40	0.45	0.32
53 – Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	221	1.32	1.18	0.89
Professional and Business Services	985	1.01	0.46	0.45
Education and Health Services	2,619	0.84	0.68	0.81
61 – Educational Services	1,748	0.85	1.16	1.37
62 – Health Care and Social Assistance	871	0.83	0.37	0.44
Leisure and Hospitality	1,469	0.99	1.04	1.05
71 – Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	426	1.24	1.74	1.40
72 – Accommodation and Food Services	1,043	0.94	0.89	0.95
Other Services	526	1.07	0.87	0.82
81 – Other Services, Ex. Public Admin	526	1.07	0.87	0.82

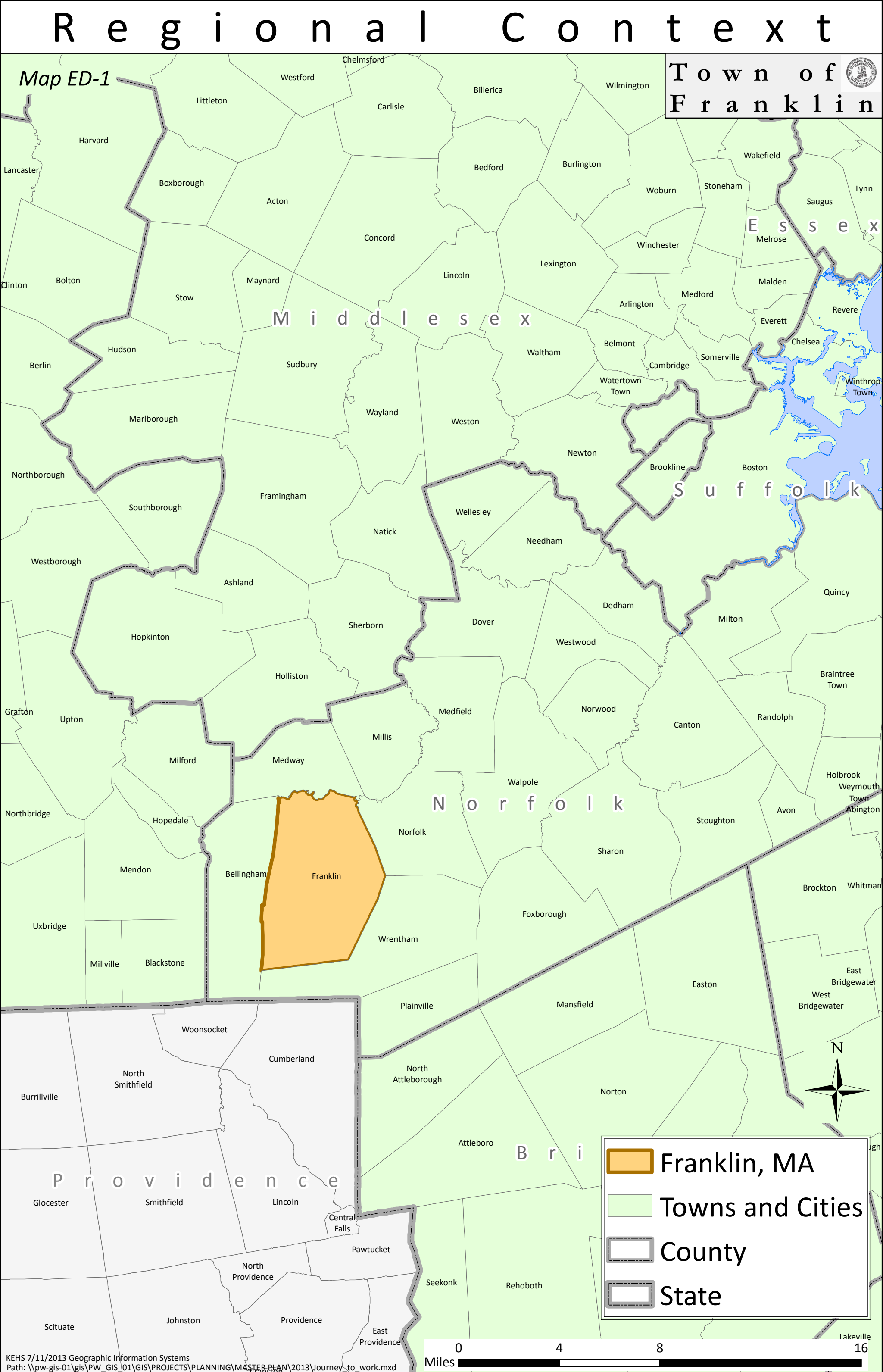
Source: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development  
Labor and Workforce Development, ES-202 Data <[http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/lmi\\_es\\_a.asp#IND\\_LOCATION](http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/lmi_es_a.asp#IND_LOCATION)>

## ***Journey to Work***

### **Commute**

Only 26% of Franklin commuters live and work in Franklin, the other 74% commute outside of Franklin for work<sup>2</sup>. Direct access to I-495 (at two locations) and access to several smaller routes as well as access to two MBTA stations make Franklin an ideal Town to commute to and from for work (see Map ED-1: Regional Context)

<sup>2</sup> Census 2000, "MCD/County to MCD/County Worker Flows Files," Special Tabulations Series, <<http://www.census.gov/mp/www/spectab/specialtab.html>>



# Regional Context

Map ED-1

Town of  
Franklin



- Franklin, MA
- Towns and Cities
- County
- State

10,953 people commute from Franklin to a community outside of Franklin to work; the most commuters, 13%, travel to the City of Boston. Of the top 10 places residents of Franklin commute to, three are neighboring communities (Milford, Bellingham and Medway) representing 10.2% of Franklin's commuters (see Table ED-7: Top 10 Places Residents of Franklin Commute for Work).

**Table ED-7: Top Ten Places Residents of Franklin Commute for Work**

Location	Number of Commuters
City of Boston	1,455
Milford	554
Framingham	544
Natick	344
Norwood	332
Marlborough	309
Bellingham	293
Needham	281
Medway	273
City of Cambridge	265
Total number of Persons that Commute out of Franklin for Work	10,953

Source: Census 2000, "MCD/County to MCD/County Worker Flows Files," Special Tabulations Series, <http://www.census.gov/mp/www/spectab/specialtab.html>

Approximately 12,907 persons commute to Franklin for work; with 10% commuting from Woonsocket, Rhode Island (see Table: ED-8: Top Ten Residences of those that Commute to Franklin for Work). Woonsocket, Rhode Island is just 10 miles or about a 20 minute commute from Franklin. 21% of commuters come to Franklin to work from a community within the State of Rhode Island. Nearly 22% of people commute from the neighboring communities of Bellingham, Blackstone, Medway, Milford, Norfolk and Wrentham.

**Table ED-8: Top Ten Residences of those that Commute to Franklin for Work**

Location	Number of Commuters
Woonsocket, Rhode Island	1,282
Bellingham	871
Milford	652
City of Boston	495
Attleboro	388
Blackstone	381
North Attleboro	361
Medway	357
Wrentham	325
Norfolk	246
Total Number of Persons that Commute to Franklin for Work	12,907

Source: Source: Census 2000, "MCD/County to MCD/County Worker Flows Files," Special Tabulations Series, <http://www.census.gov/mp/www/spectab/specialtab.html>

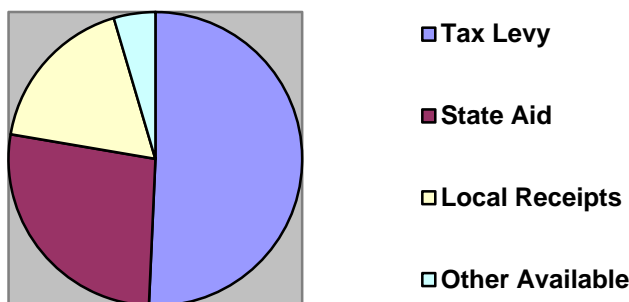
U.S. Census 2000 data shows that 34.2% of Franklin commuters travel less than 20 minutes to work, while only 15.7% commute over an hour for employment.<sup>3</sup> Almost 90% of Franklin commuters drive to work, likely as a result of excellent highway access and the Town's close proximity to many surrounding communities that are leading providers of employment. 930

<sup>3</sup> Table P31. Travel Time to Work for Workers 16 and over.



persons take the train to work, the second highest means of transportation to work, while a mere 35 persons commute via bus.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure ED-1: FY 2013 Revenue by Source  
Town of Franklin**



### ***Tax Classification***

The largest percent of the Town's revenue, 50.7%, comes from the generation of personal property and real estate tax levies; the rest of the Town's revenue comes from other sources such as State Aid (26.99%), local receipts (including excise tax, 17.74%) and other miscellaneous sources 4.57%). See Figure ED-1: FY 2013 Revenue by Source.

Franklin has a single tax rate, meaning residential and commercial

properties pay the same rate; the FY 2013 tax rate is currently set at \$14.34 per \$1,000. The amount a business or individual pays in taxes is determined by multiplying the tax rate by the assessed value of the property and dividing by 1,000. For example, if a property is valued at \$300,000.00 a person would pay \$14.34 times \$300,000.00 divided by \$1,000.00 or \$4,302.00 in taxes.

According to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, the Town's assessed property values as of FY13 was \$4,078,795,875 with a total tax levy of \$58,489,933. 79% of Franklin's tax levy comes from residential properties which are assessed at \$3,217,480,235.00; the average single-family home pays \$4,846.00 in taxes. (See Table ED-9: Town of Franklin Fiscal Year 2013 Tax Classification).

**Table ED-9: Town of Franklin Fiscal Year 2013 Tax Classification**

Tax Classification	Assessed Values (\$)	Tax Levy (\$)	Tax Rate (\$)
Residential	3,217,480,235	46,138,667	14.34
Open Space	0	0	0
Commercial	309,624,420	4,440,014	14.34
Industrial	407,055,540	5,837,176	14.34
Personal Property	144,635,680	2,074,076	14.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,078,795,875</b>	<b>58,489,933</b>	

Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services

The second largest contributor to Franklin's tax revenue is from the Town's industrially assessed properties. These properties make up 10% of Franklin's tax revenue. There are more than 2,300-acres of industrially zoned land in Franklin, which support \$407,055,540 of assessed valuation and contribute in excess of \$5.83 million in annual property taxes.

The EMC Corporation, is a producer of computer storage and electronic devices, is Franklin's number one employer and is also one of the Town's top tax payers, contributing, contributing 1.3% of the Town's taxes yearly (\$711,237).

Franklin encourages the development of industrial based businesses in properly zoned areas and will offer, when appropriate, tax increment financing to business (see Economic Incentives) in order to help a company locate in Franklin or expand its business and remain in Franklin. A priority for the Town is increasing the tax revenue without increasing the municipal services that

<sup>4</sup> Table P30. Means of Transportation to Work for Workers 16 and Over.

are often required by residential properties, i.e., an increase in students in the school; this can be done by increasing commercial and industrial properties in Town.

Just over 7% of Franklin's tax revenue comes from commercial properties. The leading commercial tax payer in Franklin is Cedar-Franklin Village, LLC, the owner of the Franklin Village Shopping Center located on West Central Street. This area contains several retail stores, including Stop & Shop, one of Franklin's leading employers, as well as restaurant franchises. In all, Cedar-Franklin Village, LLC pays 1.2% or \$702,952 in taxes to the Town (see Table ED-10: Largest Tax Payers in Franklin).

**Table ED-10: Largest Tax Payers in Franklin**

RANK	NAME	NATURE OF BUSINESS	VALUATION (\$)	TAXES (\$)	%
1	EMC Corporation	Computer Storage / Manufacturing	51,764,000	711,237	1.3%
2	Cedar-Franklin Village LLC	Mall (Franklin Village)	51,161,000	702,952	1.2%
3	Crp-2 Forge, LLC	Industrial Park	30,225,740	469,298	0.8%
4	New England Power / Mass Electric	Electric Company	23,781,100	415,302	0.7%
5	Verizon New England	Telecommunications	21,238,400	326,752	0.6%
6	Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance	Apartment Building	20,852,900	291,816	0.5%
7	Gpt-Glenn Meadow LLC	Apartment Building	19,690,300	286,519	0.5%
8	Brekelhammer, Robert B Tr	Dairy (Garellick Farms)	20,768,200	270,645	0.5%
9	The Realty Assoc Fund Viii	Warehouse	17,725,400	243,547	0.4%
10	Franklin Shoppers Fair	Mall (Horace Mann Plaza)	16,099,500	221,207	0.4%
TOTAL			286,693,940	3,939,274	7%

Source: Town of Franklin, Office of the Town Treasurer, 2012

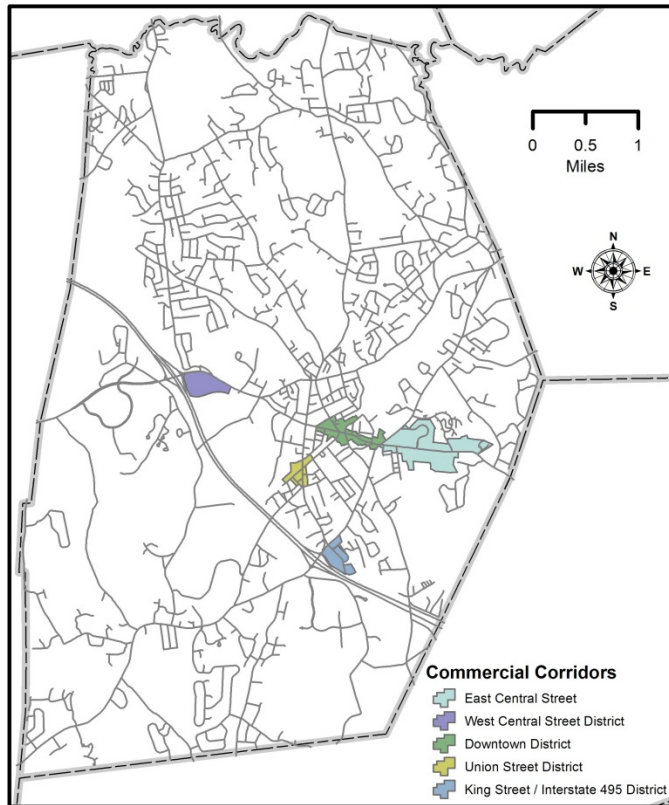
It is important that Franklin continues to promote economic development within the community because of the large percentage of revenue that is produced from commercial and industrial properties. A combined 17.5% of the Town's real estate tax revenue comes from industrial and commercial properties (7% commercial, 10% industrial). If there is a decline in businesses within Franklin's industrial and commercial areas, there is subsequently a decline in tax revenue produced by these industries. A loss of business in Franklin may prompt the need to increase taxes in order to maintain the Town's tax levy, by default leading to an increase in residential tax rates as well. For this reason, Franklin should encourage the development of new industrial and commercial based businesses within the Town.

## ***Commercial Corridors***

### **East Central Street**

East Central Street runs from the Wrentham Town line continuing east to Downtown Franklin where it turns into West Central Street (at the intersection of Main Street); East Central Street is also known as Route 140. The zoning along East Central Street varies, from Rural Residential I and Single Family III near the Wrentham boarder to Commercial II for just over a mile stretch passing the Town's Municipal Building at 355 East Central Street into the Downtown where zoning changes to Commercial I.

Along the stretch of East Central Street that begins at the Wrentham Town line are single-family residential properties. Some of the properties have been converted to commercial uses, such as dentist and doctor's offices; commercial uses are allowed in a single-family zoning district with a Special Permit from the Planning Board.



**Figure ED-2: Commercial Corridors**

As the road continues, the zoning changes to Commercial II. Located along this stretch of East Central Street are a Big Y Supermarket built in 2011-12, and the Horace Mann Shopping Center which includes a Supermarket along with several other retail establishments. East Central Street continues into the Downtown, a further description of the Downtown Commercial District is found below.

### **West Central Street Commercial District**

West Central Street begins in Downtown Franklin at the intersection of Main Street and continues west until intersecting with the border of Bellingham; West Central Street, also known as Route 140, is accessible via exit 17 off I-495.

The beginning of West Central Street, is in the downtown which is zoned Downtown Commercial; this section of roadway is one-way between Main Street and Emmons Street. Just outside the Downtown Commercial District is zoned

Single Family IV until the intersection of Beaver Street and West Central Street where it changes to Commercial II zoning. The Commercial II zoning district changes into a Business zone just after Panther Way, then turning to Industrial Zone near the Forge Park Commuter Rail Station for the remainder of the roadway before reaching the Bellingham Town line.

Within the Single Family IV zone, there is a mix of converted residential properties that contain small scale businesses and single and multi-family homes. There have been discussions regarding the appropriate zoning for this stretch of West Central Street. Many argue that this area should be rezoned to a commercial or business zone. As the roadway continues, it quickly changes to a dense, commercial area. The largest commercial development is the Franklin Village Shopping Center which houses a multitude of restaurants and retail stores, including a large supermarket. In the business zoned portion of West Central Street, there are several restaurants, as well as the large warehouse style retail establishment known as BJ's Wholesale Club.

### **Downtown Commercial District**

Three roads, East and West Central Street, Main Street and Emmons Street intersect at various points to form a triangle in the heart of Downtown Franklin. Also included in Downtown Franklin is the Town Common, Dean College and several small side streets that radiate out from the commercial center. Currently, there is one-way traffic circulations through the roads that make-up the Downtown triangle; Route 140 north forms Main Street and Emmons Street while Route 140 south forms West Central Street.

The Downtown core is within the Downtown Commercial Zoning District. Within this area there are many small businesses and eating establishments, many of which are members of the



**Downtown Franklin**

Photo by: Robert Wierling, Franklin Resident, 2012

Franklin Downtown Partnership, a non-profit organization that works to promote downtown businesses and the livelihood of Downtown Franklin.

The Downtown Commercial Zoning District was created in 2012 to attract developers of mixed-use, transit oriented properties; it is anticipated that this new zoning district will further promote economic development in the Downtown.

In addition to proposed zoning changes, the Town is in the planning stages of a \$7.5 million Roadway and Streetscape Improvement Project for the Downtown area. This project includes intersection

reconfiguration, traffic light improvements, installation of pedestrian friendly elements including new sidewalks, lighting and crosswalks. All of these improvements are anticipated to boost the economic livelihood of the Downtown Commercial Corridor.

## **Union Street Commercial District**

Union Street once ran from the southern portion of Town near the Wrentham border continuing north, ending at the intersection of Pleasant Street. But construction of I-495 created two distinct areas; Upper Union Street (see Industrial/ manufacturing for more information) and Union Street.

Union Street begins at the intersection of King Street and continues for several miles until it intersects with Pleasant Street. The zoning along Union Street varies from Single Family III at the intersection of King Street, changing to Commercial I and Commercial II in the Unionville section of Town, with a small portion zoned General Residential V finally changing to Single Family IV until the road intersects with Pleasant Street just past the Town Common. Along the Commercially zoned section of Union Street, in what is called the Unionville area, are several small dining establishments, and a few commercial properties. Historically, the Union Street Business Corridor was the location of many of Franklin's mill buildings. Today, these buildings have been converted into an apartment complex as well as a shopping center that houses several small commercial businesses.

Recently, the Town made infrastructure improvements to the roadways and sidewalks. However, there has been no significant private sector investment in the area. While not blighted, buildings are deteriorating as a result of their age. The Union Street Business Corridor has ample parking and would benefit from investment in the building stock to create a more thriving, pedestrian friendly area, increasing business prosperity in this Corridor.

## **King Street / Interstate 495 Commercial District**

King Street runs southwest from the intersection of Chestnut Street and East Central Street until it intersects with Washington Street. King Street is accessible via exit 16 off of I-495.

The King Street Commercial District is small, housing a handful of restaurants, a health club, gas station and hotel; this area is zoned for Commercial II uses. The portion of King Street heading towards Washington Street was recently rezoned from Single Family Residential III to Business. Recently, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts made a significant investment in the

infrastructure at exit 16 off I-495 upon entering King Street. These improvements included underground utilities and installation traffic lights to improve safety at an otherwise dangerous intersection.

## ***Industrial / Manufacturing***

In the 1980's, the Town rezoned former farmlands lying adjacent to I-495 for industrial uses. Since that time, the Town has rezoned additional residential property to industrial several times, including approximately 110 acres in 2007.

Currently, approximately 2,334± acres of land in Franklin are industrially zoned. In addition, the Town contains over 630-acres of commercially zoned land (Commercial I, Commercial II, Business, and Office). 660± acres of the Town's industrially zoned land are located within the Town's two largest industrial parks; Franklin Industrial Park and Forge Park. Other areas in Franklin that contain large amounts of industrially zoned land are along the Grove Street Business Corridor, where there are numerous established manufacturing industries, as well as the Town owned Nu-Style property, which is a Brownfield site.

Most of Franklin's commercial and industrial stock is post-1980 construction. Approximately three million square feet of commercial and industrial space was added between 1982 and 1992. Franklin has had a steady increase in commercial and industrial development. As of 2001 there was approximately 7,200,000 square feet of industrial and commercial space in use or available. Between 2002 and 2005 another 2,700,000 square feet of industrial and commercial space was added, including seven buildings in Franklin Industrial Park during 2004. The continued annual increase in commercial and industrial construction has assured that Franklin's tax rate stays at a reasonable level, and that the Town will continue to be attractive to developers. During the last five years, commercial and industrial development has slowed, but even with the downturn in the economy and lessening in available industrially-zoned property, Franklin's commercial and industrial stock increases each year. Currently (FY2013) the Town has approximately 2,575,900 square feet of Commercial space and 7,870,500 square feet of Industrial.

Franklin's industrial and office parks house a substantial number and variety of businesses representing many industry sectors, including metal fabrication, food processing, data storage equipment, software development, fiber optics, electronic equipment, measurement devices, bio-storage, metalized paper, and distribution. In recent years Franklin has attracted new innovative technology companies performing research and development and manufacturing in a variety of areas, including nanotechnology, robotics, specialty materials, life science, medical devices, biotechnology, and pharmaceuticals. Many of these industries are located in one of the areas which are detailed below:

### **Franklin Industrial Park**

Franklin Industrial Park is a 300-acre master-planned industrial and office park located approximately 0.2 mile from Interstate 495's Exit 16. Twenty-two of the Parks parcels are within the Franklin Industrial Park Economic Opportunity Areas (EOA), twenty of which are within the Franklin Industrial Park Priority Development Site (PDS); 11 parcels are within the Town's Biotechnology Uses Overlay District. The park includes a substantial number of distribution and manufacturing companies, including EMC, Franklin's largest employer. While all but one parcel within Franklin Industrial Park are built out, several properties are frequently available for lease.

### **Forge Park**

Forge Park is a 360-acre master planned office and Industrial Park on Route 140, one mile from Interstate 495's Exit 17. Thirty-three of the parcels are within the Forge Park EOA, thirty of

which are within the Forge Park PDS; 28 parcels are within the Town's Biotechnology Uses Overlay District. The park contains a wide range of office, research and development, and manufacturing companies. In addition, Forge Park is the site of Forge Park Commuter Rail Station, Marriott Residence Inn, and a YMCA fitness center.

### **Pond Street Property**

The Town owned Pond Street Property consists of two parcels totaling 33.952 acres which was the location of the Town's wastewater treatment facility between 1902 and 1980. The property is both an EOA and a PDS, and within the Town's Biotechnology Uses Overlay District. The site is located approximately 2,000 feet from Route 140 and is 0.7 miles from the Forge Park MBTA Commuter Rail Station. The site is within the only "Office" (O) zoning district in Franklin.

### **Grove Street Business Corridor**

The Town of Franklin's Grove Street Business Corridor consists of several hundred acres of business and industrially zoned property adjacent to I-495 between Exits 16 and 17. The Grove Street Business Corridor includes a wide assortment of office, manufacturing and warehouse facilities, and includes several small office and business parks, including the Grove Street Business Park, Kenwood Industrial Park, Beaulieu Business Park, Franklin Oaks Office Park, and Financial Way Business Park. Several properties are available for sale or lease. The Business Corridor contains three EOAs, and the majority of the business corridor is included in the Town's Biotechnology Uses Overlay District.

### **Upper Union Street**

Upper Union Street runs from the border of Wrentham to the intersection of King Street at Constitution Boulevard. Upper Union Street, is zoned Rural Residential I along the southern border of Town, changing to Industrial at Ribero Drive until it intersects with King Street. Upper Union Street is classified as a Scenic Road because of its stone walls and its rural landscape.

Along the industrially zoned portion of the roadway is a series of industrial style buildings and a hotel. Many of the buildings located along this stretch of Upper Union Street are designed as contractor condominiums. These single unit spaces have large bay garage doors and high ceilings that provide larger work areas for businesses primary involved with a trade, i.e. contractor's garage, storage for small-scale businesses or carpenters. In addition to contractor condominiums, there is also an auto sales store and several small businesses with a concentration in construction services located along the roadway.

## ***Vacant and Underutilized Properties***

### **Brownfield Redevelopment**

Franklin was once a vibrant manufacturing community with deep industrial and manufacturing roots leading back to the days of the Industrial Revolution. What remains of a productive era are now dilapidated, abandoned and underutilized mill and factory buildings and their environmental histories of pollutants and contaminants found at the Town's Brownfield sites.

As Franklin looks to expand its economic base and balance residential and commercial growth, redevelopment of Brownfield sites is extremely important; the community's economic vitality depends upon it.



## Nu-Style Property

The Town owned Nu-Style Property consists of two parcels (Map 276, Lot 022 and Map 276, Lot 027) which have been vacant for more than 15 years. The property sits in a primarily commercial and industrial area, known as the Grove Street Business Corridor and is ideally located less than five minutes away from Interstate 495. Lot 022 is approximately 9,929 square feet and contains a 4,000 square foot one and one-half story building. The property's existing condition is an unsafe environment for residents and lowers property values of businesses nearby. Lot 027 is currently vacant, and was the location of an EPA and Town funded brownfield remediation project, which is nearing completion. The remediation work included demolition of a 42,000 square feet vacant, dilapidated two-story building, and removal of over 500 tons of contaminated soil.



Nu-Style Property prior to demolition -  
Grove Street

## Pond Street Property

On September 25, 2001, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded the Town of Franklin a Targeted Brownfield Assessment (TBA) grant to conduct an environmental assessment of the Old Sewer Bed Site located at the Town-owned Pond Street Property. A risk assessment determined that a condition of No Significant Risk to human health or the environment exists at the site and a permanent solution was achieved at the site without the need for remedial action. It was also determined that no activity and use limitations (AUL) was required to maintain a condition of No Significant Risk under current or foreseeable future Site conditions.

## Private Brownfields

Within Franklin, there are five (5) privately owned properties that have activity and use limitations (AUL)<sup>5</sup>. This means that these sites have restrictions imposed on them for future use as a result of the contamination found and the extent of the remediation at the site. The five sites that have AULs are summarized in Table ED-11 below.

**Table ED-11: Sites with Use Limitations**

Release Address	Site Name / Location Aid	Compliance Status	Date	Phase	RAO Class
5 Fisher Road	Clark Cutter McDermott Co.	RAO	12/5/2005	PHASE V	A3
140 East Central Street	Shell Service Station	RAO	4/27/2006	PHASE IV	A3
Cottage Street Extension	No Location	RAO	11/15/2002	PHASE II	A3
138 East Central Street	No Location	RAO	1/28/2002	PHASE III	A3
235 Cottage Street	Gloucester Co. Inc.	RAO	3/2/2004		A3

Source: Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, "Searchable Sites, Reportable Release Lookup"  
<<http://db.state.ma.us/dep/cleanup/sites/search.asp>>

<sup>5</sup> Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, "Searchable Sites, Reportable Release Lookup"  
<<http://db.state.ma.us/dep/cleanup/sites/search.asp>>

In addition to the five sites listed above, there are numerous sites throughout Franklin that have had releases significant enough to notify the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Many of these releases involve oil spills that require clean-up but are not classified as extremely hazardous spills such as those that have use limitations imposed after clean-up.

## ***Economic Incentives***

Economic development related efforts are crucial to attracting new businesses and industrial manufacturing companies as well as retaining these types of businesses in Franklin. The benefits of providing opportunities such as Tax Increment Financing or expedited permitting to a company are significant for the Town, including increasing the value of Franklin's commercial and industrial tax base, filling the Town's empty and underutilized industrially zoned buildings, attracting the right mix of companies to the community, and increasing the number of living wage jobs for residents.

## **Priority Development Sites**

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 43D (Chapter 43D), provides for local option, site-specific, expedited permitting for commercial and industrial projects in locally defined "Priority Development Sites" (PDS), see below. The Town of Franklin has adopted Chapter 43D regulations at both Franklin Industrial Park and Forge Park, as well as at the Town owned Pond Street Property. Chapter 43D provides an opportunity for a community to proactively target commercial or industrial sites or "PDSs" and to recruit developers by offering a predictable and streamlined permitting process (180 days or less).<sup>6</sup> If development occurs at a PDS, local permitting must be completed within 180 days, by all Boards and Commissions involved in the permitting processes. Franklin has three Priority Development Sites totaling over 546 acres of land, which are shown on Map ED-2: Economic Opportunity Areas & Priority Development Sites, and summarized below:

1. ***Franklin Industrial Park Priority Development Site***, consisting of 20 privately owned, industrially zoned parcels totaling 252.3+/- acres located on four roadways (Constitution Boulevard, Discovery Way, Freedom Way and Liberty Way);
2. ***Forge Park Priority Development Site***, 30 privately owned, industrially zoned parcels totaling 259.8+/- acres on three roadways (Forge Parkway, National Drive, West Central Street [Route 140]);
3. ***Pond Street Priority Development Site***, consisting of two town-owned, office zoned parcels totaling 33.95 acres on Pond Street.

## **Tax Increment Financing**

Franklin is part of the I-495/95 South Regional Technology Economic Target Area, and as such can offer businesses looking to start up or expand in Franklin one of the most attractive incentives a Massachusetts community can offer a business, a Tax Increment Finance Agreement (TIF). The Town of Franklin supports the use of this local tax credit for a wide range of development projects, including projects that create a significant number of livable wage jobs for Franklin residents, support innovative technology, and result in redevelopment of empty or underutilized industrially zoned properties, or development of new facilities. Once a business negotiates a tax increment finance agreement with the Town of Franklin it may qualify for a state investment tax credit for qualifying tangible/depreciable assets, as well as other significant tax

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<sup>6</sup> Executive of Off Housing and Economic Development, Chapter 43D Information, Expedited Permitting Fact Sheet. <<http://www.mass.gov/>> keyword "Chapter 43D".



incentives. In order for a business or property owner to qualify for a tax increment finance agreement the specific parcels must be within an established Economic Opportunity Area.

### **Economic Opportunity Areas**

An Economic Opportunity Area (EOA) is a site located within a community that is within the larger regional Economic Target Area (ETA); as mentioned above, Franklin is part of the I-495/95 South Regional Technology ETA. According to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 23A, an EOA must be determined to be a “blighted open area”, “decadent area”, or “substandard area”, or has experienced a plant closing or permanent layoff resulting in a job loss of two thousand or more within the four years prior to designation as an EOA or, is a plant or equipment used to produce, manufacture, or otherwise generate electricity which has a market value at the time of sale that is at least 50 per cent less than its current net book value. An EOA can be a specific site or it can be numerous properties that abut each other. EOAs are designated through an application to the State’s Economic Assistance Coordinating Council who will then determine if the proposed EOA meets the standards of M.G.L. Chapter 23A for designation of an EOA.

The Town has six multi-parcel economic opportunity areas which are shown on Map ED-2: Economic Opportunity Areas & Priority Development Sites, and summarized below:

1. ***Forge Park Economic Opportunity Area***, consisting of 33 parcels on 277.51± acres of industrially zoned land.
2. ***Franklin Industrial Park Economic Opportunity Area***, consisting of 22 parcels on 261.43± acres of industrially zoned land.
3. ***Pond Street Economic Opportunity Area***, consisting of two Town-owned parcels on 33.95± acres of office zoned land.
4. ***North Grove Street Economic Opportunity Area***, consisting of 9 parcels on 24± acres of business zoned land.
5. ***South Grove Street Economic Opportunity Area***, consisting of 32 parcels on 221.52± acres industrially zoned land.
6. ***Financial Way Economic Opportunity Area***, consisting of 2 industrially zoned parcels on 122.6± acre

In addition, the Town’s first EOA was the Master Drive EOA, which was established in 2004 in order to provide Eikos, Inc with a 6-year, TIF agreement. Eikos, Inc was to create 20 new, permanent, full-time jobs for Franklin residents and/or those within the ETA. Eikos would invest \$1.2 to \$1.5 million dollars in the company; in turn, the Town would give Eikos, Inc. a Tax Increment Financing exemption for a period of six years ranging from 90% in the first year reducing to 20% in the last year. Eikos, Inc. never reached their job creation goals and investment in the property; the company was decertified in 2009 and the EOA expired in 2010.

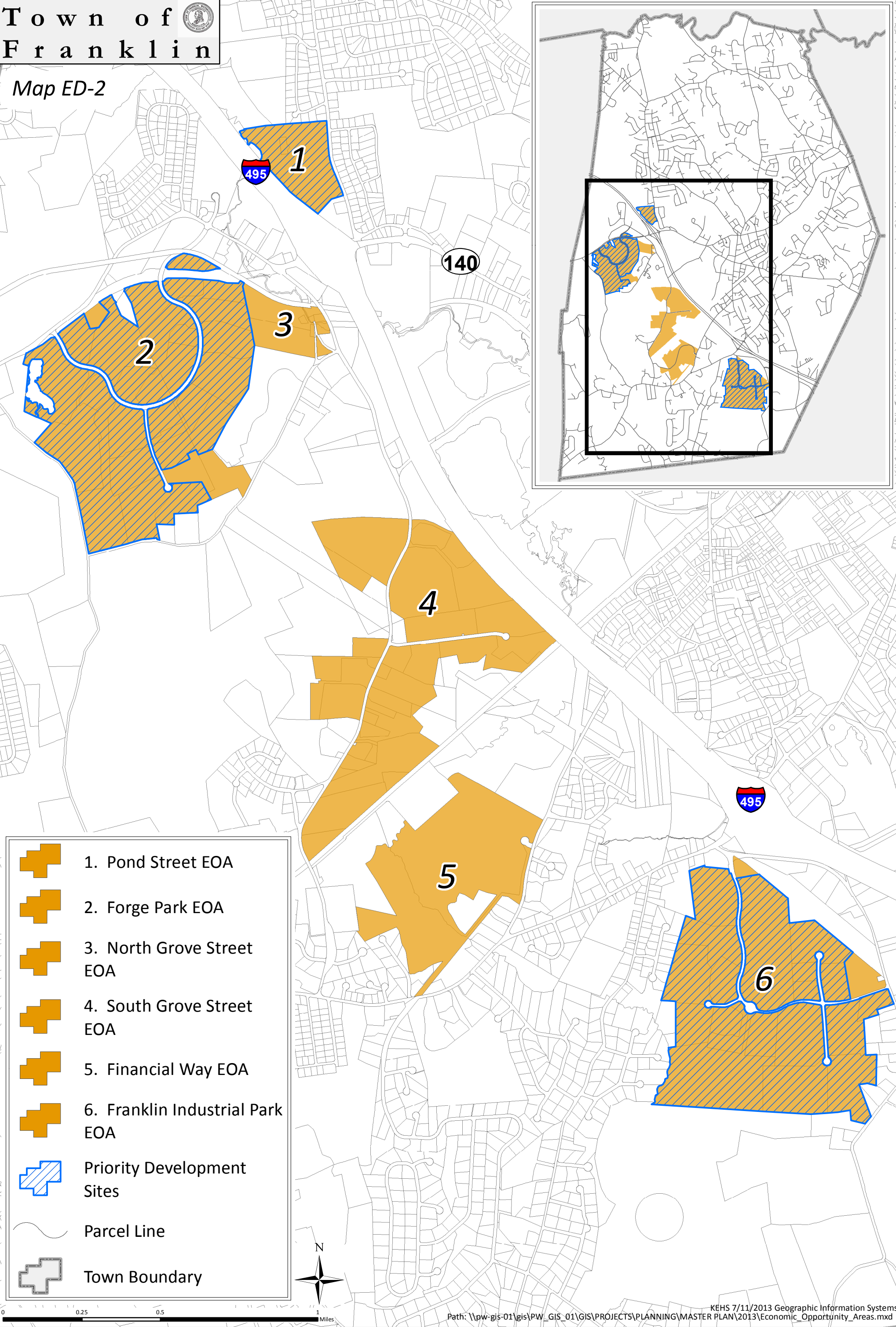
9 Forge Park EOA was established in 2008 in order to provide New England Precision Grinding (NEPG) with a 10-year TIF and provide NEPG with the opportunity to access substantial State investment tax credits. NEPG is surpassing their TIF agreement requirements in both employment opportunities and investment in the company.

# Economic Opportunity Areas & Priority Development Sites

Town of Franklin



Map ED-2



## Biotechnology Uses

In 2010, changes were made to the Town of Franklin's Biotechnology Uses Zoning Overlay district to include eleven (11) additional parcels and to remove one parcel, which was sold to the State Forest. In addition, changes were made to the entirety of the Town's Biotechnology bylaw, allowing biotechnology uses within the Town of Franklin's Biotechnology Use Zoning District by right, subject to limitations and conditions, rather than by a Special Permit from the Town Council as previously required under the Town's Biotechnology Bylaw. The Bylaw requires a Franklin Board of Health Biotechnology Operating Protocol Permit prior to commencing a biotechnology use or constructing any structure for such use. By rewriting the Bylaw, the Town made it easier for biotechnology companies to come to Franklin by removing the formerly lengthy process that discouraged these industries from siting a facility in Town.

Portions of Forge Park and Franklin Industrial Park are within Franklin's Biotechnology Uses Zoning Overlay District. During 2011 additional parcels within the Grove Street Business Corridor, and the Town's Pond Street property were added to the Overlay District (see Map ED-3: Biotechnology Use Zoning District).

## State Development Incentives

There are a variety of State programs that can be utilized by Massachusetts communities to improve infrastructure in order to attract commercial and industrial development. Recently, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts introduced a "one-stop shop for municipalities seeking public infrastructure funding to support economic development" called the MassWorks Infrastructure Program. The program has consolidated six formally separate grant applications into one comprehensive grant application that includes the following programs:

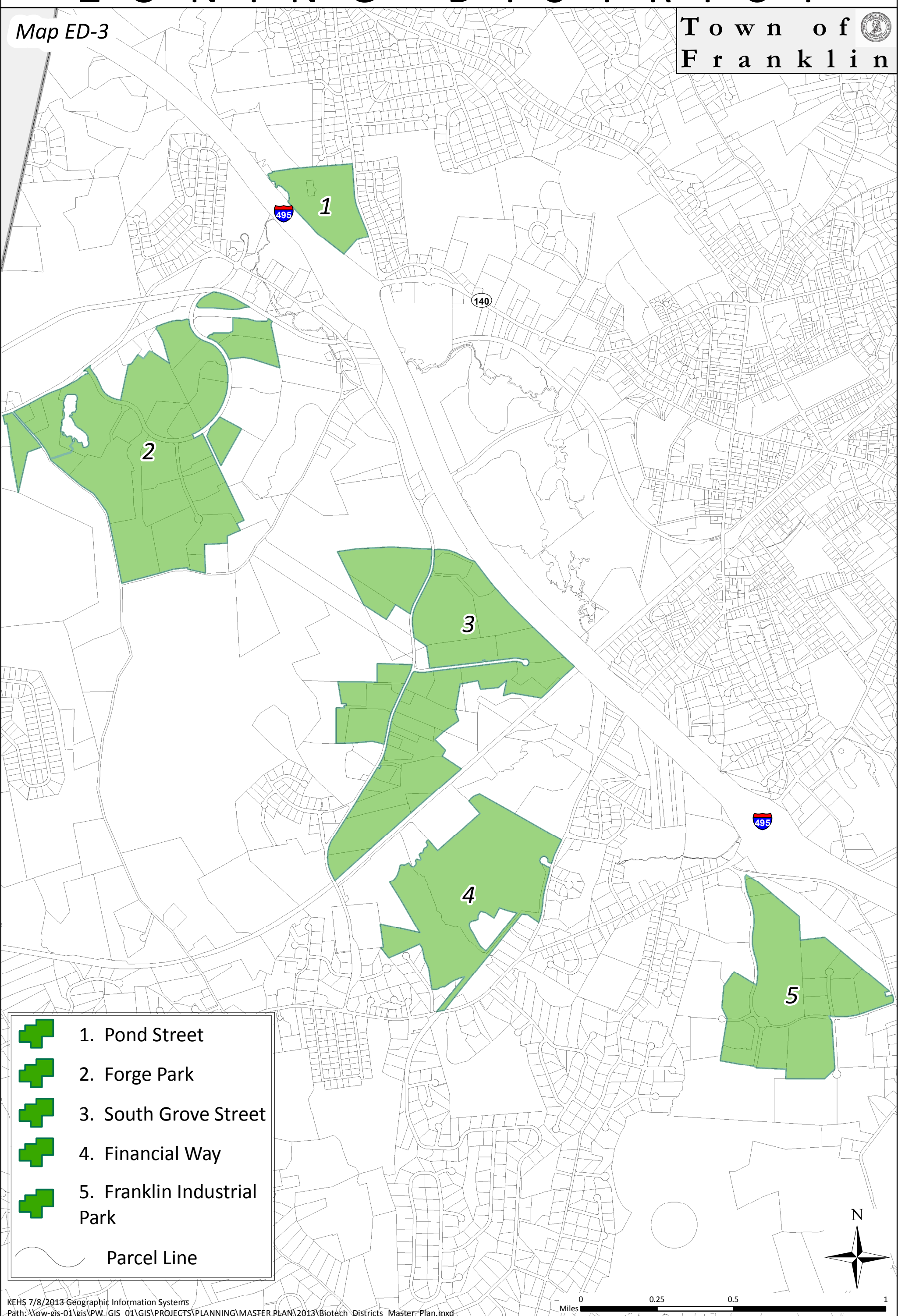

1. **Community Development Action Grant (CDAG):** Available for projects that build local economies, eliminates blight, create jobs and produce workforce and affordable housing that would not occur by private enterprise alone. Communities may apply for up to \$1 million dollars in CDAG funding.
2. **Public Works Economic Development Program (PWED):** Funding to assist with transportation infrastructure needs.
3. **Growth District Initiative Grant (GDI):** Used to create a level of readiness within identified growth districts. Utilized in areas that has been identified as being appropriate for significant new growth (residential, commercial or mixed-use).
4. **Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion Program (MORE):** Offers assistance to stimulate job creation and economic growth by providing the public infrastructure improvements companies need.
5. **Small Town Rural Assistance Program (STRAP):** This program is available to Town's with a population of 7,000 or less and is not available to Franklin.
6. **Transit Oriented Development Grant Program (TOD):** Used to increase compact, mixed-use, walkable development close to transit stations.





# BIOTECHNOLOGY USE ZONING DISTRICT


Map ED-3


Town of  
Franklin





 1. Pond Street

 2. Forge Park

 3. South Grove Street

 4. Financial Way

 5. Franklin Industrial Park

 Parcel Line

There are many other programs available through the State to help companies and industries expand, relocate or remain in Massachusetts. These programs focus on job creation and retention as well as business retention; some of these programs include:

### **Job Creation Incentive Program for Biotechnology and Medical Device**

**Manufacturing Companies:** The incentives are paid to companies that create new biotech and medical device manufacturing jobs in Massachusetts. These companies must engage primarily in research, development, production, or provision of biotechnology or be a company engaged in the production of medical device manufacturing. Companies must be able to increase their Massachusetts employment by at least 10 full-time bio-technology jobs over the previous calendar year. If companies qualify for this program, they will receive job incentive payments equal to fifty-percent of the salary attributed to the increase of jobs multiplied by the Massachusetts personal income tax rate. This program is offered through the Massachusetts Office of Business Development.

**MassEcon Site Finder:** The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is host to a service called MassEcon Site Finder (<http://massecon.com/services/site-finder>). MassEcon.com is a resource for companies wishing to locate in Massachusetts. The site details numerous properties throughout the State, including properties within Franklin. Companies are able to utilize this site to find properties that meet their specific real estate needs.

**MassDevelopment:** MassDevelopment Finance Agency is the State's finance and development authority established in 1998. MassDevelopment works with both public and private-sector clients to stimulate economic growth by eliminating blight, preparing key sites for development, creating jobs, and increasing the state's housing supply.<sup>7</sup> MassDevelopment provides a wide range of services, including financing (bond financing, loans & guarantees, tax credit financing as well as special programs including Brownfield redevelopment funds) and real estate and development services (Expedited Permitting 43D, available real estate, project management and other services).

The Town of Franklin works with numerous State agencies as well as other local organizations to provide the most up to date information on available real estate and economic development incentive. Easy access to these resources are crucial to commercial, industrial and manufacturing businesses of all sizes, as to ensure they are able to quickly relocate to Franklin, expand or retain business within the community.

## ***Regional Efforts in Economic Development***

### **495/MetroWest**

It is important that Franklin maintain a partnership within communities located in the 495/MetroWest area. Franklin draws members of its workforce from the nearly 32 communities that make up the MetroWest, attracts businesses looking to relocate from these communities and also utilizes regional services offered by Central Massachusetts agencies.

The Town of Franklin is part of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, an organization that acts as an advocate for the public and private sector by forming partnerships between the sectors to provide assistance related to economic development, traffic and water supply issues.

According to the 495/MetroWest Partnership's 2011 Strategic Plan, one priority for economic development in the area is to retain, grow, and attract employers to the region as well as retain and attract a skilled workforce to grow existing and new businesses. The Partnership believes these goals can be accomplished by conducting outreach to draw people to the area,

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<sup>7</sup> MassDevelopment, Company Overview. <<http://www.massdevelopment.com/about/overview/>>

highlighting the region's strength as well as encouraging public/ private partnerships between municipalities and businesses to encourage growth in the region.

### **Adjacent Communities**

Like Franklin, surrounding communities are focused on expanding their tax base by attracting businesses too through economic development incentives. Ten communities, including Franklin are part of the I-495/95 South Regional Technology Economic Target Area (ETA); these communities are Bellingham, Foxborough, Franklin, Mansfield, Medway, Norfolk, North Attleborough, Plainville, Walpole, and Wrentham. ETA communities are able to enhance and preserve the economic vitality of the region by offering tax incentives to companies either looking to locate or expand in the area.<sup>8</sup> It is the goal of the ETA to encourage business expansion and retention, create livable wage job opportunities, attract technology and technology enhancing business to the area and encourage development of abandoned and contaminated sites into more productive uses.

### **Chamber of Commerce Activities**

The United Regional Chamber of Commerce serves the communities of Attleboro, Bellingham, Blackstone, Foxborough, Franklin, Mansfield, Medway, Medfield, Millis, Norfolk, North Attleborough, Norton, Plainville, Rehoboth, Seekonk and Wrentham; its mission is to strengthen the business community while preserving and enhancing the quality of life in our area.<sup>9</sup>

The Chamber of Commerce is an important ally to the Town of Franklin as they are a valuable source of information regarding the Region for potential new business looking to relocate to the area. The Chamber regularly works to find ways to reduce costs for members of the business community; this is beneficial to Franklin members of the Chamber of Commerce because they are given cost reducing options to help them remain and operate in Franklin. For example, the United Regional Chamber of Commerce is part of an Energy Collaborative established with other statewide chambers to provide a purchasing power that saves members on electricity, natural gas, and energy auditing programs.<sup>10</sup>

The Chamber also provides support to Franklin's local government by providing endorsement to projects proposed by the Town. Recently, the Chamber of Commerce wrote a letter of Support that was submitted with the Town's application to the EPA for Brownfield funding to redevelop a site into an area that would provide economic benefit to the Town.

It is important to Franklin that the Town continues to receive the support it does from the United Regional Chamber of Commerce as they act as a key partner in proactively marketing Franklin to businesses.

### ***Future Economic Areas of Consideration***

The Town of Franklin is continually working to find ways to attract new businesses to the community. One way Franklin works to attract businesses is by creating a quick permitting process for industries that need to move quickly to site facilities. It hoped that the changes to the Biotechnology Overlay District will promote Franklin's desire to attract new and innovative technologies to the Town.

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<sup>8</sup> Norfolk County, I-495/95 South Regional Economic Target Area. <<http://norfolkcounty.org/index.cfm?pid=10608>>

<sup>9</sup> United Regional Chamber of Commerce. <<http://www.unitedchamber.org/>>

<sup>10</sup> United Regional Chamber of Commerce. Services. <[http://www.unitedchamber.org/service\\_detail.php?service=18](http://www.unitedchamber.org/service_detail.php?service=18)>

## **Green Technology**

Franklin is currently undergoing a process to be certified as a Green Community by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Certification as a Green Community means the Town is able to meet the following criteria:

- Provide as-of-right siting in designated locations for renewable/alternative energy generation, research & development, or manufacturing facilities;
- Adopted an expedited application and permit process for as-of-right energy facilities;
- Establish benchmark for the Town's energy use and developed a plan to reduce baseline by 20 percent within 5 years;
- Purchase only fuel-efficient vehicles; and
- Set requirements to minimize life-cycle energy costs for new construction; one way to meet these requirements is to adopt the new BBRs Stretch Code (780 CMR 120.AA).

By becoming a Green Community, Franklin will show the business community that it welcomes and encourages businesses in the renewable/alternative energy generation and distribution, research and development, and manufacturing industries to locate in Franklin. Meeting the requirements of the Green Communities Program shows Franklin's commitment to not only reducing Town wide energy consumption, but also that Franklin wants to be a location for clean, renewable and alternative energy projects, as well as providing for economic development in the clean energy sector.

## **Solar Power and Wind Energy**

Over the course of the past several years, wind and solar power have become more cost-effective ways for providing alternative sources of energy leading to more businesses and individuals pursuing construction of structures that provide the energy source.

Franklin does not currently have bylaws that pertain to the construction of wind or solar facilities. The Department of Planning and Community Development recognizes the benefits and importance of siting alternative energy facilities within the Town not only for the clean energy production they provide but also for the economic benefits that these structures would bring to Town. The Town is in the process of developing a Wind Energy Bylaw that would detail the process for siting a wind facility or structure within the community.

Within Franklin, there is one wind turbine located in the southern portion of Franklin which is operated by the Cistercian Nuns of Strict Observance located on Upper Union Street in the southern portion of Town abutting Wrentham. The Nuns use the power generated from the winds turbine to power their candy making facility, thus reducing their reliance on traditional power sources.

In 2010, the Town of Franklin received an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources for \$99,500 to install a new solar PV system for the Gerald M. Parmenter Elementary School, located at 235 Wachusett Street. Franklin would like to see more solar projects developed within the Community and is working to encourage use of solar panels by creating bylaws that promote alternative energy production.

The Town is interested in attracting renewable energy and other new innovative technology companies. By simplifying the approval process for these types of companies, Franklin makes its self more competitive with other communities to attract alternative businesses to the Town.

## **Goals & Objectives**

**Policy Statement:** Adopt strategies for business and workforce retention and attraction to diversify Franklin's economic foundation, and increase its property tax yields.

**Goal 1:** Adopt strategies that will promote higher levels of investment in the Town's industrial areas, and increase related property tax yields.

Objective 1.1: Build upon the Town's and the region's life sciences industry cluster, including biotechnology and medical device manufacturing and research and development companies.

Objective 1.2: Promote business expansion and retention within Franklin's Economic Opportunity Areas.

Objective 1.3: Promote the diversity of industrial uses within the Town's industrial areas.

**Goal 2:** Adopt strategies that will support the Town of Franklin's small business community, promote higher levels of commercial investment, and increase related property tax yields.

Objective 2.1: Encourage expansion and retention of current businesses and attraction of new businesses in appropriate locations.  
Please refer to Goal 3 and related objectives in the Land Use section of this document.

Objective 2.2: Create Transitional Use Zones to buffer residential buildings from non-residential uses.  
Please refer to Goal 4 and related objectives in the Land Use section of this document.

Objective 2.3: Strive to increase the industry diversity of local businesses, to sustain balanced economic growth, assure availability of goods and services, and to assure downturns in the economy do not substantially impact the community.

Objective 2.4: Promote existing, and invest in additional, quality of life factors conducive to business innovation.

**Goal 3:** Work to revitalize Franklin's Downtown core and adjacent neighborhoods.

Objective 3.1: Promote mixed-use development in appropriate areas.  
Please refer to Goal 2 and related objectives in the Land Use section of this document.

Objective 3.2: Work with businesses, institutions, Franklin Downtown Partnership and other non-profit organizations to revitalize, enhance and promote Franklin's downtown area.

Objective 3.3: Utilize cultural economic development concepts and resources to support Downtown Franklin's revitalization.

Objective 3.4: Work to support and retain current Downtown area businesses, attract the right retail mix including new specialty/niche businesses, and promote Downtown Franklin as a commercial district.

Objective 3.5: Work regularly to increase access to parking in Franklin's Downtown core.

Objective 3.6: Improve the overall image, pedestrian circulation, and streetscape quality of the Downtown area.



**Goal 4:** Adopt strategies that will promote workforce development, attract skilled workers to the region, and increase employment options for the Town's current residents.

Objective 4.1: Build partnerships between state agencies, educational resources and local businesses to promote workforce development initiatives in Franklin and the region.

Objective 4.2: Increase employment options for the Town's current residents.

Objective 4.3: Work to attract skilled workers to the region.

**Goal 5:** Support and strengthen the Town of Franklin's business retention and attraction initiatives, activities and strategies.

Objective 5.1: Work with State agencies, chambers of commerce, and other public/private organizations to coordinate economic development programs and services in support of Franklin's business community.

Objective 5.2: Provide resources that support Franklin's business community.

Objective 5.3: Attract additional businesses to Franklin.

**Goal 6:** Support sustainable development, renewable energy and recycling initiatives, low impact development, and other "Green" activities.

Objective 6.1: Pursue the Green Communities designation under the Massachusetts Green Communities Act.  
Please refer to Community Services & Facilities Goal 7, Objective 7.3.

Objective 6.2: Pursue creation of a Green Technology zoning district.

Objective 6.3: Encourage investment in green technologies as part of Town sponsored development or redevelopment projects.  
Please refer to Community Services & Facilities Goal 7, Objective 7.2.