

Master Plan 2026

Village of Farwell, Michigan

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Regional Setting

The Village of Farwell is nestled at the boundary where farming ends and the wooded northern portion of the Lower Peninsula of Michigan begins. Sited on Clare County's southern border, the Village's location on M-115 serves as one of Michigan's Gateways to the North (see Map 1). The Village is located in the north central part of Michigan, five miles west of the City of Clare (the largest community in Clare County).

Settlement History

Prior to European settlement, it is currently believed that much of the Midwest was settled by Indian Tribes that were part of the Hopewell civilization. Their presence on Michigan's interior appears to have mainly consisted of seasonal fishing, collecting, and hunting sites with an increased dependence upon exploitation of fish. Larger villages and subsistence farming appeared. They did construct ceremonial mounds as part of their culture, but these mound-builders of this period declined by circa 500 AD. They were followed by the Late Woodland period Indians with this period extending up to initial Western contact. During the Late Woodland period, a variety of new tools were introduced and developed, including the bow and arrow, birchbark canoe, and widespread use of ceramics.

French introduced the fur trade in Michigan around the turn of the 17th Century, which had a significant impact upon the traditional Indian lifeways as trade for Western goods infiltrated their societies. At contact, the Anishinaabe peoples had settled across much of what is present day Michigan. The three main Anishinaabe nations in the State included: Ojibwe (Chippewa), Odawa (Ottawa), and Bode'wadmi (Potawatomi), which comprised the Council of the Three Fires. At first contact, the three Tribes were agrarian peoples with corn as a main foodstuff with some wild rice, squash, and kidney bean cultivation. Most of their settlements were along the Great Lakes and main rivers while much of the interior of the State was only seasonally occupied for hunting and gathering wild fruits and vegetables. The fur trade significantly impacted traditional life and battles between the French, English, and eventually Americans increased aggression and war activities within the Council of the Three Fires and with other Tribes including the Iroquois Confederacy.

First contact with Westerners on the East Coast and Canada had ripple effects on Indian Tribes all the way west into Michigan and the Midwest. Disease, trade, and dislocation on the Eastern seaboard had far reaching impacts that extended into the territory that would eventually become Michigan. Some Tribes that were in Michigan at first contact were pushed further west as a result of all of the turmoil and dislocation brought about by European settlement on the eastern seaboard of North America.

By 1760, the Odawa controlled much of the western half of the Lower Peninsula while the eastern half was under the Ojibwa. The area including much of the eastern Lower Peninsula to

the east of Farwell was ceded by the Treaty of Saginaw (aka Treaty with the Chippewa) in 1819, principally with the Ojibwe, but the treaty also included the Odawa and Potawatomi. This furthered the settlement of Michigan by non-Indians, which had begun in earnest with the Treaty of Detroit in 1807. This earlier treaty ceded SE Michigan and the lower 2/3rds of the Thumb, opening up the region around Detroit for European settlement. These two treaties laid the framework for the Treaty of Washington (1836) which ceded the western half of the Lower Peninsula and the eastern half of the Upper Peninsula, including the area where Farwell was later founded. With much of the Michigan Territory now opened to settlement, the Erie Canal, which opened in 1825, fueled rapid European settlement of much of Michigan into the 1850s.

With the territorial dispute with Ohio over, Michigan was able to join the American union in 1837. The Michigan State legislature named what is now called Clare County for Sauk Indian chief Kaykakee in 1840. An Irish surveyor switched the name to Clare County after his home Irish County in 1843.

With European settlement, logging became the main industry in Clare County. Like the rest of Michigan, the area was lumbered using water to drive logs down many streams until the Lake George and Muskegon Railroad, a logging railroad, revolutionized lumbering in the state. This railroad began operating in Clare County in 1877, and Winfield Scott Gerrish is credited with this innovation. Though this railroad only operated for five years, it was the precursor to later logging railroads that supplemented winter and water transportation of cut timber. With all of the lumbering activities, the region was also susceptible to spring forest fires, and the County was struck by significant fires in 1874, 1879, 1884, 1887, 1889, and 1891.

The Village of Farwell was founded in 1870 by Samuel Farwell, a resident of Utica, NY. He was a well-known contractor in public works construction including New York City's Croton Aqueduct. He was also involved in the construction of the Erie Canal. As a major stockholder in the Flint Pere Marquette Railway Company, he is responsible for the establishment of Farwell as a planned community on the Flint\ Pere Marquette Railroad by the Farwell City Company or it was named in his honor.

The Trust Deed for the land encompassing the Village was dated December 5, 1870 and signed by Ezra Rust, Gurdon Corning, L.B. Curtis, James Hay, Ammi Wright, Thomas Merrill, Edmund Hall and their wives. These men were all in the logging business and needed a town closer to their camps where they could pick up supplies. Farwell was the first county seat of Clare County, and business was booming until 1877 when the County House burned. Arson was suspected. In response to the fire, the County Seat was moved to a more centrally located Harrison in 1879.

At that time, Clare County was growing at a rapid pace, due to the immense white pine forests and the strategic location of the Tobacco and Muskegon Rivers, by which lumber was floated south to both Muskegon and Saginaw.

Being located on the main railroad connecting Saginaw to Ludington and the railroad ferries crossing Lake Michigan, Farwell like Clare was able to transition from lumbering into a community with a manufacturing base after the turn of the 20th Century. This industrial base began to fade as the Michigan auto industry struggled from the 1970s onward and the

relocation of American manufacturing from the American Northeast and Midwest to the South and overseas.

Modern roads and vehicles along with the wealth generated by Michigan's auto industry supported the emergence of Michigan's up-north vacation culture and economy. Farwell and Clare County's lake communities became a summer holiday/weekend destination, beginning in the 1920s and accelerating after World War II as new American highways improved long-distance vehicle travel.

The Village of Farwell – Local Context

The Village of Farwell can be characterized simply as a small, urbanized village, surrounded by rural open space, inland lakes, and state-owned forest areas. The community is largely a resort and recreation-based residential community, as it is located just to the south and east of several small inland lakes. Many cottages and summer homes of varying sizes line the shores of these lakes. A number of these cottage homes over time have also been converted into permanent, year-round housing.

Farwell is uniquely located within easy access to several highway interchanges, including US-127, US-10, and M-115. US-127 serves as the primary north-south transportation route between Lansing and Houghton Lake. US-10 serves as a primary east-west route between Ludington and Bay City. M-115 provides transportation access to towns and cities located in the Traverse City area along with the cities of Cadillac and Clare. Access to these important transportation linkages allow Farwell's diverse manufacturing base to gain exposure to many larger nearby markets, such as Cadillac, Mount Pleasant, Midland, Bay City, and Saginaw.

Farwell also plays a role in local tourism, being in close proximity to the aforementioned Clare County "lakes" area. It also lies within the vast Au Sable State Forest Area, which supports a variety of outdoor recreational activities, including hunting, trapping, fishing, and boating.

The Village of Farwell has retained a small-town atmosphere through the support of many small businesses. Retail and commercial "mom and pops" located within the Village serve primarily a local clientele. Larger-scale, more diversified commercial and retail outlets are located in nearby Clare.

The Village of Farwell – A Broader Context

Although it is important to understand the roots of its existence, it is equally important to understand how the Village of Farwell relates geographically to its surroundings. Farwell occupies a prime geographic location near the center of Surrey Township. As of 2020 Census, Surrey Township is the second largest township of record in Clare County behind Hayes Township, which surrounds Harrison and by 2020, eclipsing Grant Township, surrounding Clare.

According to its most recent Surrey Township Master Plan 2017-2037, the Township's fundamental community-wide goal is to "preserve and protect the Township's abundant natural resources" and "to capitalize on the Township's abundant resources for the purpose of creating an attractive community that meets the physical, social, and economic needs of its residents and businesses in an environmentally sensitive manner." New to the 2017-2037 Plan was the desire to make the community attractive to young adults so they may choose to remain in the Township when they enter adulthood. The Plan identified nine Township-wide goals during the public participation portion of the development of the current plan:

- Preserve and protect the Township's abundant natural resources such as woodlands and lakes.
- Capitalize on the Township's abundant resources (i.e. natural resources, central location, and excellent access through US-10 and M-115) for the purpose of creating an attractive community that meets the physical, social, and economic needs of its residents and businesses in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Attract and manage new growth in a manner that will retain the rural character of the community.
- Preserve and promote the rights of individual property owners while maintaining the aesthetic character of the community.
- Relate land use primarily to the natural characteristics of the land and the long-term needs of the community, rather than to short-term economic gain.
- Encourage intergovernmental cooperation between Surrey Township, the Village of Farwell, surrounding communities, Clare County, and the State of Michigan in the provision of area-wide facilities.
- Alleviate blight to present a better image of the Township.
- Develop programs and policies that assist in making the Township attractive for retaining its youth as they grow into adulthood.
- Utilize numerous Placemaking tools to enhance the community for its residents and visitors.

More specific goals and objectives were detailed for six more specific land use patterns that support the plan's overarching goals. Of note, the residential objectives call for the development of a variety of housing types to meet affordability standards and to retain the community's current rural and small character. This concept is further supported by the commercial objective to discourage strip commercial along highways and only allow for the placement of commercial in strategic locations in the Township with the intent of supporting Downtown Farwell as the community's commercial center.

In general, the Surrey Township Master Plan 2017-2037 supports the general concepts found within this Master Plan for the Village of Farwell. Both documents detail the importance of retaining the current rural and small-town character of the community, manage residential growth, improve nonmotorized connections, and the retention of the Village as the center of the community. Due to the symbiotic nature of Farwell and Surrey Township, good communication and coordination between both is necessary for success of each.

Map 1: Regional Location

Chapter 2 - Socioeconomic Profile

This section of the master plan analyzes existing conditions, based primarily on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and Esri. Farwell’s demographic and housing characteristics are analyzed and compared with those of surrounding communities, Clare County, and the State of Michigan to gain better insight into the general welfare of Farwell in relation to the surround region.

Existing conditions analysis is a fundamental element of master plans. Planning for future growth and development, stagnation, or contraction requires some consideration of “how much” – how many people will need Village services, how much housing is “affordable”, or how many new housing units will be built.

Historic population trends are used to predict future population change, demographic shifts within the population, and resultant needs. Fast growing villages require new or used land for development/redevelopment and accommodating services. Maturing villages need to develop strategies to address changes in the population’s needs for housing and services.

The intent of an existing conditions analysis is to paint a general picture of the community. A differential in demographic or housing characteristics may indicate issues or areas in which land use planning and public policies beyond the typical scope of a master plan are warranted.

The existing conditions analysis assesses trends for the following characteristics:

- Population
- Age
- Household Size
- Educational Attainment
- Income
- Occupational Characteristics
- Employment
- Housing
- Future Trends

The existing conditions analysis concludes with an assessment of the effects of demographic and housing trends on future growth and development patterns in the Village.

Population

Total Population

Growth of a community's population is a primary force driving new development and redevelopment. Decline of a community's population can lead to abandoned buildings and blight. Understanding the community's population trend and regional context are necessary to develop an effective future land use plan. This section describes the Village's historical population trend, analyzes the regional population growth context, and compares the Village's population growth to that of surrounding communities.

Historical Population Trend

The Village's historic population trend, based on the decennial census, is presented below in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Historic Population Trend – Farwell, 1880-2020

Since 1880 (the first U.S. Census since Farwell was incorporated in 1879), the Village has experienced periods of rapid growth (1880-1890 and 1940-1960) with periods of decline (1900-1940) and modest growth (1990-2020). The period of modest growth shows that the Village is bucking the trend that is facing much of rural and small-town Michigan, which has generally shown decline since the Millennium.

Population Forecasts

Through the understanding of the populations, the study of demographics makes educated estimates regarding the future growth of a community. Demographers use birth rates, death rates, age, and in/out migration rates to project the future size of a community's population.

Most demographic studies will build their estimates based upon county-wide data. In Michigan, these estimates were built upon some basic assumptions for continued population growth, and their models didn't account for changes in migration pattern like the large out-migration of young Michiganders for other States, which started around the turn of the Millennium and is still being felt today.

Currently the State's population projections through 2045 show steady decline for Clare County, with the County's population declining by 22.4% by 2045. **Table 2** shows Clare County declining from 30,856 in 2020 to 23,931 in 2045. Population decline impacts the ability to provide services to the residents as there are fewer people remaining to support the services, and in low density areas, fewer people increases the cost to provide the service per person because program overhead has to be spread across fewer users.

Population projections that originated from around the turn of the 21st Century now seem quite flawed for the State of Michigan. These projections anticipated continued population growth for most of the State, but these projections were grossly inaccurate. In 2019, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and the Budget's Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives report titled "Michigan Population Projections by County through 2045", found that the State's peak population was 10,055,315 residents in 2004 with economic related emigration causing the State to decline after that year. Michigan only reached its previous peak population number again in 2020.

This State of Michigan report projects a modest population growth to occur in Michigan as the Baby Boomers retire and people immigrate into Michigan for job opportunities. One drag on Michigan's growth is its natural change (births minus deaths) has declined from 98,000 more births than deaths in 1970 to only 19,450 more in 2015. By 2030, the natural change is expected to go negative as there will be more deaths in the State than births. This is estimated by the age of residents and the birth rate. In-migration is expected to allow Michigan to continue to grow modestly until about 2040 when it is projected to begin to decline again.

This information becomes significantly more volatile when looking at the county data. The estimates see a range of counties shrinking by almost 20% in parts of northeastern Lower Peninsula, the Thumb, and the Upper Peninsula while some counties growing by 12.5% in the southern Lower Peninsula. More rural communities have been facing population stagnation for decades due to many younger people moving to urban areas and impacts of large-scale farms. This impacts the rural natural change rate by both reducing the population and driving down the number of people in prime child-bearing years. This change also increases the community's mortality rate as the average population age rises.

Providing population projections in Michigan has been difficult over the last 40 years due to several macro-economic forces that has been impacting the State's economy and its residents that do not easily factor into standard demographic models. These outside factors include: major shifts in the auto industry (Michigan's largest industry); reduction in the manufacturing and construction sectors; younger adults desiring to live in vibrant urban communities with good job prospects; substantial national changes in the development of the American family; and demographic shifts from the American Midwest to the South and Southwest. There are several external factors including ongoing globalization, impacts of technology, spread of broadband, impacts of climate change, and changes to U.S. immigration policy that cannot be factored into these statistical projections either.

Other newer factors are also at play as well including the advent of back-to-the-city movements having success in many of Michigan's larger urban areas while buoying smaller communities' downtowns as well. The long-term land use impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on where people are choosing to live and work has yet to fully mature regarding the ability of people to work remotely as well and affect living choices long term. The resulting resurgence of Michigan metropolitan areas may also impact the natural change rate that isn't covered in these statistics by providing desired options for young Michiganders to stay in Michigan in their youth instead of migrating out of the State.

Table 2: Michigan Department of Transportation Population Forecast 2025-2045

To address this shrinking and aging population, focus for Farwell should be on addressing trends found within the demographic data. These trends suggest ensuring construction of an increased diversity of housing units within the community. These units may also support residents aging in place. Creation of additional housing units within the Downtown district should also be encouraged to address the housing desires of Baby Boomers (born 1946 to 1964) and Millennials (born 1978 to 1999) who have less interest to live in traditional single family detached homes. Low income levels and high rates of poverty found within the Village and the County also illustrate the need for the creation of new low to moderate income housing

units and programs that may assist homeowners with emergency unbudgeted home repairs and ongoing maintenance activities.

It is important to understand that population projections are very inexact and different forecast models can have very different results. The 2000 Master Plan utilized two models to project future Village population. Each projected continued growth with one model projecting 20 more village residents in 2010 and a second with 69 more residents than the 2010 Census actually recorded. The 2017 Plan's projections estimated that there would be 865 residents in 2020 when the US Census counted 15 more persons, 880, or 1.7% under counted.

For planning purposes, it is the most prudent to take the most conservative approach so best to plan for the future. If the community is rapidly growing, then it is best to project for larger growth rates while for a community that is stagnant or declining in population, it is more conservative to select for larger declines. With the current United States trends for aging of the population, decreasing size of households, and migration to large urban areas, preparing for stagnation as illustrated in the MDOT projections is the most prudent choice.

Age

The age of a community's population has very real implications for planning and development, whether it be schools for population under the age of 18, or housing alternatives for empty nesters and elderly residents. This section analyzes the age of the City's population – based on age structure, median age, and percentage of population under 18 and over 65 – and assesses the implications of the population's age on land use and development.

Common Measures of Age

The age analysis begins with three common measures of the age of a population. The first measure is the median age at which one-half of the population is older and one-half of the population is younger. Median age is the most often used measure of age because it can be used to compare populations of different sizes. The second measure is the percentage of the total population that is under the age of 18. Individuals under the age of 20 are usually enrolled in the school system, or preparing to enter school, and thus require services not provided for the general population. The third measure is the percentage of the total population that is aged 65 and over. Many individuals approaching retirement age seek alternative housing. As individuals age, they may lose their ability to drive and public transportation can become a new and important issue. These three measures of community age are presented in **Tables 3 & 4**.

Table 3: Age Distribution – Farwell, Surrey Township, Clare County, Michigan, and U.S. – 2023

Table 4: Median Age - Farwell, Surrey Township, Clare County, Michigan, and U.S. – 2010 & 2023

The Village’s median age, 43.9 years, is lower than Clare County (48.3 years), and it is still older than Michigan (39.1 years). The significantly lower median age than Clare County suggests that the Village’s population is younger. This is reflected in the higher percentage of individuals under the age of 19 than the Surrey Township and County populations. Thus, the need for school and recreational facilities and services may be greater in the Village than in the County. The Village’s population also includes fewer individuals over the age of 65 than the County.

Age-Life Cycle

Age structure refers to the portion of the community’s population in each age group. This section compares the Village’s age structure to that of the county, and the region. Subsequently, the change in the Village’s age structure from 2000 to 2010 is analyzed.

As humans progress through life, they pass through stages of life that generally correspond to their age levels. Life-cycle analysis is used by demographers and policy makers to anticipate future changes in items such as consumption, housing, medical care, education, and recreation.

To compare the age structure and lifestyle categories of various communities, the population is divided into the following basic groupings:

Age	Lifestyle Category
Under 5:	Pre-school
5 to 19:	School age
20 to 44:	Family forming
45 to 64:	Mature families
65 and older:	Senior

Table 3: Comparison of Age Groups by Percentage of Total Population – Farwell, Clare County, Michigan, and United States

From 2010 to 2023, the Under 5 decreased from 1.2% of the Village population, 5-19 decreased 2.0% while the 20-44 year olds increased 0.4% while the 65 and over increased by 3.1%. All of this data illustrates that there are fewer younger people who will drive future growth by becoming parents in the future while the over 65 increased as well.

Nation-wide, the two largest demographic groups in the United States are Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) and Millennials (born 1981-2000 – there is some disagreement on birth years for this group). In 2015, demographers stated that the Millennials had surpassed the Baby Boomer’s as the largest generation, and these two demographic groups make up approximately

45% of the entire United States population. Both of these groups have significant impacts upon the make-up of a community and the services required to serve that age group. As each of these populations move through life, they operate like a “pig in a python”, slowly moving through “building-type cycles” leaving “predictable weakness in the wake of those markets they have passed through”¹

The Millennials are the most technologically advanced and diverse generation in U. S. history. Of interest to land use planners, Millennials are less inclined to purchase homes and automobiles than previous generations. They’re significantly more interested in living in larger more dynamic urban environments, and they’ve shown a willingness to move to communities that provide these types of lifestyle choices. For a smaller rural community, this is a challenge to be attractive to their life choices. The Village’s 2000 Master Plan correctly predicted that this generation, referred then as the “Echo Boom” was going to be as sizable as the original Baby Boom group.

Baby Boomers bring a second set of challenges for land use. Boomers will begin to be moving from their larger homes where they raised their families into smaller housing units where they can age in place. As they age, boomers will impact leisure and recreation markets. As they continue to age, they will be moving into retirement communities, or even second homes that were purchased years earlier. As the Boomers approach 70, they will be swelling the ranks of the seniors and elderly. They will increase the demand for health care and “lifecare” services and facilities will increase.

Similar to the prediction from the 2000 Master Plan, there will likely be a contraction of the generation following the Millennials as the Generation X (1965 to 1980) group has 30% fewer members. Because of its size, this generation has fewer Family Forming members than the Baby Boomers did that generated the Millennial boom.

Depending upon where Millennials choose to raise a family, in the community from where they were born or where they’ve moved to as an adult, this choice will have an impact on the size of future generations in communities like the Village of Farwell. To stem the Millennial outmigration, efforts should be considered that expand housing options that are attractive to both Baby Boomers and Millennials who want to live in or adjacent to Downtown districts. These two groups desire residential housing options close to where they can walk for dining, entertainment, and recreation opportunities. Second floor units over commercial and urban apartments in the Downtown district would be desirable to these two groups.

Race/Ethnicity

¹ Ellen Flynn-Heapes, “The Demographics of Demand: How to Select Strong Future Markets,” *Marketer*, February 1994, pg. 1.

Another important characteristic of a community is its racial make-up. Knowing a community's racial composition may be helpful in identifying the diverse needs of its population.

For all intents and purposes, the Village Racial make-up is predominately white at 89.9% while 1.7% are American Indian or Alaska Native with only 0.3% Black. The largest racial minority are those who define themselves as two or more races at 6.3%. Compared to the Village, Michigan has a much more diverse population with 24.3% of Michiganders identifying as other than White in 2020.

Hispanic or Latino make up 2.6% of the Village, and this percentage has likely grown drastically since US Census definitions first changed in 1997. Those identifying as Hispanic or Latino have continued to evolve as cultural identification preferences have also changed.

Household Size

A trend is occurring nation-wide, and characteristic of today's population, is the declining size of households. A household includes all of the persons who occupy a housing unit. A housing unit is defined as a house, apartment, mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied as a separate living quarter. Despite the nationwide decline in household size, it is not uncommon for communities to register a net increase in housing supply while not experiencing a proportional population increase, or in some cases, even recording a population loss.

There are several factors which demographers have linked to decline in size of households, including the fact that people are marrying at a later age than a generation ago, postponing having children, and having fewer children when they do start a family. Nation-wide, married couple families still comprise the largest group of households, but the number of single parent (female or male) headed households is rising, which reduces household size. Another big factor is the emergence of single person households, either comprised of a single young adult or a senior living on their own.

This shrinking trend can be seen on a micro-scale in the Village. Like the County and the State, **Table X** illustrates that the persons per household size has declined steadily since 1980, and the Village's Household Size has generally lagged both the County and State during this entire period.

Table X: Household Size — Farwell, Clare County, Michigan, 1980-2028

Educational Attainment

The level of educational attainment reached by the residents provides insight into the capabilities of the workforce, income levels, and overall economic vitality of the community. The U.S. Census compiles data on the educational attainment for people aged 25 years and over. It is important to note that the figures are not cumulative, rather they are independent

from one another. For example, if a respondent had only a bachelor's degree, that person would check that answer only, even though a high school degree was also attained.

Table and illustrate 2022 educational attainment statistics for the Village, County, and State. The compiled data shows that 81.1 percent of the Village residents finished high school while 18.9 percent did not. Only 13.2% of the Village has completed a bachelor's degree or higher. The Village and the County educational attainment levels significantly lag the State. This lower educational attainment level is a concern as the Village and Clare County do have an industrial and manufacturing base that is seeking higher trained employees, often with an associate's degree or a post-high school trade accreditation.

Table X: Educational Attainment of Population 25 Years and Over – Farwell, Clare County, and Michigan, 2022

Income and Employment

The type and rate of growth and development in a community is largely dependent on its economic situation relative to the surrounding region. Affluent communities generally attract high-end shopping centers, specialty shops, and upscale services, while low-income communities may bring more daily required serving businesses including marginal corner businesses, grocery and dollar stores. Moreover, lower income communities commonly have lower ownership rates, more residential turn-over, absentee landlords, and commensurate increased crime rates. Understanding where the Village is positioned in the economic spectrum will aid in addressing associated the resident needs.

Income Statistics

Three measures of income (median family, median household, and per capita) are depicted in Table for the Village, County, and State using 2000, 2010, and US ACS. **Table X** shows the percent change in income during this time period.

Median family income includes the income of all members of a household while median household income may include a single person household. Households are the basic consumer unit and supplier of labor to the market. A household represents all persons (not necessarily related) who occupy a housing unit. A household may be made up of one or more persons. Median household income (that level at which half of all households earn more and half of all households earn less) is a broad measure of a community's economic health.

In 2022, the Village of Farwell had a median household income of \$38,542, which was stagnate from 2016 Esri forecast. Clare County's income significantly increased (over \$12,000) from the previous plan to \$47,816; however, both the County and the Village lag both Michigan and the country. Village household incomes grew by 36.2 percent, while County household incomes grew by 39.7 percent and the State by 34.8 percent (See **Table X**) during the period between 1999 and 2022. The Village of Farwell made modest income gains during that period, but the Village and County still markedly lag the State and national income levels.

The per capital income statistic represents, as is implied, income per person. Until the end of the COVID-19 Pandemic, most individuals have seen stagnating incomes over the last 25 years, especially in the working and middle income brackets. Income has been rising in the last four years, but inflation has been rising nearly as equally as fast.

Table X: Annual Household Income – Farwell, Clare County, State of Michigan, and USA – 2022

Table X: 2000, 2016, 2022 Income Statistics

Household Income Distribution

The distribution of household income for the Village of Farwell, Clare County is shown in **Table X**. Generally, the household income distribution curve for the Village lags both the County and the State. There is significantly higher percentage of households earning less than \$15,000 per year in the Village (20.6%) than compared to the County (11.8%) and Michigan at 9.1%. Of note, forty-six percent (46.0%) of Village households make less than \$35,000 per year whereas only 35.7% and 24.8% earn this amount in the County and State, respectively.

Poverty Rate

The poverty rate for the Village, County, State, and Nation in 1979, 1989, 1999, and 2014, and 2022 are shown in **Table** . Since 2014, the County poverty rate has decreased five percentage points while the Village’s has increased to nearly 1/3 of the entire Village population (32.2%) and both the Village and County rates exceed the State of Michigan and the United States’ rates by significant sums. This illustrates the ongoing weakness in America’s rural non-agricultural economy.

High poverty rates impact households ability to afford quality housing, pay for the utilities, afford health care, and pay for transportation. Households in poverty often require additional social services to assist with the income shortfalls they face.

Table X: Percent of Population in Poverty 1979 – 2022

Source: U.S. Census – 1980, 1990, 2000; U.S. Census ACS 2010- 2014, 2018-2022

Occupied Housing Units by Vehicles Available

A final indicator of household wealth in America is based upon household vehicle access. In auto-centric communities, mobility is vital to household members ability to find and retain employment and for access to shopping and other activities. The following statistics illustrate the percent of occupied dwelling units that have access to vehicles.

Table 4: Occupied Housing Units by Vehicles Available

Source: US. Census ACS 2018-2022

Table 4 illustrates that the Village residents do have more limited access to vehicles than their State of Michigan counterparts but they fare slightly better than County residents. Five and one-half percent of the Village households have no access to a vehicle, which is nearly three percentage points higher than the State. The Village has far fewer housing units having access to more than one vehicle. In households with more than one driver, this lack of vehicle access is limiting. This lower vehicle access rate illustrates that a much higher percentage of households must share one vehicle for access to work, shopping and entertainment. Over one third (36.2%) of Village housing units has no access to a vehicle or only access to one vehicle.

Employment

This section examines employment trends within the Village of Farwell in terms of occupation and industry. Occupational information describes the kind of work a person does while on the job. Industry information relates to the nature of the business in which a person is employed.

Understanding the composition of the workforce may provide insight into how a community may be impacted by a sudden change in the economy. For example, a plant or office closing may economically devastate a community that relies on a particular industry for its employment.

Table X shows employment by selected occupation in the Village of Farwell while **Table X** shows the employment by industry.

Table X: Selected Occupations of Population 16 Years and Older – Farwell

The largest occupational sector is production at 14.2% with office/administrative support the second highest occupation at 13.1% followed by construction/extraction at 9.4%. Transportation/material moving, sales and sales related, management, and food preparation/serving were all between 7.8% and 7.2% of the population. No occupation has over 15% of the workforce so employment is relatively diverse. Regarding the industry in which the occupations are included, over 28% of all jobs are in the manufacturing sector with Health care/social assistance (11.4%) and construction (10.6%) make up over half of all jobs (50.3%).

Table X: Employment by Selected Industry

Housing

This section of the demographic analysis assesses the Village's housing market and key vital statistics including number of units, tenure, age and cost of housing.

Housing Type

The first housing characteristic under consideration is the type of housing. The available census data on housing is categorized into the following types:

- One-family, detached
- One-family, attached
- Two-family / duplex

- 3-9 units
- 10 or more units
- Mobile homes
- Other units (includes boats, RVs, van, etc.)

Understanding the breakdown of the existing housing stock is important because not every resident requires the same type of housing, and America’s predilection for single-family homes does not meet the needs of growing segments of the population. The increase in single-person households and aging households changes the housing needs. These smaller households do not need and often do not want an entire house for themselves and would prefer an apartment or condo. Single-headed households and lower income households may not want or have the desire or money to maintain a single-family home either. Understanding the housing mix and the demographics helps to identify if the housing mix meets the needs of the current or future residents. A wider selection of housing options benefits older individuals who strongly want to age in place but are not longer able or want to maintain a house. Their long-term health outcomes improve if they’re able to live out their lives supported by their existing network of friends and family.

The breakdown for the Village is presented in **Table X**.

Change in Housing Type

The single family detached home remains the majority housing type in 2022. It comprises 63.2% of the Village’s housing stock, and this number is nearly the same (within two percentage points) of the 1980 and 2010 US Census counts. The second largest type of housing unit is the mobile home, which in 2022 comprises 12.6% of the Village’s housing units, down approximately five percent since 2010. To further understand the City’s housing stock, the change in housing type is analyzed. Since 1990, the number of mobile home units increased to 20.9% in 2000, but it has modestly decreased since 2000. There is little other change in the intervening years.

Table X: Changes in Housing Type — Farwell, 2010 and 2022

With Clare County, the percentage of single family units has remained around 78% since 1990 (79.1% in 1990 77.4% in 2014, and 78.4% in 2022). Clare County has always had a higher percentage of single-family dwelling units than the Village of Farwell as the County has had significantly fewer multi-family units. This is expected as rural areas are comprised mostly of single family units with mobile homes making up a large majority of the remainder of units. For Clare County, the percentage of mobile home units remained over 17% of total number of housing units until 2022 when it declined to 16.1%. Both the Village and the County have 16.1% and 12.7% mobile home units respectively as compared to the State with only 5.1%. Mobile home parks are often found on the edge of communities and provide lower and moderate income housing options for residents.

Number of Housing Units

The number of housing units within the Village modestly grew from 1980 through 2010 with a growth rate between 1.2%% (between 2000 and 2010) with the greatest growth rate 9.4%

(between 1980 and 1990). Since 2010, there has been a reduction in the number of housing units including a large decline in the number of mobile home units within the community (loss of 14 units). With the mobility of mobile homes (unlike other housing types, they can be easily relocated in and out of the Village), they add a volatility in the housing unit numbers because of their large percentage of such a small sample. With the Village population remaining basically steady (increasing nine people between 2010 and 2020), the U.S. Census data illustrates that since 1980 as household size has declined, there has been an increase in the overall number of units.

Housing Tenure

Table provides housing occupancy characteristics for the Village of Farwell, Clare County, and Michigan. According to the 2022 American Community Survey data, there were a total of 403 units available for occupancy within the Village. Out of these 403 units, 371 units were occupied (92.1%) while 42 units (10.4%) were vacant.

Of the 371 occupied units in the Village, 300 (80.9%) were owner-occupied while 71 units (19.1%) were renter-occupied. This illustrates a 20% decrease in the percentage of renter-occupied homes since 2014. This change is likely partly due to the declining impacts of the Great Recession.

Clare County has a very high number of for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use units (83.5% of all of the County's housing units) that mostly serve as summer cottages for Downstate Michigan residents. These units tend to be clustered around the county's many lakes. Farwell does not have a high number of vacation properties with only 14.3% of the Village's vacant housing stock being reported as seasonally vacant. Since Farwell has one of the few historic downtown districts within Clare County, this is an opportunity to provide tourist-related businesses that cater to these seasonal county residents.

Table X: 2022 Housing Occupancy Characteristics

Age of Housing Stock

Table shows the age of Village housing stock by year of construction. According to the 2018-2022 American Community Survey (the replacement for the US Census Long Form), the median year that the housing structures were built in the Village is approximately 1974. Twenty-six percent (26.8%) of the housing stock was built prior to 1960. Generally, the economically useful age of residential structures is approximately 50 years. Once a structure reaches this age threshold, the need for extensive housing repairs and ongoing maintenance increases unless the structure undergoes a major renovation where many of the systems (windows, roofing, plumbing, electrical, heating) are replaced. Therefore, at present, over 41% of the Village's housing units are at or beyond this threshold. With the lower household incomes found within the Village, this is a concern because these structures require extensive renovations that the residents have difficulty affording or budgeting for.

Table X: Year Structure Built - 2022

Housing Values and Costs

Table compares the housing values in the Village of Farwell to Clare County and the State. The under \$100,000 price range for owner occupied houses is the largest segment of the housing market comprising 63.1% of all households with a median value of \$90,500, which is \$22,000 less than the County's (which may be inflated by the waterfront properties) and nearly \$110,000 less than the State's median. Within the Village, only 8.9% of the homes exceed \$200,000 in value.

Regarding renters, nearly 40% of the renters pay an average of \$540 per month, which is \$210 less than the County and nearly ½ of the State average rent. Though there is low income in the Village, the lower rental rates do modestly reduce this impact

Table X: Housing Financial Characteristics - 2022

Poverty and Vehicle Access

Studying income and poverty levels is a good way to measure the relative economic health of a community. Three measures of income (median household, median family, and per capita) are illustrated in **Table X** for the Village, Clare County, and Michigan. Household income is a measure of the total incomes of the persons living in a single household. Family income is a measure of the total incomes of a family unit. Because families often have two incomes, and do not include single persons living alone, median family incomes are typically higher than median household incomes. Per capita income is a measure of the incomes of every citizen of an area, including children. Because per capita income is based on the average of all individuals, they are much lower than family or household incomes.

Table X shows the family, household, and per capita income levels for 2022. Overall, the income levels for the Village are the lowest of all the comparison categories.

Table X also gives the percentages of families who were found to be below the poverty level. The percentage for Farwell is higher than all of the comparison jurisdictions with the total population in poverty at 32.2% while 65 years and older category is 35.1% was the highest, three times higher than the County and nearly four times Michigan's rate.

Table X: Income and Poverty – 2022

Table X: Percent in Poverty – 1979 to 2022

In a society so reliant upon private vehicle for transportation, understanding family vehicle accessibility is another measure of financial stress on a household. In nearly all of the United States, access of a vehicle is necessary for access to shopping and work. One measure is number of vehicles available to a household. Farwell has the highest percentage of households with no vehicle (5.5%) and only one vehicle (30.7%) as compared to the County and Michigan.

Table X: Occupied Housing Units by Vehicle Availability - 2022

Chapter 3 - Natural Features

Introduction

The development of land, including excavation, fill, cleaning, grading, and construction that can occur on a site can significantly impact the natural environment. Special attention must be given to environmentally sensitive areas.

Environmentally sensitive areas may be defined as land areas whose destruction or disturbance will immediately affect the life of the community by either: 1) creating hazards such as flooding; or 2) destroying important resources such as wood lots, wetlands, and floodplain areas; or 3) wasting important productive lands and renewable resources.

It is important for local administrators and planners to know where environmentally-sensitive lands are located in a community, their size, the extent of their boundaries, and how they relate to adjacent land uses. The existence of a particular natural feature element either on or nearby a parcel of land may determine whether the proposed land use activity for that parcel is appropriate, or whether it should be discouraged.

A natural features inventory was completed for the Village of Farwell planning area. Natural features such as bodies of water, wetlands, and woodlands were identified and mapped as a result of this process. The following data may prove useful to community leaders when particular land use decisions are made in the future.

Climate

Data on climate conditions for the Village of Farwell was taken from the United States Department of Agriculture's *Soil Survey of Clare County, Michigan*, Reissued December 1993, as recorded at the weather station in Gladwin.

The Farwell area has an average daily winter temperature of 22.1°F, with an average daily minimum temperature of 13.4°F. January is typically the coldest month of the year. In summer, the average daily temperature is 67.0°F, with the average daily maximum temperature of 80.0°F. July is typically the warmest month of the year.

Precipitation in the form of rain averages 32.3 inches annually. The month of June is typically the wettest, with an average monthly accumulation of 3.55 inches. Average seasonal snowfall for the Farwell area is 51.3 inches, with the month of January seeing the highest accumulation. On average, 95 days out of the year have at least one inch of snow on the ground; however, the number of such days varies greatly year to year.

Significant Site Features

Significant site features are those surface characteristics which serve to “shape the community”. In some instances, discouraging development in these areas is appropriate while in other instances, attracting particular land use activities would be appropriate. The first of these features to be examined is soils.

Soils

Generally speaking, the soils in and around the Village of Farwell are dominated by lighter classifications, unlike the heavier soils to the south and east. For further reference regarding this section, please refer to the Soil Associations **Table 5**.

The most urbanized, central portion of the Village has been developed over well-drained Montcalm loamy sands. Linear formations of this soil type can also be found along the South Branch of the Tobacco River, southwest of the Village limits, although these areas tend to be more sloped than areas within the Village. Characteristically, these soils are well suited for a variety of uses, including building site development, recreational uses, as well as for pasture and cropland uses. Although the soil is suitable for use in building site development, droughtiness and caving of cutbanks are limitations. Engineering precautions, such as shoring of walls, should be taken to prevent caving. When used for recreational purposes, such as playgrounds and walking trails, grass cover is usually too sparse to withstand heavy traffic. It is recommended that woodchips or other surface be used in areas where traffic is heavy. Playgrounds can usually be established in areas having little to no slope.

Areas located northwest of the central Village, as well as in the vicinity of the fairgrounds and Mill Pond, consist of mucky soil types, such as the Lupton and Markey mucks. These soils tend to be very poorly drained, and are the subject to frequent flooding for long periods. Although they are virtually unusable in any intensive form of development, due to the seasonably high water table and soil instability, these areas are very well suited for use as wetlands wildlife habitat. In woodland areas, this soil type supports a wide variety of tree species including norther white cedar, black spruce, balsam fir, tamarack, and quaking aspen. Special assistance from engineers is recommended before roads are built on these soils. Septic tank absorption fields should also be discouraged in these areas, as effluent can infiltrate and contaminate groundwater supplies.

Residential areas located to the southwest of the Mill Pond lie on excessively drained Rubicon sands. These soils are well suited for use in building site development and recreational use, as slopes tend to be gradual. When used for recreational activities, care should be taken to limit erosion and windthrow of the soil. Woodchip paths and play areas with granular safety surfacing can be implemented as preventative measures in most cases.

Vacant areas which lie west of the fairgrounds consist of poorly drained Roscommon soils. Characteristically, these soils tend to be subject to frequent flooding for brief periods, as runoff is very slow to ponded areas. Building site development and recreational uses should be discouraged in these areas due to the seasonably high water table and flood hazard limitations.

Although these soils have good potential for use as wildlife habitat and pastureland, these uses may not be practical in these locations, due to the surround *urban* character of the area.

Table 5: Soil Associations

Soil Name	General Description	Good Potential For Use As	Poor Potential For Use As	Limitations
AuGres Loamy Sand	Somewhat poorly drained. Found in nearly level and flat areas. 0-2% slopes. Permeability rapid, runoff slow.	Pastureland Cropland	Wildlife habitat Recreational uses Building sites Septic tank/fields	Seasonal high water table Caving of cutbanks Droughtiness
Graycalm Sand	Somewhat excessively drained. Found in nearly level to gently undulating plains. 0-6% slopes. Permeability rapid, runoff very slow	Pastureland Woodlands Building sites Recreational uses	Wildlife habitat Septic tank/fields	Erosion Droughtiness Caving of cutbanks
Histosols	Have a high content of organic matter with most saturated year-round	Wetland habitat	Development	High water table and generally unsuitable for development
Lupton Muck	Very poorly drained.. Found in nearly level and depressional areas. Subject to frequent flooding for long periods. Permeability moderately slow, runoff very slow.	Wetland wildlife habitat	Woodland Recreational uses Septic tank/field	High water table Caving of cutbanks Instability of soil
Luxley	Very deep, poorly drained soils with slow to moderately rapid permeability	Low wetlands with limited trees	Intensive use	Very poorly drained with moisture found from 0.1 to 1 foot below the surface
Markey Muck	Very poorly drained.. Found in nearly level and depressional areas. Subject to frequent flooding for long periods. Permeability moderately slow, runoff very slow.	Wetland wildlife habitat	Cropland Recreational uses Septic tank/field	High water table
Menominee	Soils formed by glaciofluvial deposits over glacial till with sandy loamy content with slope ranges of 6-70%.	Active agriculture or pasture or forested lands	Good features for development	May be too sloped for development
Montcalm loamy sand	Well drained. Found in nearly level to gently undulating broad plains. 0-12% slopes.	Pastureland Cropland Building sites	Septic tank/fields	Droughtiness Erosion Caving of cutbanks

	Permeability rapid, runoff slow.	Recreational uses		Slope
Roscommon mucky loamy sand	Poorly drained. Found in nearly level, flat areas and drainageways. Subject to frequent flooding for brief periods. Permeability rapid, runoff very slow to ponded.	Wetland wildlife habitat Pastureland	Woodland Recreational use Building sites	High Water table Flood hazard
Rubicon Sand	Excessively drained. Found in nearly level to gently undulating broad plains. 0-6% slopes. Permeability rapid, runoff slow.	Building sites Woodlands Recreational uses	Cropland Pastureland	Droughtiness Caving of cutbanks

Source: USDA Soil Conservation Service, 1983

Areas which lie to the northeast and directly west of the Village limits, as well as parcels northeast of the Mill Pond, consist of somewhat excessively drained soils known as Graycalm sands. These soils support a wide variety of activities including pasture and woodland uses, building site development, and recreational uses. Because these soils tend to be excessively drained, erosion and caving of cutbanks are major limitations. Septic tank absorption fields should be discouraged in these areas, as effluent infiltration can pollute the groundwater.

The industrial park is located on Menominee soils that is well-suited for development. The soil type is well drained with a relatively low clay content that allows for a higher conductivity of moisture across and through the soil.

Major Bodies of Water

The most significant water feature found within the Village of Farwell is the Mill Pond. The Mill Pond occupies a large area southwest of the central Village. The existence of the pond is actually the result of the damming up of the South Branch of the Tobacco River, for use in conjunction with the historic mill site. The mill burned under suspicious circumstances on July 3, 2003. The pond is now used for mainly low-intensity recreational uses, like fishing, and it provides a picturesque backyard view for residences location along its southwestern shore.

Another significant water feature located within the Village is the South Branch of the Tobacco River. The River begins its journey west of Farwell, near Deadman Lake in the AuSable State Forest. It continues through the Village of Farwell and the City of Clare, ultimately emptying into Rose Lake in the Village of Beaverton.

Woodlands

Woodlands in the Village of Farwell were mapped using the Michigan Geographic Data Library 2019 information. The Natural Features Map depicts the location of woodlots. As depicted on the map, large tracts of woodland surround the Village limits. Large patches of woodlots are also inside the southeast and northwest portions of the Village.

Woodland areas are complex ecological systems, and consequently, provide multiple benefits to the environment and its wildlife and human inhabitants. Woodlands play a role in flood protection by slowing the flow of surface run-off to allow for greater storm water infiltration. Woodlands also reduce air pollutants by absorbing certain air borne pollutants. In addition to providing wildlife habitats, forest vegetation moderates the effects of winds and temperatures while stabilizing and enriching the soil. For human inhabitants, forested areas offer a visual and audio barrier which is considered aesthetically pleasing and offer unique opportunities for recreation and relaxation.

Woodland resources contribute greatly to the environmental quality of the Village of. Through woodlot conservation efforts, the future environmental character of the community is retained. Woodland areas should be conserved, as much as possible. Any trees that must be removed through development process should have to be replaced by the developer.

Wetlands

In 1979, the Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act was enacted by the state of Michigan. This legislation was passed to protect wetlands by restricting their use to only certain activities (fishing, boating, and farming, among others) while permitting other activities only after permit approval by the state of Michigan. Permits are approved only upon a review of an environmental assessment filed by a petitioner and upon a finding that the activity is in the public interests. The Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act has been replaced and its function is now carried out by Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA451, as amended. Michigan is only one of two states that regulates its wetlands on behalf of the Federal government.

Under the Act, regulated wetlands are contiguous to an inland lake, pond, river, stream, or similar natural watercourse or five acres in size or larger. The Act also permits a municipality, by ordinance, to provide for a more stringent definition and regulation of wetlands. Additional Michigan legislation regulates Michigan wetland use and alteration.

Wetlands in the planning area were identified and mapped using Michigan Geographic Data Library information. The Natural Features Map indicates the existence of an abundance of forested, or wooded, wetlands in and around the Village of Farwell, most of which fall under the protection of Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act.

There are three major wetlands types with many other different types identified by biologists. In Michigan, the three types are marshes, swamps, and bogs.

Marshes have standing water from less than an inch deep to several feet deep, and the amount of water fluctuates seasonally and from year to year. They are dominated by soft stemmed plants such as cattails, grasses, sedges, rushes, arrowhead, pickerel weed, and smartweed.

Forested wetlands include seasonally flooded bottomlands areas, shrub swamps, and wooded swamps, including those around bogs. Unlike marshes, swamps tend to be dominated by woody plants. Wooded swamps and floodplains contain primarily oaks, red maples, elm, ash, alder, and willow. Shrub swamp vegetation includes alder, willow, and buttonbush. Shrub

swamps are wetland areas which are dominated by woody vegetation under 20 feet tall. Predominate species include alder, dogwood, sweetgale, leatherleaf, and water willow. Forested wetlands also include areas dominated by trees more than 20 feet in height. Normally the soil surface is seasonally flooded with up to twelve inches of water. Usually, several levels of vegetation are present, including such species as cedar, black spruce, tamarack, and balsam fir.

Bogs are found where accumulations of decaying vegetation forms mats that eventually cover kettle lakes and old ponds. There may be open water surrounded by floating vegetation on the edges. The soils tend to be very acidic with oxygen and nutrient deficiencies. Acid loving woody plants include labrador tea, poison sumac, tamarack, and black spruce. Orchids are common along with sundews and pitcher plants.

In Michigan, another wetland of interest that may not meet the traditional definition of a wetland but is an important environmental resource are vernal ponds. These areas are small bodies of water that form in the spring from meltwater. By mid-summer, they will often be dry, but they perform an important function of supporting the lifecycle of amphibians (frogs and salamanders) who reproduce through aquatic larvae. These animals are able to mature without the presence of fish predators. Heavy periods of summer or fall rain may also make these vernal ponds wet again.

Wetlands play an important role in a community as they are areas of great biodiversity while providing a number of other ecological benefits. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources website describes the following benefits of wetlands:

Because they occur where the dry land meets the water, wetlands play a critical role in the management of our water-based resources. Acre for acre, wetlands produce more wildlife and plants than any other Michigan habitat type. Wetland species also comprise a critically important segment of these species. For example, Michigan boasts about 2,300 native plant species; 50 percent of these are wetland species and over 25 percent of the wetland species are threatened or endangered. More than 40 percent of the 575 vertebrate (with a backbone) wildlife species in Michigan live in or utilize wetlands. This includes 10 to 15 of the 66 mammals, 180 of the 370 birds, 22 of the 28 reptiles, and all of the 23 amphibians.

Besides supporting biodiversity, wetlands also provide a number of beneficial environmental qualities including:

- reduce flooding by absorbing runoff from rain and melting snow and slowly releasing excess water into rivers and lakes - a one acre swamp when flooded to a depth of one foot contains 330,000 gallons of water
- filter pollutants from surface runoff, trapping fertilizers, pesticides, sediments, and other contaminants and helping to break some of them down into less harmful substances, improving water clarity and quality
- help recharge groundwater supplies when connected to underground aquifers
- contribute to natural nutrient and water cycles, and produce vital atmospheric gases, including oxygen
- provide commercial or recreational value to our human economy, by producing plants, game birds (ducks, geese) and fur bearing mammals - many fish are directly connected

to wetlands, requiring shallow water areas for breeding, feeding and escaping from predators

- when wetlands occur adjacent to the Great Lakes, inland lakes or streams, they serve as nutrient traps that then enrich the larger body of water of which they are part

Map 2: Natural Features Map

Chapter 4 - Existing Land Use

Overview

One of the most important aspects of the Master Plan analysis the identification of existing land uses. A thorough knowledge of existing land use patterns and site conditions furnishes planners and community leaders with basic information by which future residential, commercial, industrial, and public land use decisions can be made, and it may be used to track changes over time.

The existing land use map and acreage tabulation chart, Table 6, included in the following pages, will serve as key references for the Village of Farwell to utilize in its consideration of land use and infrastructure improvement proposals during the term of this Master Plan.

Methodology

The original 1999 field survey, conducted by Wade-Trim Associates, was updated through municipal staff review of the original materials and aerial reconnaissance. Data was gathered for all parcels contained within a one-quarter mile radius of the Farwell village limits. Updates to the original survey were entered into an ESRI ArcView database.

The original land use field data was transferred from the field survey notes into a computer-aided drafting (CAD) system running Intergraph MicroStation software, and the property line base map was prepared using digital files obtained from Paul B. Lapham and Associates, Incorporated. This information was updated in the mid-aughts when Wade-Trim prepared new digital Zoning District map for the Village.

For the 2025 plan, Wade Trim updated the Existing Land Use map from aerial photography and Village of Farwell staff reviewed this draft map and compared it to 2017 Master Plan Existing Land Use map. Edits were made to reflect current land uses within the Village.

Table 6: Land Use Acreage — Farwell

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Single Family Residential	211	23.9
Medium Family Residential	8	0.9
Manufactured Home Park	18	2.0
Commercial	29	3.3
Central Business District	8	0.9

Industrial	76	8.6
Institutional	16	1.8
Parks and Recreation	45	5.1
Public	2	0.2
Semi-Public	20	2.3
Vacant	449	50.9
Total	882	100.00

Source: Village of Farwell staff and Wade Trim

Land Use Distribution

Each existing land use was placed in one of eleven (11) general land use categories. The Existing Land Use Map depicts the geographic distribution of the land use classifications.

The Village of Farwell planning area encompasses approximately 1.4 square miles in area. Data provided in **Table X** indicates the total acreage occupied by each land use type and its proportion of total land area within the Village of Farwell Planning Area. The land use tables from the 2017 and 2024 plans differ in acreage within the Village; however, the ratios of land uses remained rather steady between the two dates.

Single Family Residential

The single-family residential category includes site-built single-family detached structures used as a permanent dwelling, manufactured (modular) dwellings or mobile homes located outside of designated mobile home parks, and accessory buildings, such as garages, that are related to these units. Single-family dwellings in Farwell may be located as part of a subdivision or on an individual parcel.

Land uses categorized as single-family residential development occupy 211 acres or 23.9 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Multiple Family Residential

The multiple-family residential category includes housing structures consisting of more than two units which are located on the same site. These may be apartments or townhouses developed individually or in complexes. It also includes related lawn areas, parking lots, and any accessory recreation facilities. Examples of multiple-family residential uses found in Farwell are the Pinehurst Condominium complex, located off Pinetree Street, the Nottingham Apartments, located off of South Mill Street and the Corning Apartment complex, located along North Corning Street. The Pinehurst condominiums are open strictly to low- and moderate-income senior citizens, whereas the Corning and Nottingham apartments are open to renters of all income levels.

Multiple-family residential development occupies 8 acres or 0.9 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Mobile Home Park

The mobile home park category includes land assembled for the purpose of locating a planned mobile or manufactured home community on the site. Land so classified includes related service and recreational areas.

Farwell has only one mobile home park within its boundaries, that being the Meadows of Farwell Mobile Home Park. This modest park is located along Grace Street, in the northwest portion of the Village.

Mobile home park development occupies 18 acres or 2.0 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Commercial

The commercial category includes convenience stores, comparison shopping centers, and general commercial businesses.

Convenience stores are commercial establishments which satisfy the day-to-day shopping needs of residents. Convenience uses include food stores, hardware stores, and barber shops. In Farwell, most of this type of development is clustered around the central business district of the Village.

Comparison shopping centers are developments which offer merchandise, products, or services needed less frequently, but which a customer usually comparison shops before buying. Included in this category are clothing stores, furniture appliance showrooms, and department stores. There are no comparison shopping centers in the Village of Farwell. To satisfy these types of needs, residents generally travel to comparison shopping centers located in the larger urban center of Clare, just 5 minutes southeast of the Village.

General commercial businesses do not require a location in a shopping center; rather, such uses benefit from a location on a major thoroughfare which permits good access. Such uses include gasoline stations, restaurants, automotive sales, light auto repair/service facilities (i.e., quick oil change businesses), theaters, landscaping supply centers, motels and greenhouses. As in the convenience commercial category, the majority of this type of development is clustered around the central business district of the Village.

At the present time, lands occupied by commercial land uses occupy 29 acres or 3.3 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Central Business District

The central business district acts as the central focus of commercial activity for the Village of Farwell and occupies a four-block area both north and south of Main Street of the downtown. Land uses included in the central business district category includes a variety of business, financial, medical, professional offices, and related service establishments.

The central business district land use category occupies 8 acres or 0.9 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Industrial

The industrial category includes both heavy and light forms of manufacturing, assembling and general fabricating facilities. Since 2000, an industrial park on the north end of the community was completed.

Examples of industrial uses in the Village of Farwell are the Melling Automotive Products plant, located along Grace Street, the Lear manufacturing plant, located off Hoover Street in the northwest portion of the Village and Future Mold, located just north of the fairgrounds area on Weber Street, and the Farwell Enterprise Park industrial park to the NW of the Village center.

Industrial development occupies 76 acres or 8.6 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Institutional

This category includes lands used for public and private education, hospitals and other related purposes. Examples of this type of use include the Farwell Community High School, Middle School and Elementary School, which are located one block north of Main Street, between Ohio and Michigan Streets

Land uses which fall under this category occupy 16 acres or 1.8 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Parks and Recreation

This category includes lands principally used for recreational purposes. This may include active recreation facilities such as playground equipment, ball diamonds, tennis courts soccer fields and public and private golf courses. In addition, passive recreation facilities, such as hiking trails, and picnic areas, are also included in this category.

Examples of this type of use in the Village of Farwell include the Farwell Recreation Area, located between Hall and Superior Streets and along Ellen Street. This park provides the Village

with six little league ballfields, a softball diamond and tennis court facilities. In addition to this area, the Village possesses a passive park, Littlefield Park, which is located along the south side of Main Street near the center of the Village. A public shelter is provided for community picnics and other events. Farwell's Farmer's Market is located adjacent to the Pere Marquette Trail, near the intersection of Illinois and S. Hall Streets

Parks and recreation areas occupy 45 acres or 5.1 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Public

This category includes all land devoted for public purposes such as village offices, police and fire departments, department of public works, sewage and water treatment facilities, libraries, fairgrounds and other comparable uses found throughout Farwell.

Public land uses occupy 2 acres or 0.2 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Semi-Public

This category includes structures or areas generally open to the public such as churches, meeting halls, auditoriums, cemeteries and other comparable uses. Specific examples of semi-public uses in the Village of Farwell include the Trinity Baptist Church, located just west of the central business district along Main Street/U.S. 10, and the VFW Post 3039, located at the corner of Floyd and Weber Streets in the southeastern portion of the Village.

Semi-public land uses occupy 20 acres or 2.3 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Vacant, Open Space, Rights-of-Way, Bodies of Water and Other

All dedicated rights-of-way (highways, roads, and major utility easements) are included in this category. In addition, an MDNR rail/trail (a trail that has been converted from an abandoned railway) which stretches across the Village, waterbodies, lands lying fallow, woodlands, and vacant land for which no specific use was identified are included in this category. Much of the land falling under this land use category consists of the woodlands, wetlands, and open space areas which immediately surround the Village limits.

This category occupies 449 acres or 50.9 percent of the total land in Farwell.

Map 3: Existing Land Use

Chapter 5 - Community Facilities

Overview

The functional operation of any community involves the effective use of public facilities and provision of municipal services. A thorough understanding of the community's public facilities and services is essential in determining future land use planning decisions. These decisions consider the impact of future residential, commercial, industrial, and public improvement developments on the community.

This chapter includes a general description of public facilities and services in the Village as well as an assessment of current and future needs of these facilities and services.

Municipal Facilities

There are several municipal facilities that are operated by the Village. These facilities include the Village Hall, the Department of Public Works Maintenance Facility, Municipal Well Fields, Water Treatment Facilities, and Wastewater Treatment Plant. Surrey Township operates a couple facilities within the Village including the Township Hall, Fire Station, and the Library.

Village Hall

The Village Hall is located at 109 South Hall Street, and it is located adjacent to Littlefield Park one ½ block south of Main Street. The building serves as the site for all Village administrative activities and regular public meetings. The Treasurer serves on a full-time basis and is assigned to handle the Village's administrative operations.

Surrey Township Hall

Surrey Township Hall is located at 110 E. Michigan Street in the Downtown. The facility includes township offices and the fire station. **Immediately across Superior Street from the Township Hall, additional Township offices have been built.**

Fire and Police Services

The Village contracts with the Michigan State Police to provide police protection. Additional patrols have been authorized to give an increased police presence in the Village.

The Village is provided fire protection by the Surrey Township Fire Department. The Fire Department station is situated at the Surrey Township Hall complex, which is located at the corner of Michigan and Superior Streets in Downtown Farwell. The Fire Department is staffed with volunteer firemen.

Library

The Surrey Township Public Library is located in Downtown Farwell at the northeast corner of E. Michigan and N. Hall Streets. Originally, the local library was started in 1879 by a volunteer women's organization, "The Ladies Library Association". In 1931, Surrey Township overtook the operations, and the present library was built in 1975. The library has expanded twice and built an outdoor pavilion to serve patrons and area residents.

Farwell Museum

The Farwell Museum is located on Main Street in the heart of the downtown district. The building was constructed in 1883 by the Ladies Library Association to serve as the public library. Surrey Township operated the library in the building from 1931 until new library was constructed in 1975. After the library vacated the premises, the "Ladies Library Association" transformed itself in 1977 into a historical society that redeveloped the building into a historical museum. In 2003, the Farwell Area Chamber of Commerce became a tenant, and they share the facility to this day.

Water and Sewer Services

The Village of Farwell operates its own water and sewer services. These operations are provided by the Department of Public Works.

Water Treatment

The Village of Farwell's municipal water system is supplied from three wells, which are located on Maple Grove Road at the north end of the Village. The three wells each have a capacity of approximately 375 gallons per minute and pump from the same aquifer, which is approximately 200 feet below the surface. The water in this aquifer has medium to high amounts of iron, and the iron is removed with a sand and activated carbon filter system, which is located in the main well house. A fourth well which accesses a shallower aquifer also exists at the wellhead location, and it is reserved for necessary emergency use (i.e. fire protection). Pressure is maintained throughout the water distribution system with a 150,000-gallon elevated water storage tank located in Littlefield Park, directly behind the Village offices.

A computerized radio-controlled system was installed in 1999, which operates the wells thereby maintaining water levels in the elevated storage tank from a central location at the Department of Public Works maintenance garage. The water distribution system throughout the community consists of four inch (4") to twelve inch (12") diameter water mains. The community is adequately looped and valved to maintain consistent distribution of pressure throughout the community during an average fire event. The community is relatively flat, which also facilitates a uniform pressure distribution throughout the water system. A new elevated storage tank may be necessary in the future if the proposed industrial park development attracts industrial water users with high fire demand. The existing system should be adequate to serve existing needs with moderate expansion.

The water distribution system consists of a water storage tank, and approximately 10,000 lineal feet of water mains and appurtenances. The appurtenances include valves, fire hydrants, and service connections. Records indicate that much of the water system, including the storage tank, was constructed in the 1970's but there are some water mains that date from the 1950s or before. The distribution system generally provides adequate flows and pressures for serving industrial, commercial, and residential drinking water and fire protection needs.

The majority of the water mains are constructed of either cast or ductile iron with a service life up to 100 years. The remaining water mains are made of either asbestos cement or plastic pipe. These materials have an expected life of up to 70 years. Replacement should be considered when water main breaks begin to occur often within an area and the Public Works staff has indicated that there are no concentrated areas of water main breaks.

The water valves, hydrants, and services in the system are generally 30 to 60 years old. Routine operation and maintenance, such as hydrant flushing, has taken place on this infrastructure. Because most service is reactive to problems or failure, the Village should consider a developed maintenance program. Greater attention to replacement and continued maintenance are especially critical as the system ages. A capital improvement plan and maintenance program are necessary to achieve this goal.

The Village had its regulatory required General Plan and Reliability Study prepared in 2012. The Plan recommended improvements including adding a water main loop in the northwest section of the Village to improve flow, pressure, and reliability to the area; replacing and extending the water main along the entire length of Main Street; and upsizing small water mains (4" diameter and smaller) to provide better fire protection service. Future improvements should include a program to replace water mains, valves, hydrants, and services as they become problems or approach their design life.

Wastewater Treatment

The Village of Farwell's Wastewater Treatment Facility consists of a lagoon treatment plant with a capacity to treat 200,000 gallons per day of effluent. Current wastewater flow into the plant is approximately 170,000 gallons per day on average. Wastewater enters the plant is split between two 0.17 acre aeration cells. Effluent from the two aeration cells enter Treatment Cell Number 1, which is a 1.2 acre storage lagoon. From Cell Number 1, the effluent enters one of two 3.4 acre flooded irrigation cells for disposal. The treated wastewater effluent seeps into the ground through the seepage cells and is vented through the groundwater towards the south branch of the Tobacco River. Six monitoring wells located between the seeping lagoons and the river are tested regularly to monitor the quality of the groundwater to ensure that degradation does not occur.

The Village of Farwell filed a groundwater discharge permit renewal application in October of 1998. The application has been accepted by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the treatment facility is in compliance. During the application process, the Village identified the following areas, which need to be considered in the future to maintain and upgrade the wastewater treatment facility:

- 1) Remove sludge from the aerated lagoons
- 2) Investigate ways to remove excessive infiltration and inflow (I/I) from the collection system
- 3) Repair several valves on the wastewater treatment facility
- 4) Upgrade and add additional aeration capacity to the aeration cells
- 5) Rehabilitate Cell Number 1 to prevent leakage.

The Village is current looking into the above needs and alternatives for financing to complete the improvements. Current excess capacity is approximately 30,000 gallons per day. Removal of the excess infiltration and upgrading of the wastewater treatment facility should provide additional capacity for future growth within the system.

Wastewater Collection System

Sanitary sewer service is provided to most of the developed portions of the Village. Wastewater is collected through a system of six inch (6") to twelve inch (12") gravity sewer lines and wastewater is pumped by four separate lift stations. All wastewater, which enters the wastewater treatment plant, is pumped through the main pump-station, which is located on Hall Street just north of Washington Street. The collection system has been generally dependable; however, excessive infiltration and inflow (I/I) has been identified in the system. The wastewater lift stations are equipped with emergency standby power.

What is the status of the age of the system and the pumps? What improvements have been done recently? What plans are there for improvements? Any plans for expansion into Surrey Township?

Stormwater Management

The Village of Farwell owns the Farwell Drain that passes through community. This drain is an important part of Clare County's surface water drainage network, and the network is key to addressing stormwater flows within the Village. The Village Department of Public Works staff should periodically inspect the drain to ensure that it is still operating correctly and that the regular or wet-weather flows are not impeded by silting, vegetative growth, damaged culverts, or other issues within the drain. These inspections should be scheduled at least every five years, and maintenance work should be completed as necessary.

Parks and Recreation

The Village of Farwell expired 2014-2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared by Leisure Planning and Solutions, LLC. This plan was adopted by the Village Council in December 2013. This plan covered a larger area than just the Village of Farwell because the Village serves as the economic, educational, social, and cultural center of the surrounding rural area with the Farwell Public School district covering nearly 180 square miles in both Clare and Isabella Counties. These students and their parents travel to the Village to participate in school activities. The Village and its recreational partners should consider updating this plan so that the community would be eligible to apply for Michigan Department of Natural Resources recreation grants; an up-to-date recreation plan is required for grant eligibility.

The Village of Farwell currently operates two parks Littlefield Park, located in the center of Village on Main Street, which is approximately two acres, and Farwell Little League Park, which is 18 acres. Maintenance of both is provided by the Village Department of Public Works. Coker Park, on Pine Tree Drive, is owned and operated by the residential subdivision in which it is located.

The portion of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Mill Pond property that abuts the northeastern corner of the Mill Pond, including the Pere Marquette Trail Parking Lot, is being leased by the Village from the State to the Village to become Mill Pond Park. In 2023-2024, the Mill Pond was dredged, removing over 8,000 cubic yards of dredging spoils, with a Michigan legislative earmark to improve fishing habitat. The Village was awarded a Michigan Infrastructure Grant by the State of Michigan and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to develop Mill Pond Park. Highlights of the park will include scenic pathways, pavilions with picnic tables, a fishing pier, a launch area for kayaks and small non-motorized

boats, and upgraded parking areas. Opened in 2025, the park will be open year-round to visitors, with easy access from the rail trail.

In 2012, the Village purchase land to open a seasonal farmers market, located one block south of Main Street, at the northwest corner of S. Hall and Illinois Streets. This parcel includes open space and an enclosed events building. The market is open from the first Saturday in May to the first Saturday in October, supporting local farmers, bakers, and artisans, while providing the community with access to quality food and goods.

Besides organizing the farmers market, the Village also organizes the annual Lumberjack Festival in July, which highlights the Village's lumbering heritage. The Farwell Labor Day Committee organizes Michigan's oldest Labor Day Festival that is approaching its 120th anniversary. The Farwell Little League manages youth baseball and girls softball programs with volunteers assisting in the maintenance and beautification of the Farwell Little League Park.

Surrey Township does not offer any recreational services, and Clare County primarily serves as a clearing house for parks and recreational services in the county. The Farwell School District manages two recreational facilities, one in the Village at the school complex comprised of school playground equipment, and a sports complex that is located just north of the Village with vehicle access from South Old State Road.

The Pere Marquette State Trail is a tremendous recreation asset as it passes directly through the Village just south of Main Street. This trail runs from the City of Clare west to Baldwin. From Clare west to Reed City, the trail surface is paved asphalt, and from Reed City west to Baldwin, it is paved with finely screened and compacted limestone. The former 2.25 mile trail gap west from downtown Clare was closed in 2024. From Clare southeast to Midland, this route continues as the Pere Marquette Rail Trail and is an additional 30 miles in length.

The Pere Marquette State Trail is a part of an expanding network of rail trails in the north central part of the State of Michigan. With the growing trail network, the region is poised to become a major bike riding center in America's Midwest. In Reed City, the Pere Marquette State Trail crosses the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park that acts as a north south backbone to Central Michigan's regional network. The proposed US-127 Trail from Alma north to Clare will help to solidify this region as a bicycle riding destination by creating a linked network of trail opportunities. Downtown Farwell is perfectly situated on the Pere Marquette State Trail to become a rest point where visitors can explore the community. The Downtown area would be able to benefit by providing services to trail users including food, drinks, shopping, and bike services.

The Farwell Fairgrounds, operated by Farwell Chamber of Commerce, hosts the annual Labor Day Festival and other periodic events including demolition derbies throughout the year. In 2025, the fairgrounds hosted the third annual Memorial Day festival, returning a traditional event to the community.

Table 7: Recreation Inventory

Facility Name	Map Location	Facilities Available
Little League Complex	1	Two girls softball fields Four boys baseball fields One tee-ball field Equipment/Concessions building Picnic tables, bleachers, miscellaneous equipment Two shuffleboard courts
Littlefield Village Park	2	Picnic area Pavilion with restrooms Playground equipment
Coker Park (privately owned)	3	Undeveloped small lot within a residential subdivision.
Mill Pond Park		Currently undeveloped park with parking area for the Pere Marquette State Trail
Pere Marquette State Trail	4	Developed rail trail stretching from Baldwin to Clare
Farwell Area Schools	5	Playground equipment Three ½ court basketball courts
Farwell Area Schools Sports Complex	6	Football field, bleachers, and track Locker rooms and storage facility Softball field and baseball diamond Soccer Field
Farwell School Forest		Wooded property with teaching opportunities
Eagle Glen Golf Course	7	18-hole par 72 championship golf course.
Farwell Fairgrounds	8	Concessions, parking, and restrooms

Post Office

The U.S. Post Office operates its Farwell branch from a circa 1960s building on West Main Street

Map 4: Community Facilities

Chapter 6 - Planning and Urban Design Standards

Overview

To encourage future development and to address some community concerns regarding housing choice/availability and downtown vitality, several recognized urban design principles should be considered for new development within the Village.

Urban Design Standards

To ensure orderly and attractive development that supports tax base growth and improved quality of life in the Village of Farwell, the focus of this Master Plan update is on land use and planning concepts that the Village is able to implement through changes to the Village's Zoning Ordinance. In a community with limited staff capacity, the Village's Zoning Ordinance will be the most powerful tool in implementing the Master Plan's vision.

This section will focus on several zoning tools that will support a more lively and dynamic Downtown district through the implementation of zoning revisions that supports a mixture of uses.

Inclusive Use Selection

Since Euclidean zoning principles that separate land uses was confirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1926, most American communities have been divided into separate zoning districts that do not allow for the mixture of uses. Euclidean zoning principles were designed to separate most all uses into three main groups by increasing intensity of use – residential, commercial, and industrial. Over time, each of the categories has been further subdivided. An example of this is the siting of heavy industry with its very noxious impacts. To prevent a new plant from having serious negative impacts upon the quality of life of adjacent properties, the Euclidean zoning method was created to separate uses from each other.

This division of uses has created physical separations between the uses and reliance upon public transit at first and later the automobile for mobility between use districts. This reliance upon cars has drastically altered land use as cars needed larger roads to drive on and parking

spaces at office or shopping destinations. American communities have been drastically altered to accommodate these transportation methods, and downtown districts have been some of the worst areas affected.

In the last thirty years, there has been a growing recognition that reliance upon cars and clear separations of uses has created districts that are quiet and devoid of people for large parts of the day. These use separations also require car trips for almost every trip out of the office or home to obtain a good or service. In the last twenty years, there has been a marked growth in the interested in living and/or visiting mixed use commercial districts. To combat these land use issues, new planning concepts have been developed that harken back to earlier town development patterns that permitted a mixture of uses and supported the development of vibrant and active mixed-use districts throughout the day and night.

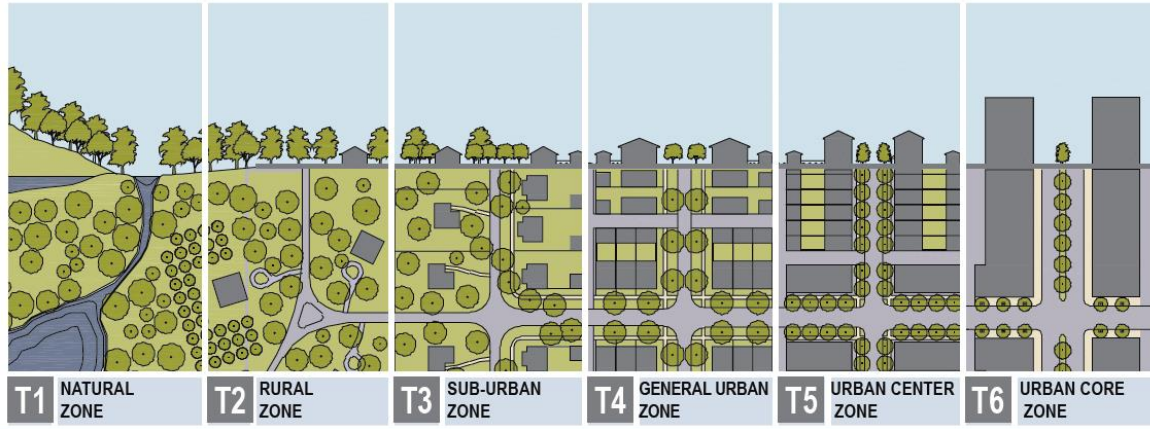
One recent approach has been to increase the number of uses permitted within core districts, even allowing some uses to be located in places where they would have been prohibited in the past. These changes include allowing for a variety of residential uses to be allowed within the Central Business District, including residential on the ground floor of buildings not along main thoroughfares.

With the advent of new high-tech manufacturing, allowing certain light manufacturing uses that have no off-site impacts is also a way to bring new uses to main street locations. These uses may include artists making crafts or 3D printing of specialized parts that are being designed onsite. These actions not only bring new uses to downtown districts, they also support local job creation.

Form-Based Codes

Traditional zoning districts regulate properties by the permitted uses and other requirements while form-based code regulates land based upon the physical form of allowed development. Form-based codes are regulations that govern the relationships between the building facades and public realm, the form and mass of the buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and physical layout of streets and blocks.

Form-based codes focus on ensuring that new buildings support the development of active pleasant streets that offer a variety of services that are open and active throughout the day and night. This method is often accomplished with the transect model that illustrates the increasing intensity of uses from an undeveloped rural parcel to fully developed large-city downtown. The transect also illustrates the shape of the buildings and location along the street.



Source: Original image from DPZ Initiatives

Form based codes than layer onto this transect the regulation of the form of the buildings within the various zones to ensure that the street’s appearance and feel create comfortable and active streets in all commercial and residential zones. Thriving downtown districts have several similar characteristics including an uninterrupted street wall of buildings built to the property line, variety of uses, differing architecture that engages the public, and quality streetscape elements. The lining of the street with buildings and storefronts defines the urban realm and focuses public improvements that enliven and support this public space.

Pedestrians do not find it appealing to walk on streets where “holes” in the street wall have been formed by buildings setback from the street edge, parking lots, blank walls, or areas without storefronts. These voids in street wall destroy street life that is necessary for thriving urban districts. Many planners now believe that standard zoning supports the formation of downtown districts that have street wall voids caused by zoning requirements like setbacks, off-street parking requirements, buffering, density controls, etc. Zoning separates uses while form-based zoning codes support the development of mixed use commercial districts.

Form-based code zoning regulations and standards are presented in both words and clearly drawn diagrams and other visuals. To support redevelopment, the Village of Farwell should consider adopting a form-based code for its downtown district which will support the creation of vibrant spaces that will serve both the resident and visitor alike. If the Form-base Code approach is deemed too unorthodox, the Village should consider revising its standard Euclidean approach with a Hybrid Code approach within the Central Business District. This hybrid model revamps traditional zoning codes to support the development of zero-street wall buildings with a mixture of commercial and residential uses on multi-story buildings. The hybrid code may include glazing and exterior design requirements.

Missing Middle Housing

Adding a mixture of housing densities and sizes is important to communities in the 21st Century as residents desire for a wider variety of housing types that just single-family homes and traditional apartment complexes located on the edge of the community that comprise a large

majority of the residential development over the last 70 years. This approach has limited the supply of housing for those who do not want or cannot afford to live in single-family houses.

This variety of housing options can be achieved by permitting the construction of Missing Middle Housing in and adjacent to the Downtown. Since the end of World War II, there has been limited construction of non-single family homes in most of the United States. America's two largest demographic groups are Millennials and retiring Baby Boomers. Both groups are interested in non-single family home living options. Larger percentages of Millennials are interested in living in urban environments with less desires for home and car ownership than previous generations whereas the Baby Boomers are interested in living options that do not require maintaining single-family homes. The Missing Middle housing choices include duplexes, fourplexes, courtyard apartments, townhouses, lower density mixed-use buildings, and live-work spaces.



Supporting the opportunity for Missing Middle Housing in Farwell will enable the creation of new housing stock that is desired by the country's two largest demographic groups. This housing also supports the downtown businesses by creating a group of residents who will be "captive" users of the Downtown businesses. These residents often choose trips by foot to nearby Downtown businesses versus driving to shop outside of the Village.

As a part updating the Village's Zoning Ordinance to adopt recommendations from the Master Plan, the Village should consider adopting language that permits Missing Middle Housing within the Downtown area. The medium density residential districts adjacent to the Downtown should be "up zoned" to allow for additional Missing Middle Housing opportunities that fit within the district. Appropriate housing types include duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, row/townhouses, and smaller courtyard apartments.

URBAN FOREST

An urban forest provides a wide array of environmental and quality of life enhancements within a community, but the community value of this urban design intervention is often overlooked.

An urban forest is comprised of several components including canopy shade trees along road rights of way, generous site landscaping, and landscaping of parking areas. A generally accepted urban forestry guideline recommends a 40% tree cover for all urbanized communities

east of the Mississippi River. Currently, the Village of Farwell falls far below this guideline, and it should begin the decade's long efforts to correct this deficiency.

The Village of Farwell is closely associated with forestry in Michigan. The region's virgin forest was logged in the 1870s through early 1900s with several of the community's founding fathers making their fortunes in the logging industry. One of these founders, Josiah Littlefield remained in Farwell for his entire life, and he was an avid forester and conservationist. He and his second wife donated Littlefield Park to the Village in 1894 after already planting the site with numerous trees prior to their donation. Mr. Littlefield also took active steps to encourage his conservation viewpoint by donating land in 1928 to Farwell School's to establish Michigan's first School Forest Park where forestry concepts and appreciation of the forest would be taught to the students. In a *Detroit News* article from October 1927, Mr. Littlefield was called the "Father of Conservation" in Clare County due to his forestry efforts.

Each last weekend in July, the Village also hosts the annual Lumberjack Festival in Littlefield Park to celebrate the area's lumbering heritage.

Additional information regarding the many benefits of developing an urban forestry program are detailed in Chapter 10 Implementation. To enhance Farwell's urban forest, it is recommended that the Village amend its Zoning Ordinance to require canopy shade trees along every road right-of-way, increased site landscaping requirements, and strengthening parking lot landscaping requirements. It is also recommended that the Village begin the process to become a Tree City USA designee by the Arbor Day Foundation.

By leveraging the Village's forestry heritage and implementing a long-term plan to plant and manage an urban forest, the community's overall livability and aesthetics will be significantly enhanced.

Chapter 7 - Transportation Analysis

Each year, the highway, county roads, rail line, and bikepath that traverses the Village move goods and thousands of people. Along with the nearby freeways, these transportation systems collectively make up a vital part of the regional infrastructure. Despite the fact that transportation systems connect the Village to the rest of the region and parts of the country, the Village has little control or jurisdiction over the roadways. Clare County and the Michigan Department of Transportation control and maintain the main roads providing service and access to the Village.

Regional Context

The Village of Farwell is located in the southern central portion of Clare County in the heart of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. Clare County's Surrey Township surrounds the Village. The Village of Farwell is approximately 20 miles southwest of the City of Harrison, the county seat of Clare County, and 20 miles northwest of the City of Mt. Pleasant, the county seat of Isabella County. The Village is seen as being located at the Gateway to Northern Michigan, from the larger municipalities located in "Downstate Michigan". It is near the Clare Isabella county line that many Michiganders feel that reach "up north" as they're travelling north.

The Village is located five miles west of the City of Clare where two major regional highways meet: US-127 connecting Mt. Pleasant, Lansing, and Jackson from the south to Grayling, Mackinaw City, and the Upper Peninsula via I-75 to the north; and US-10 providing access from Saginaw, Bay City, and Midland on the east side of the state to Reed City and Ludington on Michigan's west coast, ultimately connecting to Wisconsin via the Lake Michigan Car Ferry.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets is a comprehensive transportation policy and design approach that requires all streets to be designed, planned, constructed and operated with all users considered regardless of their ages and abilities and for all modes of transit. Complete Streets enables safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for those walking, biking, driving cars, driving trucks or delivery vehicles, or riding public transit.

Complete Streets includes: 1) pedestrian infrastructure including sidewalks, curb-cuts, bump-outs, improved crosswalks, and ADA compliant facilities; 2) traffic calming measures including shorter curb radii, center pedestrian "refugee" medians, angled face-out parking, and road

diets; 3) bicycle facilities including protected bike lanes, shared-use paths, signage, bicycle parking facilities; and 4) public transit improvements.

It is recommended that the Village make a commitment to Complete Streets through the Village Council ratifying a resolution adopting Complete Streets as a design goal. Approval of the Village's Complete Streets goals and desires have to be taken into account when the Michigan Department of Transportation and/or the Clare County Road Commission are planning or designing projects within the Village.

The Transportation Plan **Map X** illustrates the Future Transportation Plan for the Village. Many of the proposals are for intersection improvements and right-of-way preservation of the arterial road network. A network of non-motorized paths and on-street bikeway connections has also been identified to connect the Village's various natural and community facilities.

There is no single formula or prescription for a Complete Street. Streets are "complete" when they fit into the context of the surrounding area and accommodate all prospective roadway users. Not all Farwell's streets will include all of the elements below, but this list represents what the Village will strive to achieve when evaluating future transportation projects.

- **Pedestrians:** Farwell's streets will include sidewalks with unobstructed walking space, adequate lighting, benches, trees, shading, roadway separation and on-street parking, easy access to walkable destinations, and safe and frequent road crossings.
- **Bicyclists:** Farwell's streets will include spaces to bike comfortably shared with traffic, or clearly marked bike lanes with appropriate separation based on speed and volume of vehicle traffic, adequate bicycle parking, intersection treatments, and destinations accessible by bike.
- **Vehicles:** Farwell's streets will be safe and convenient for driving. On-street and off-street parking will be easily accessible, signed, and appropriately priced, and streets will be designed to promote safe driving speeds.
- **Streets as places:** Farwell's streets will be places for people to inhabit. They will not simply link destinations; they will be destinations in themselves. Landscaping and street furniture provide amenities that enable streets to function more than transit ways by supporting other activities including social gathering, exercising, and relaxing.
- **Adding value:** Farwell's streets will enhance property value and be coordinated with land use development standards to support commerce through connectivity, design aesthetics, street life, and access.
- **Transit:** Farwell's streets will support access to existing and future transit systems in the region.

Supporting Complete Streets in Farwell will complement existing development patterns; enhance the attractiveness and use of the Central Business District; enhance the existing commercial corridor; extend traditional neighborhood development patterns as sites are developed within and beyond the boundaries of the Village; improve connectivity with Surrey Township; and improve upon the walkability of the Village.

Protecting Vulnerable Users

It is generally recognized that traffic volumes on Main Street are high. This is due to M-115 bringing traffic directly through the Village. This traffic is both an opportunity and a drawback. While higher traffic volumes are desirable for business, excessive volumes and higher speeds cause downtowns and commercial corridors to become less attractive for users and investment. Individuals with disabilities are often more severely impacted by vehicular-focused transportation decisions. Some vulnerable users have mobility challenges that require longer crossing times, and the Village's current road network does not provide fair accommodations. Poorly designed streets with fast-moving traffic and extra-wide widths negatively impact this community greater. Streets designed to Complete Streets standards take the limitations of all users into consideration, and the road geometries improve the safety and convenience for all users.

Existing Non-Motorized Transportation

The Village has two general nonmotorized transportation facilities within its borders: 1) the Pere Marquette Rail Trail that extends east west throughout the Village along the former Pere Marquette railroad line; 2) the sidewalk network that extends through portions of the residential neighborhoods.

Due to the intensity of potential use, certain areas where sidewalks do not exist should be prioritized over other areas. Ensuring sidewalks lead to all public facilities and transportation trip generators should be a goal. Significant gaps in the sidewalk network include those leading to the Farwell Little League Park, the two industrial parks along Old State Road, and sidewalks along East Michigan and Grace Streets. Smaller gaps are found throughout the system and should be addressed as funds become available or adjacent development occurs. When a vacant parcel is developed, it is good public policy that the property owner is responsible for developing the adjoining public infrastructure including water, sewer, and sidewalks. Efforts should be made to ensure that all crosswalks are ADA accessible as it makes the Village's sidewalks more user friendly for walkers, skateboards, roller bladers, and for persons with disabilities.

The Village has very little in the way of existing bicycle facilities, although many of the local streets are safe for biking and safe pedestrian crossings. To provide improved network connectivity, improvements are necessary for bicycle parking, wayfinding, and arterial bikeway treatments. This plan recommends connections that would make Farwell a non-motorized transportation destination within the northcentral Michigan region.

Vehicular Circulation

The ability of people and goods to efficiently and safely flow without unexpected stops or accidents is an important part of the quality of life in a community as well as a vital part to a community's economic well-being and growth.

Circulation Analysis

One way to evaluate the street system is to determine how well each street serves its purpose. Streets are classified in two ways: [1] a national ranking system called “Functional Classification” and [2] by standards found in Act 51 of 1951 by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

Federal Functional Classification

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) to classify all highways, streets, and roads according to their function in 1968. Since being established, this structure is recognized as the Nation’s road classification system. It utilizes several factors including volume of traffic and types of trips served in its determination criteria, and transportation planning, roadway design, and funding allocations are all made from this information. The following list each category in the NFC:

- **Interstates and Other Freeways & Expressways:** Limited access roadways either designated as a part of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways or designed to similar standards with directional travel lanes, often separated by a physical barrier with controlled access and egress points.

There are no Interstates or Freeways with the Village of Farwell; however, US-10 travels east-west approximately two miles to the north of the community and US-127 travels north-south five miles to the east of the Village. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for the maintenance of these freeways and their bridges and access ramps.

- **Principal Arterials:** Principal arterials serve major metropolitan centers by providing a high degree of mobility and may also provide mobility through rural areas. These roadways serve primary centers of activity, carry high traffic volumes, and carry both through and local traffic. Unlike their access-controlled counterparts, abutting land uses may be served directly from the road right-of-way.

No roads in the Village of Farwell are designated as principal arterials.

- **Minor Arterials:** Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials but they generally carry less traffic and function to carry trips of shorter distances. Accessibility is greater but stops are more frequent due to signalized intersections.

M-115/Main Street is a Minor Arterial in the Village of Farwell.

- **Major Collectors:** Major collector roads are important travel corridors and provide service to arterial roads and often connect major population and employment centers. They provide direct access to parcels and direct traffic from residential areas to arterials.

South Old State Road and Mill Street/North Vandecar Avenue are designated as Major Collectors.

- **Minor Collectors:** Minor collectors often collect traffic from local roads and private property

and provide connections to more developed areas.

Beaver Road/South Harrison Avenue to the east of the Village is a minor collector.

- **Local Roads:** Local roads primarily provide access to adjacent properties and include most residential streets. These roads are not eligible for federal aid funding.

All of the remaining roads within Farwell are local roads.

State of Michigan Act 51 Classification

Michigan’s Act 51, PA of 1951, as amended, is the mechanism under which the State of Michigan shares gas tax revenues for road maintenance with communities. Municipalities are awarded funds based on the mileage of roadway within their boundaries.

The State of Michigan retains a portion of the gas tax revenues, which are allocated to MDOT for maintenance and upgrading of the interstate highways and state trunklines within the local jurisdictions. The remaining funds are allocated to local units of government by a set formula, and ultimately, depends upon the length of roadway in each classification.

Under Act 51, roads are divided into five categories – State Trunkline Highways, County Primary Roads, County Local Roads, Major Local Streets and Minor Local Streets. Regarding funding and responsibility, local municipalities are only directly concerned with the last two categories. Main Street/M-115 is a State Trunkline that passes through the Village, and it is maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Vandecar Avenue/Mill Street is a County Primary Road within the Village, and the segment is 0.6 miles long. Old State Road is under local jurisdiction within the Village, but it becomes a County Primary Road once it leaves the Village.

Designed to carry higher volumes of traffic at greater speeds, Major Local Streets receive more funding per mile than Minor Local Streets, which typically serve only residential areas. The Village of Farwell has jurisdiction over six miles of public streets. This responsibility includes 3.37 miles of Major Local Roads and 4.72 miles of Local Minor Streets. In addition, there is a approximately 1.3 miles of State Trunkline (Main Street/M-115) that the Village has a maintenance contract with MDOT to maintain.

Village Road Characteristics

The principal east-west street in Farwell is Main Street/M-115, which is a Minor Arterial/State Trunkline under the Michigan Department of Transportation jurisdiction. The standard right-of-way for Village streets is generally exceeds 66 feet in width.

Other Transportation Modes

Public Transportation

The Village of Farwell is served by Clare County Transit, which operates dial-a-ride bus and van service throughout the County. The 33-vehicle transit system served 44,525 riders in 2021-2022 with six-day-a-week service; typical fares are \$2.00 for in-town service and \$3.00 for

service outside of the Village, with senior and handicapped fares at 50% of the regular fare. Clare County Transit celebrated 40 years of operating service in 2021. Since its founding, approximately four million rides and 175 million passenger-miles have been driven.

Air and Rail Transportation

The Clare Municipal Airport, is approximately 7 miles east of Farwell, and it, provides general aviation services and has two operating paved runways. Additional nearby general aviation airports are located in Eart, Harrison, and Mt. Pleasant.

The closest commercial airport is MBS (Midland, Bay City, Saginaw) International in Freeland (approximately 50 miles southeast of Farwell). Grand Rapids and Flint also have regional commercial airports. The nearest international airport is Detroit Metropolitan Airport outside of Detroit, which is approximately 170 miles southeast of the Village.

Farwell is not served by passenger rail, although the Great Lakes Central Railroad operates a freight rail line in the Village. The nearest passenger rail station are approximately 90 miles south in East Lansing on the Blue Water Route or 90 miles southwest in Grand Rapids along the Pere Marquette Route, both with connections to Chicago.

Intercity Bus Transportation

There is no intercity bus transportation within the Village; however, Indian Trails provides intercity bus transportation on Michigan’s Strait’s Bus Route. The nearest stop is at Clare’s emerging north end commercial district located at US-10/US-127/McEwan Street intersection, at Cid’s Marathon Gas Station – 10197 S. Clare Avenue. This location is approximately six miles east of the Village.

Additional Transportation Issues

There are two issues related to the current transportation and circulation network of the Village that raise concerns.

Through Traffic on Main Street/M-115

A major issue in Farwell is the presence of fast moving through traffic in the Downtown area and the extreme width of pavement through the Downtown district. Up to 58 feet of pavement exists between the curbs through the Downtown. Farwell’s Main Street serves as M-115 which carries a great deal of traffic that is just passing through the Downtown district. This issue was partially alleviated when the US-10 Bypass was built west from Clare to the current intersection of M115 and US-10 about two miles northwest of the Village in the 1970s, but there still is a large portion of traffic that is using Main Street/M-115 as just a transportation route through the Village. This through traffic impacts the desirability of the Downtown through noise, speed of traffic, congestion, and dirt generated by the traffic.

The Village should work with M-DOT to institute: 1) Complete Streets designs that include traffic calming features within the Downtown district to slow the traffic and minimize the impacts on the Downtown users, and 2) MDOT's Multi Modal Development and Delivery (M2D2) Guidebook to ensure mobility is retained while enhancing the road's aesthetics.

Clare County Nonmotorized Pathway Development

Clare County are interspersed with vacation homes around many of its inland lakes. The very high number of seasonal homes is evidenced in Chapter 3 Socioeconomic Profile where 37.1% of Clare County's housing stock is comprised of seasonal or vacation housing. This high level of seasonal residents provides a great opportunity for a quaint Village like Farwell to take advantage of these residents who are looking for places that offer entertainment and dining options while they are visiting their seasonal residences.

With the advent of electric bicycles (e-bikes – which extend the range of a typical cyclist while reducing time and effort required), three clusters of these lake districts are close enough for visitors to utilize non-motorized pathways as a method to reach the Village of Farwell. Without safe and pleasant pathways, the likelihood of people riding or walking along unimproved road shoulders is however unlikely. With an attractive and safe alternative, the opportunities greatly increase that people will use these non-motorized routes as a recreational or transportation method. Surrey Lake, Lake Thirteen/Otter Lake, and Five Lakes lake districts are all potential traffic generators for the Village. The Village should work with Surrey Township and the Clare County Road Commission to build these pathway connections outside of the Village.

This expanded non-motorized network would benefit users of the Pere Marquette State Trail as well by expanding the offerings along this State pathway trunk line for short excursions. Currently, a sidewalk has been extended north of the Village to Lake Thirteen; however, it is only a five foot wide sidewalk. This sidewalk should be widened to a ten-foot wide asphalt pathway that better services runners, walkers, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users.

At this time, there is limited ability of the adjoining townships to assist with this issue, but the Village could partner with the Townships to seek State funds to assist in developing these pathways.

Additionally, US Bicycle Route 20 enters the Village from the south and continues north, traveling through Lake George before hitting M-61 and heading west, eventually ending in Ludington with further ferry service to Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

Future Transportation Plan

The Transportation Map sets forth recommendations for the development of public right-of-way in a manner consistent with and supportive of recommendations for Future Land Use. The Transportation Map maintains the existing, functional classification and Act 51 designations, as well as signal locations. The recommendations focus on intersection improvements, gateway creation, and improvements for more complete streets with pedestrian, bus transit, and bicycle facilities. The network is designed to link Farwell’s community facilities, link the Village to surrounding lake districts, and establish easy to navigate connections for people to walk and bike in their neighborhoods and around the Village.

Sidewalk Network

Farwell embraces walkability as a primary goal for the transportation system; however, the Village’s sidewalk system has significant gaps within it. Parts of the Village lack links in the residential sidewalk network and additional sidewalks are needed to complete the pedestrian pathway system.

This plan recommends a full build out of the sidewalk network in all areas of the Village. Residential sidewalks should be a minimum of five feet wide and have a minimum of five feet of landscape parkway separating the sidewalk from the roadway. Where right-of-way permits, an at least eight foot wide parkway landscape separation is desired.

Nonmotorized Pathway Network

Improvements to the pathway network in Farwell are intended to support residents’ health and access to important local destinations. With nonmotorized network improvements, more Farwell residents will be able to make safe, short trips, to parks, schools, and even downtown entertainment and shopping, all without getting in a car. Nonmotorized network improvements are recommended based on the need for separation from vehicle traffic, existing signal locations to cross Main Street, and alignment with desirable community destinations, like schools, parks, and public facilities.

Work with Clare County to implement Clare County Nonmotorized Pathway improvements detailed in the previous section to connect the Village of Farwell with the surrounding resort lakes of Surrey Lake, Lake Thirteen/Otter Lake, and Five Lakes.

Many of Farwell’s neighborhood streets are comfortable to bike on now, and could be improved with both pavement and pole signs. Some corridors that serve as more prominent system links could be improved with on-street pavement markings like conventional bike lanes and marked shared lanes. Most people don’t feel comfortable biking with heavy traffic; on these corridors

complete separation between vehicles and bicyclists are most desirable. Please note that in-street riding is not appropriate for riders less than fourteen years old. Children should remain on the sidewalk or utilize sidepaths as they cannot safely ride in the street with vehicles.

Streets that could use improvements include Mill Street/North Vandecar Avenue, North Superior Street, and East Michigan Street/Kapplinger Drive. This plan supports the creation of Complete Streets for these main pathway linkages, connections to various recreation and school nodes within the community, and support of the creation of the US 127 pathway. The following types of bike facilities are recommended:

Shared Use Paths and Sidepaths

Shared use paths are paved concrete or asphalt paths wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists that follow their own rights-of-way while sidepaths are located adjacent to the road within the same road right-of-way. These paths are typically a minimum of 10 feet wide with 2 feet of clearance on either side of the nonmotorized path. They offer cyclists a safe place to bike off-street when there is no space for a bike lane, or it is unsafe to bike on the street.

Signed Bike Routes

Bike route signs raise all users' awareness and acceptance of cycling. They make all residents aware of the most bike-friendly routes in their communities. Bike route signs are appropriate for any roadway that provides an essential link in a bicycle system, and can offer important, affordable motorist education and traffic calming. "Bike Route" signs should be implemented with a system of wayfinding signs that provide directions to specific destinations. These types of bikeway signs provide useful information and directions for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians alike. One example of a signed bicycle route is U.S. Bicycle Route 20 that passes north-south through the Village.

Conventional bike lanes and shared-use (sharrow) routes are not appropriate for the Village's network that would have a high percentage of younger users. In addition to supporting the health and quality of life of Village residents, improving the Village's nonmotorized network may also function as an economic development driver.

Biking on regional trails is a growing pastime nationally, and the Village and Clare County should take advantage of its location on a highly utilized Pere Marquette State Trail. The 2024 closing of the gap along the Pere Marquette State Trail just west of Clare will improve trail user experience across the length of the trail. The US 127 Trailway is in the preliminary phase which would provide a direct connection to the Fred Meijer Trail to the south, which serves as a major backbone of north central Michigan's emerging nonmotorized network.

Farwell's small town charm and convenience should be utilized to increase bike tourism related development.

Due to the size of the community and lack of overnight amenities, Farwell is likely to serve as a tourist stop for bicycling enthusiasts who are touring through Clare County. Farwell is at the

gateway to Northern Michigan, and this developing nonmotorized transportation infrastructure may be leveraged to support local economic development while providing a year-round benefit to residents. As north central Michigan grows as a bicycling destination, there are tremendous opportunities for the development of bicycle serving businesses in the Downtown including full-service bike shops, coffee shops, ice cream parlors, souvenir shops, restaurants, and bars.

Intersection Treatments and Traffic Calming

In addition to modifications to the roadway configuration and multimodal network alignment, intersection modifications can improve the overall safety, walkability, and identity of Farwell. Intersection treatments like curb extensions, textures, pavement markings, crosswalks, eliminating free-flow right turn lanes, tightening corner curb radii, and installing pedestrian refuge islands can improve traffic management and safety at intersections in the Downtown area. These features will also assist in slowing the traffic moving through the Downtown along Main Street/M-115. The following treatments are recommended:

Pedestrian Crossing Recommendations

Crosswalks are recommended minimally at all major pedestrian crossings and on the crossing leg parallel to the arterial network. Crosswalks are encouraged for pedestrian safety and there are likely places where further study is needed to determine if mid-block crossings are warranted. High visibility crosswalks alert drivers of where to expect people crossing. Standard crosswalks are typically only two white lines across the street, but the high emphasis designs draw more attention to the crossing and tend not to wear away as quickly. Special paving or colored markings may also be used.

On-Street Parking and Lane Narrowing

Added on-street parking and lane narrowing is recommended along Main Street/M-115 in the Downtown. On-street parking not only provides access to businesses, it supports sidewalk separation from vehicles and calms traffic by visually narrowing the perception of the roadway and creating additional buffer space between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Further, narrowing lanes from high-speed 12-foot-wide lanes to 10-foot-wide lanes encourages motorists to slow down and underscores a transition to an urbanized context. Along Main Street/M-115 from Corning Street to Webber Street, the roadway should be evaluated to determine if back-in diagonal parking on one side of the street would fit with the existing three-lane configuration.

Downtown Gateway Intersections

Gateway features are encouraged at Village border entrances; however, gateway features should be incorporated at the entrances into the downtown as well. Gateways can be bold statements, such as arched entryways, or can be more simply marked by signs and landscaping. Gateway areas are desirable places to site wayfinding signs and other identity features, such as banners and public art installations. Public art installations along the public right-of-way, such as sculptures and murals, can greatly accentuate the transportation network and improve the sense of place.

On-Street Bike Crossings

Intersections where the marked on-street bike network is on both streets should include bicycle crossing signs and wayfinding signs. Additionally, pedestrian crosswalks and bicycle pavement markings should be installed at the intersections and approaches.

Off-Street Bike Crossings

Intersections where the off-street bicycle network meets the on-street bicycle network should include bicycle-pedestrian crossing signs and wayfinding signs. Additionally, crosswalks for shared use paths should be as wide as the shared use path and marked with trail crossing signs. Bicycle pavement markings should be installed at the intersection and approaches.

Map 5: Future Transportation

Chapter 8 - Goals and Actions

Overview

This chapter presents the goals and actions for the Village of Farwell Master Plan. The Village's original Community Goals and Objectives were developed as a part of the Village's 2000 Master Plan. These goals and objectives were carried forward through the next iteration of the Plan in 2017, but due to limited Village staff capacity and the with the main role of the Planning Commission focused on administering the Zoning Ordinance, limited success has been achieved in Master Plan implementation over the last quarter century.

Recognizing these structural challenges, the Steering Committee and Planning Commission have thoroughly this section into actionable steps.

Goals and Action have been focused on land use and planning activities primarily that are within the purview of the Village, its staff, and the Planning Commission.

On behalf of the Village, the Farwell Planning Commission adopts the following goals to guide future development within the community and enhance the community's pleasant, small-town atmosphere. The listed actions are solid steps that should be taken to ensure the accomplishment of these goals, but additional actions may be taken that bring the Village closer to reaching its goals.

Physical Land Use Goals

Retain/Enhance Small-town Character

Through the survey responses, residents, the Master Plan Steering Committee, and the Planning Commission all agree that this goal is paramount to the success of the Master Plan, as it is the main land use aspect that residents desire to preserve and enhance. Limiting sprawl development that hinders downtown vibrancy is a concern.

- 1) Review ZO to ensure that commercial and multi-family are encouraged with the Downtown district
- 2) Review FLU and Zoning Map to limit sprawl and support downtown revitalization

Improve Urban Design Requirements

To ensure proper buffering between uses, enhanced landscaping, improved parking lot appearance, and Downtown building design and layout, revise land use regulations to ensure quality design and buffering.

- 1) Draft either Form-based Code or Hybrid Zoning for Downtown district for the Downtown district
- 2) Consider allowing mid-rise “Missing Middle” housing within the Downtown
- 3) Consider eliminating all parking requirements within the Downtown
- 4) Evaluate instituting parking maximums in all non-downtown areas
- 5) Improve landscaping requirements for all commercial and industrial developments

Eliminate Blight

Reduction of blight was identified as a serious concern during Master Plan development, and blight impacts both property values and overall community character. To ease enforcement, the Village should create a comprehensive educational and enforcement program that focuses on compliance.

- 1) Ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer has sufficient resources to encourage compliance
- 2) Develop marketing pieces to describe process and benefits of code enforcement

Expand Development Choices in Downtown

To enliven the Downtown district, revise the Zoning Ordinance to increase the number of uses that would be permitted within the Central Business District including residential on the ground-floor except along the main M-115 corridor.

- 1) Adjust Permitted Uses within the Downtown, including allowing residential
- 2) Establish a Village Brownfield Authority
- 3) Identify Redevelopment Ready Sites within the Downtown

Enhance M-115 Appearance/Reduce Negative Impacts

Reduce the impact of the existing 56’ wide Main Street and traffic at high rates of speed traveling through the Village

- 1) Work with MDOT to reduce the road footprint through the downtown district
- 2) Expand landscaping along M-115 to soften the corridor
- 3) Utilize Traffic-Calming Features

Expand Nonmotorized Connections

To support walking and bicycle riding and to encourage children to be more active, the Village should focus on expanding the nonmotorized network, including providing connections to destinations beyond the Village boundaries.

- 1) Have Village Council adopt a Complete Streets resolution or ordinance
- 2) Identify key gaps in the Village sidewalk network and budget funds to address these gaps
- 3) Identify opportunities to support connections to adjacent summer lake destinations

Expand Housing Options within the Village

To address housing affordability, support aging-in-place, and improve accessibility, revise the Zoning Ordinance to increase a variety of housing options available within the City.

- 1) Focus Brownfield Redevelopment Authority on housing affordability projects
- 2) Allow Accessory Dwelling Units within residential neighborhoods

- 3) Evaluate if low-density “Missing Middle” housing would be permitted within residential neighborhoods (duplex, triplexes, quadplexes, garden court apartments, rowhouses)
- 4) Allow “Tiny Houses” within the City

Public Policy Goals

These broader goals are beyond the direct purview and control the Village’s elected and appointed officials, staff, and Planning Commission; however, they are still important for the long-range development of the Village. They are included so as to ensure that the items remain on top-of-mind for these individuals. Opportunities may present themselves with other agencies and should be acted upon whenever possible.

Encourage intergovernmental cooperation between Farwell, Surrey Township, and Clare County

Due to the limited local capacity to develop, fund, and operate desired services including youth, recreation, and senior services –work cooperatively to accomplish these tasks:

- 1) Strengthen the relationship with Surrey Township and identify opportunities to share municipal services and facilities
- 2) Prepare a joint Parks and Recreation Master Plan with Surrey Township to be eligible to apply for grants to improve recreational facilities that will serve both seasonal and year-round residents.
- 3) Consider developing a working group to address joint development issues and focus on improving the aesthetic character of M-115 through both communities.
- 4) Identify locations for economic development within the Township that may be served by Village services.
- 5) Support workforce and economic development initiatives jointly.

Summary

The goals and actions enumerated above for the Village of Farwell are guidelines for future development. These statements are a starting point for local officials. As the planning process progresses, additional actions may be added to achieve the above enumerated goals. These goals are flexible and require constant evaluation. It is recommended that the goals and actions be reviewed and updated as necessary. To ensure progress towards Master Plan implementation, the Planning Commission should establish an annual work plan to ensure consistent efforts toward implementation.

Chapter 9 - Future Land Use

Introduction

The Future Land Use Map (Map 6) is the culmination of the comprehensive planning process. This map is based on consideration of the analyses, goals, policies, strategies and public input set forth in the plan and discussed at several meetings.

Future changes to the zoning ordinance text and map are expected to occur over time as the economic, social, and physical climates change. All zoning changes should only be made in harmony with the recommendations made within the Master Plan. Any deviation from the Master Plan should not be considered until the Master Plan is updated.

This chapter contains descriptions, recommendations, and justification for future land use in the Village of Farwell. These recommendations will provide an overall framework for the management and regulation of future development and also serve as the basis for evaluating zoning requests.

The Municipal Planning Enabling Act, Act 33 of 2008, as amended, specifically gives Village Planning Commissions the authority to prepare and officially adopt a Plan. When prepared, officially adopted, and maintained, this Plan should provide an advisory guide for the physical conservation of certain areas and for the development of other areas into the best possible living environment for present and future Village residents.

Because of the constant change in our social and economic structure and activities, the Plan must be maintained through periodic review and revision so that it reflects contemporary trends while maintaining long-range goals.

The Future Land Use Plan is general in scope. It is not intended to establish precise boundaries of land use or exact locations of future uses. It is also important to note that there is no schedule to implement the recommendations contained here. The timing of a particular land use is dependent upon a number of factors such as availability of public utilities, provisions for adequate roadways, effect on public services, and the demand for a particular land use versus the available land zoned for this use. Those, plus other factors, must be considered when reviewing a request for rezoning a particular parcel of land.

As background information to the planning process, the following narrative provides an explanation of the relationship of land use planning to zoning.

Transitional Land Use Planning

The Future Land Use Plan proposes to organize uses based on a transitional land use planning concept, whereby intensive development is buffered from lower intensity districts by a series of progressively less intensive land uses. For example, lands surrounding the industrial areas are planned for Public or Commercial uses. Similarly, Medium Density Residential is planned as a transition in residential density, located between higher intensity residential or commercial uses and lower intensity low density residential developments.

The Relationship of Planning to Zoning

The relationship between land use planning and zoning is an important one. Long range master planning establishes the vision and land use framework for the community to work towards, while zoning is the act of regulating land uses by ordinance. State of Michigan laws require that a community engage in land use planning activities, including the preparation of a comprehensive plan prior to the initiation of a zoning ordinance in a community.

The following narrative provides a better understanding of the terms "planning" and "zoning."

Planning

Planning is the process of guiding the future growth and development of a community. Generally, a document known as the Master Plan or Comprehensive Plan is prepared which addresses the various factors relating to the growth of a community. Through the process of land use planning, it is intended that a community may preserve, promote, protect, and improve the public health, safety, and general welfare. Additional considerations include: comfort, good order, appearance, convenience, law enforcement and fire protection, prevention of the overcrowding of land and avoidance of undue concentration of population, facilitation of the adequate and efficient provision of transportation, water, sewage requirements and services, and the conservation, development, utilization and protection of natural resources within the community. The Master Plan is also intended to guide local land use and zoning decisions. The future land use map should be used in conjunction with the Plan's goals when reviewing rezoning applications and certain special land use decisions. The Plan is to guide development but it is not a legally enforceable document.

Zoning

Zoning is one of the instruments, along with capital improvements programming and the administration of local subdivision regulations, which implements the goals and policies of the master/comprehensive plan. Zoning regulations have the force of law. The enactment and administration of the zoning ordinance are legislative and administrative processes utilized by local units of government to implement the goals and policies of the Master Plan. Suggested standards for considering rezoning include the following:

- Would the rezoning be consistent with the future land use map?
- Would the rezoning be consistent with the goals of the Plan?

- Are all of the permitted and conditional uses allowed in the proposed zoning district compatible with adjacent uses and zoning? (i.e., not just the "intended use," if there is one)
- Is there reason to believe that the property owner could not obtain a reasonable return on their investment with the current zoning? (this does not mean maximum profit, only reasonable)
- Can the existing infrastructure and services support all the uses under the proposed rezoning?

A "yes" response to all the above suggests that the rezoning may be approved. A "no" response to more than one suggest that the current zoning should be retained.

The following table, Table 8 presents this information in another way:

Table 8: Master Plan to Zoning Ordinance Comparison

Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies for the Village (e.g. attract new businesses to downtown, provide a mixture of housing, and replace park equipment).	Sets forth zoning regulations – the law. (i.e. notes locations where commercial uses are prohibited, stores must be setback 50 feet from the street right-of-way, maximum sign is 60 square feet).
Flexible, written to be able to respond to changing conditions.	Rigid, requiring formal amendment and details of how to administer the zoning ordinance.
Provides a background on the community, issues, goals, the citizen’s survey, and potential actions.	Deals with physical development and how to administrate the Zoning Ordinance.
Illustrates general land use categories that are not to regulate specific sites.	Highlights site specific uses and regulations for individual parcels.
Enacted under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended).	Enacted under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended).
Adopted by the Planning Commission.	Adopted by the municipality’s legislative body (Village Council).
Amendments may be made by the local Planning Commission.	Amendments made by the community’s legislative body (Village Council). Appeals and variances heard by the community’s Zoning Board of Appeals.

Future Land Use Acreage

Upon full implementation of the Future Land Use Map, approximately 51.4 percent of the land in the Village will be used for residential uses, not including residential uses located in the Central Business District. Industrial uses will occupy 14.9 percent. Recreation land, which includes parks and public land uses (e.g. schools and vacant City land), will occupy 7.0 percent. Non-residential uses, including commercial and public/semi-public, will occupy about 13.5 percent of the total land area.

Thus, the Future Land Use map establishes the framework for a predominantly lower density residential community, but the plan provides for expansion of non-residential uses to satisfy projected community and economic development needs. A more detailed review of each land use category follows.

Table 9: Future Land Uses

FLU Categories	Acreage	Percent
Low Density Residential	348	39.4%
Medium Density Residential	76	8.6%
Multiple-Family Residential	12	1.4%
Manufactured Home Park	18	2.0%
General Commercial	54	6.1%
Central Business District	34	3.8%
Industrial	132	14.9%
Parks and Recreation	62	7.0%
Public/Semi-Public	31	3.6%
Right-of-Way	116	13.1%
Total	882 acres	100.00%

Land Use Plan Recommendations

The Future Land Use Map recommends a number of different land use classifications. The following descriptions of these future land use classifications explain the type of the proposed uses, and the approximate acreages for each classification.

Low Density Residential

Lands in this category are mainly found in the outlying areas of the Village in areas that are currently vacant or only sparsely populated. This land use designation is generally intended to provide land for single family homes on large lots while opportunities for duplexes and accessory dwelling units are permitted. Densities here are planned for no more than two (2) units per acre allowing for home sites on parcels generally greater than one-half acre.

This category accommodates home buyers seeking suburban style amenities, which included two and increasingly three car attached garages, larger setbacks for landscaped yards, decks, play equipment, and private swimming pools.

Some non-residential uses already exist in these areas. These uses, if non incompatible with open space residential character should be encouraged to remain and included as special land uses in the zoning ordinance. Home-based businesses should be carefully regulated in this area to prevent negative impacts on residential neighborhoods.

This category represents one of the largest increases in land use with a proposed 348 acres. This is attributable to the large amount of currently vacant land which is available for lower density in-town living options.

Medium Density Residential

This land use is intended for medium residential development with relatively small lots of an urban nature, with the following objectives:

- To protect the residential character by excluding activities and land uses which are not compatible, such as, but not limited to, principal commercial and industrial uses;
- To support denser housing while ensuring certain minimum yards and open spaces, and by restricting maximum coverages and the bulk of structures;
- To provide for access of light and air to windows, and for privacy, as far as reasonable, by controls over the spacing and height of buildings and other structures;
- To support the development of lower density Missing Middle housing options including triplexes and quadplexes, rowhouses, courtyard apartments, and bungalow courts,
- To protect residential areas from unnecessary traffic and to restrict volume of traffic to the greatest degree possible; and
- To encourage development within residential areas that is attractive, consistent with family needs, and conducive to constantly improved environmental quality.

The approximate 76 acres reserved for medium density residential development.

Recommended densities range generally from three to twelve units per acre. In addition, it is recognized that it may be necessary to permit the conversion of larger, older, single-family homes to permit occupancy by multiple families for housing preservation, or to provide specialized housing resources (i.e., accessory apartments for senior citizens). Such conversions should be considered to be permitted as-a-right.

Multiple-Family Residential

Approximately 12 acres of land area has been allocated for multiple family residential. Permitted uses within this district would be apartment complexes, elderly housing and convalescent nursing homes, and higher density Missing Middle Housing options including garden apartments, live-work buildings, and mid-rise apartment buildings. Residential quarters can be either condominium or rental projects.

It is intended that multiple-family developments will serve as transitional land uses which buffer the lower density residential districts from commercial properties and the ill effects created by major travel corridors. For larger developments, they should be sited where ingress and egress is provided directly from a major thoroughfare or collector street, due to their higher density and trip generation potential.

Manufactured Home Park

The purpose of manufactured housing parks is to encourage a suitable environment for persons and families who, by preference, chose to live in a mobile home rather than a conventional stick-built structure. The Manufactured Home Park land use classification includes and is generally limited to land area within the Village which is currently occupied by a mobile home park and is expected to remain in the future. Expansion of the park to the north is also planned. No additional manufactured home parks are planned.

In keeping with the occupancy characteristics of contemporary mobile homes, low-density standards should be encouraged. Development within this land use category is limited to mobile or manufactured homes when located in a subdivision designed for that purpose or a mobile home park with recreational facilities, churches, schools, and necessary public utility buildings.

Approximately 18 acres of land area have been allocated for manufactured home park development.

General Commercial

The Village of Farwell has two commercial land use areas outside of the Central Business District. These uses are adjacent to CBD, but they are physically separated from the CBD. General Commercial areas are designed to meet the needs of the local community as well as the traveler with businesses that require larger properties and outdoor storage. Examples of general commercial uses include restaurants with drive-in facilities, home supply and hardware stores with outside storage, and automobile service stations. The areas shown on the Future Land Use Map are expected to be adequate for this type of use through the lifetime of this Plan.

In those areas when commercial land uses abut residential areas, either existing or proposed, some type of buffer area between these uses should be implemented. This could include an earthen berm, landscaping, greater building setbacks, and the shielding of outdoor lights. These approaches help reduce the effect of commercial uses on nearby residents. New commercial areas should be developed with safe and convenient access built into the site plan.

Acreage proposed for commercial use on the Future Land Use Plan is approximately 54 acres.

Central Business District (CBD)

The Downtown District serves as the focal point and commercial center for the Village and outlying areas. The total land area proposed is approximately 34 acres.

This Master Plan has a commercial goal to support the preservation and upgrading of the Village central business district as an important community focal point. Further, the Plan calls for the Village to promote a particular character of commercial development with a mixture of uses that fosters a sense of identity for the community and which will be sufficient to provide for the long-term preservation for the Farwell area.

Land uses within this planning area are intentionally not segregated to provide for a multi-dimensional, distinctive, dynamic, and interesting downtown district. Typical uses recommended include retail stores, restaurants, professional offices, public buildings and personal service establishments (barber shops, beauty salons, etc.) on the ground floor along Main Street/M-115 and residential/commercial uses above. Missing Middle Housing developments are desirable within the CBD included mid-rise buildings, live-work, and small apartment blocks.

Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance should be drafted that preserves the existing scale, pattern, design, and location of buildings. Changes would include hybrid zoning, Form-based Code, or an overlay district. Regulations should also be developed to minimize the visual impact of signage and to help create an uncluttered streetscape. Further, provisions for off-street parking should be revised to limit the impacts of the automobile on the CBD's built environment that supports healthy pedestrian activity and reduces vehicular impacts upon the downtown.

Ground-floor space should be reserved for pedestrian-oriented retailing and services, with offices and housing above. The adaptive reuse of residential units for home occupations, specialty shops, and office uses is encouraged. Other appropriate uses may include restaurants, taverns, lodging, etc.

Improving the form and function of the downtown should be studied at a sub-area scale. Additional financing options in addition so the recently established Downtown Development Authority, such as brownfield and historic credits, grants, and/or special assessment should be explored.

Industrial

The plan recognizes those existing and planned industrial land use areas in the Village. It is important that the Village work with the county, the Mid-Michigan Economic Alliance and other public and private groups in attracting new business and industries to the Industrial Park. Additional industrial uses, other than those shown on the Future Land Use map, should be prohibited. Industrial areas should also be buffered from less intensive land uses through proper setbacks, berming, and/or landscaping.

In the Industrial District, uses are primarily confined within enclosed structures, although screened outdoor storage should be allowed in the industrial park. Industrial uses outside of

the industrial park should not be encouraged to expand beyond the limits shown in this Plan, but instead to be encouraged to relocate in the Park.

Uses to be permitted in this district, include:

- compounding, processing, packaging, treatment, and fabrication of a variety of non-noxious products;
- research/experimental/testing laboratories;
- tool and die, and machine shops;
- warehousing and material distribution centers;
- public utility buildings; and
- auto repair garages.

Approximately 132 acres have been designated as future Industrial location.

Parks and Recreation

There are three (3) main areas of recreation in the Village, the largest being the Village Little League Complex with Littlefield Park and the Mill Pond serving as important amenities. No expansion is planned for these areas nor are any additional areas planned. It is recommended that the Village develop and maintain a comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan to help prioritize park improvement as and help assure that the recreation facilities and programs in the Village accurately reflects the needs of all residents, regardless of age or ability. The Pere Marquette State Trail is an important regional recreational asset.

Approximately 62 acres have been designated as Park and Recreation.

Public/Semi-Public

This category refers to land devoted to governmental, institutional, or similar activities generally deemed to be in the public interest, such as public buildings, schools, churches, etc. The largest such use in Farwell is the school property located near the center of the Village. These uses vary in size and are located throughout the Village as illustrated on the Future Land Use Plan. Many of these uses are located in residential land use areas.

The total amount of land designated for this use is approximately 31 acres which is consistent with the amount now available.

Rights-of-Way

The remaining acreage represents road and railroad rights-of-way within the Village of Farwell. The amount of such land appears to be greatly decreased over what appears on the Existing Land Use Map. This is due to the fact that all currently vacant lands are categorized as a potential use for the purposes of future planning.

Approximately 116 acres has been identified as Rights-of-Way.

Summary

In looking at the proposed land use categories and locations, it is apparent that the Village of Farwell will be ready and able to respond to future land use needs and opportunities. This plan provides ample opportunity for a variety of housing options and commercial/retail uses to respond to changing demographics within the Village. The goals and actions set forth in this Plan will provide guidance to future Planning Commissions, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Village Council by setting forth a framework for contentiously conceived planned growth.

Map 6: Future Land Use

Chapter 10 - Implementation

This chapter of the Master Plan presents tools and techniques that support achieving the land use vision encapsulated within the Master Plan. These implementation measures have been developed to be within the purview and capacity of the Village, its agents (Village Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals), and staff.

Zoning Plan

Per the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008, a Zoning Plan is required to be included within a Master Plan. The Zoning Plan provides the direct nexus between the Future Land Use categories of the Master Plan with the zoning districts found within the Zoning Ordinance. The Future Land Use Plan characteristics described in the Future Land Use chapter that detail height, area, bulk, location and use of buildings and premises align with the descriptive portions presented within the written descriptions and requirements of the specific zoning districts. The correlations between land use categories and zoning districts are listed below.

Table 10: Master Plan Zoning Ordinance Comparison Table

Future Land Use Category	Zoning District
Low Density Residential	LDR, Low Density Residential
Medium Density Residential	MDR, Medium Density Residential
Multiple Family Residential	HDR, High Density Residential
Manufactured Home Park	MHP, Mobile Home Park
General Commercial	C-2, General Service
Central Business District	CBD, Central Business
Industrial	M-1, Industrial (Limited Manufacturing) and M-2, Industrial (Heavy Manufacturing)
Public/Semi-Public	All Districts
Recreation	All Districts except M-1, Industrial and M-2, Industrial

Implementation Actions

The Master Plan for the Village of Farwell presents a vision and sets the course for an improved future. As a non-regulatory visioning document, the Plan will only become reality through specific implementation steps. There are many steps presented throughout the Plan.

To accomplish the Vision, the following Implementation steps should be completed:

- Complete a Zoning Ordinance Audit to identify issues within the Ordinance
- Complete a Zoning Ordinance Amendment process that revises the Zoning Ordinance to implement the recommendation of the Master Plan
- Complete an amendment to the official Zoning Map that aligns the map with the vision presented on the Future Land Use Map
- Adopt a Complete Streets Ordinance
- Work with County partners to establish a Clare County Brownfield Authority

Other Implementation Recommendations

Urban Forestry Program

Implement a community-wide urban forestry program. An urban forestry program encourages the development of a healthy forestry canopy that is comprised of a diversity of types of street trees and site landscaping. An urban forestry program values the existence of a dense canopy across the entire community, and it ensures the long-term maintenance of the forest through public and private sector investment and public education.

Street trees provide a pleasing charm to neighborhoods and they will assist in differentiating the Village of Farwell from its more rural agrarian neighbors. Communities with a dense urban canopy support the development of community character and define a unique sense of place.



A multitude of benefits of having a fully functioning urban forest have been identified and scientifically verified in the last two decades. An urban forest:

- decreases stormwater impacts by reducing run-off by capturing rainfall in the canopy, absorbs stormwater through the tree's root system, and filters water runoff thus improving overall stormwater quality;
- improves air quality by absorbing a range of airborne pollutants (carbon dioxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrous oxides, and others), reduces ozone emitted from cars, and removes particulate air pollution as well;
- reduces greenhouse gases by sequestering carbon from the air;
- improves public health by creating greener environments that are associated with improving attention, decreasing asthma rates, reducing neighborhood noise, and improving physical and mental health;
- reducing road maintenance costs as shaded streets do not deteriorate as quickly as unshaded streets;
- induces traffic calming affects by reducing traffic speeds and reducing the number and severity of accidents;

- decreases urban heat island effects across the entire community and site specifically as well (compare a well shaded parking lot versus an unshaded one in the middle of summer);
- reduces energy costs for property owners as buildings that are shaded in summer have significant reductions in cooling costs while in winter, properties protected by evergreen screens also see cost reductions due to wind breaks afforded by the trees;
- increases residential property valuations when generous tree cover exists for all properties on the block while individual homes see benefits from a single mature shade tree located in the parkway area next to its sidewalk;
- increases the natural habitat for animals and plants along with supporting biodiversity; and
- Increases economic activity in downtown districts as studies have found that generous tree cover encourages shoppers to visit longer, travel further, and spend more time once they've arrived.

Other studies have found that a rich forested urban landscape has several other benefits including less crime, improved neighborhood connectivity, and improved resident wellbeing.

Generally accepted urban forestry guidelines recommend that 40% tree cover is appropriate for cities, towns, and villages in the Eastern portion of the United States. To achieve this rate of cover in the Village of Farwell, a long-range urban forestry program is recommended. This program would include public outreach to educate the community as to the benefits of urban forests, amendments to development ordinances that require the installation of trees with all new developments (parkway street trees, site canopy trees, and parking-area canopy trees), grant writing program to raise funds for tree installation, and municipal budgeting to establish a modest annual tree installation and street tree maintenance program.

To assist with the development of an increased tree canopy, the Village of Farwell should begin the process to become designated as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation. The four step program requires:

- 1) Establishment of a Tree Board or Department;
- 2) Adoption of a Tree Care Ordinance;
- 3) Establishment of a Community Forestry Program with an Annual Budget of at least \$2 per Capita; and
- 4) Hosting an Annual Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation.

While implementing this program, an assessment of how effective the existing parking lot landscaping requirements must be conducted, and recommended changes should be implemented that will improve the Village's tree canopy.

The urban forestry program benefits will develop over a period of decades so it is necessary to formulate a plan that is able to be implemented and sustained far into the future.

Implementation of National Main Street Center Four Step Approach

The Village should consider utilizing the National Main Street Center's Four Step Approach (Design,



Organization, Promotion, Economic Restructuring) for downtown revitalization. This program has been successfully utilized in downtowns large and small country-wide. This method leverages the community and property and business owner interest in seeing a vital and active downtown core. Technical assistance may be provided through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to restore the historic store fronts in the downtown to their original splendor. Though the Village's downtown district is small and it may be difficult to implement all of the components of the Four Step Approach, it is possible for the DDA

to utilize portions of the method to galvanize the Village’s residents and businesses for the downtown.
and site plan review procedures.

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