

Franklin Valley Newsletter, April 2026

Spring Community Update

Dear Neighbors,

Happy spring! As we welcome 2026, the Franklin Valley Association Board would like to share a spring update, provide information about common questions we've received, and outline how we're working to keep our community safe, informed, and financially responsible.

We appreciate everyone's engagement and patience during what has been a long Michigan winter season.

Seasonal Updates: What to Know

Over the past season, we've received a number of questions regarding snow removal, ice, and road salting. We want to provide clear, consistent information for everyone.

For the 2025-2026 winter season, the Board contracted Richards Lawn Services (a locally-based provider and member of our community) to plow our subdivision roads. The Board received feedback from several residents about the snow removal. The Board passed that feedback along to the company, and they were generally very responsive to residents' concerns.

Salting the roads has not been included in snow removal contracts in past years, nor was it included in the current contract. This is to prevent further deterioration of the roads, and also due to the added cost — the inclusion of salting could add as much as \$6000 to \$7000 to the snow removal contract (depending on the frequency and amount of salting), and this would have exceeded the annual budget for snow removal by several thousand dollars. The Board will carefully study the feasibility of including salting in future contracts, but the extra cost is a significant barrier.

Important Tip

The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) will plow and salt our subdivision's roads, but residential roads are low on their list of priorities — often they will not come to our subdivision until days after a snowfall, and only if the snowfall exceeds several inches. It is for these reasons that the Board contracts independent snow removal providers each year. Nonetheless, residents can call 877-858-4804 to report road conditions and request service from the RCOC. A high volume of calls from our subdivision could encourage the RCOC to move us up on their list.

Road Safety Reminders

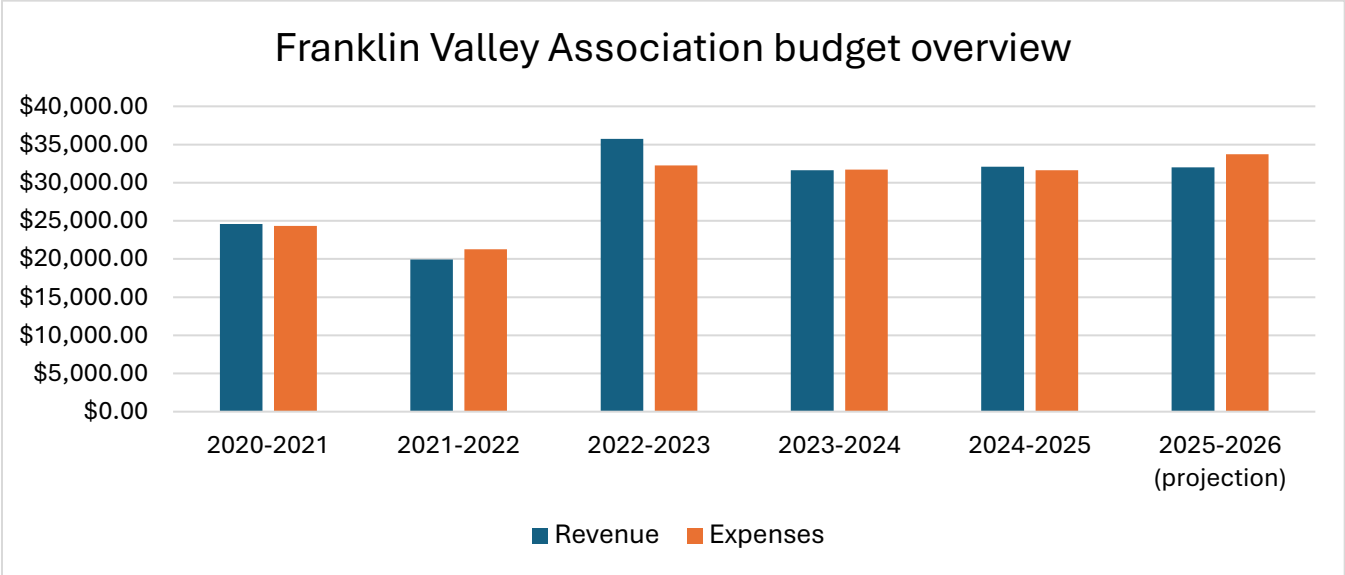
We encourage all residents to:

- Use caution when walking or driving

- Obey speed limits and reduce speed in wet, snowy, or icy conditions
- Wear appropriate footwear
- Use personal safety tools (such as walking poles or traction aids)
- Allow extra travel time during storms

Budget Transparency: Where Your Dues Go

The Association’s fiscal year runs from July to June. Over the last several years, the Association’s revenues and expenses have been close to breaking even, as seen in the following graph showing revenue and expenses from the current and past five fiscal years.



The exact dollar amounts for the fiscal year revenue and expenses are shown in the table on the right. Note that the amounts for the current 2025-2026 fiscal year are projected.

	Revenue	Expenses
2020-2021	\$24,595	\$24,330.41
2021-2022	\$19,920.51	\$21,294.68
2022-2023	\$35,729.78	\$32,276.07
2023-2024	\$31,648.45	\$31,717.11
2024-2025	\$32,104.92	\$31,644.45
2025-2026 (projection)	\$32,000	\$33,730

The Association also has approximately \$30,000 in a checking account at any given time. These funds are not earmarked for specific expenses; rather, they are held in reserve to cover expenses in excess of budgeted amounts, and to ensure that the Association can pay its bills while household dues trickle in throughout the year.

Revenue

Revenue is primarily from annual dues paid by households. There are 228 households in our subdivision, and annual dues are currently \$150 (\$115 base dues plus an annual special

assessment of \$35 that was added in the 2022-2023 fiscal year by a majority vote of residents). So, the annual revenue if all households paid dues would be \$34,300. The numbers of households that have paid dues each year are shown in the table on the right.

	Households paid	
2020-2021	199	87%
2021-2022	179	79%
2022-2023	195	86%
2023-2024	179	79%
2024-2025	195	86%
2025-2026 (year-to-date)	169	74%

Unpaid Dues

Many residents express concerns about households that do not pay dues annually.

Although it’s true that some households don’t pay dues every year, the Association’s revenue is very close to what it should be if all households were current with their dues payments (the table on the previous page shows Association revenue in recent years has been close to \$34,300). This is because some households may pay dues for multiple past years all at once. Additionally, when a house in the subdivision is sold, the title company for the sale ensures that all unpaid dues are paid at the time of closing. In other words, all households pay their fair share of dues eventually. Furthermore, the Association collects a processing fee from the title company for providing an invoice of unpaid dues.

The Board has made efforts to encourage more households to pay their dues annually, such as reaching out to homeowners with unpaid dues, offering convenient payment options (Venmo), and offering the option to pay dues in installments. The following explanation of the Associations expenses may also provide incentive for homeowners to pay dues.

Expenses

The Association’s expenses are split between many categories in the budget. The largest expense categories are landscaping, snow removal, water & electricity, insurance, and repairs & maintenance; the remaining expenses are divided among a few minor categories.

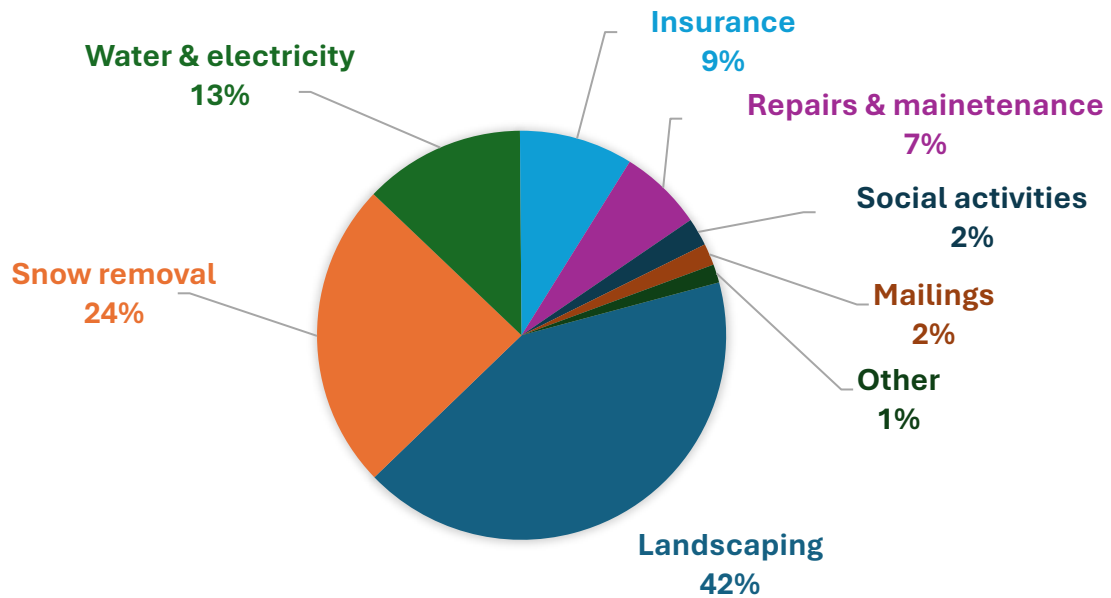
The percentage of total expenses in each of the categories for the 2024-2025 fiscal year is shown in the top chart on the next page; the bottom chart shows that costs of services associated with each of these major categories has been trending upward over the last several years. (The dip in landscaping for the 2021-2022 fiscal year is due to an installment payment to the service provider before the end of the 2020-2021 fiscal year.)

Here is a brief description of the major categories:

- **Landscaping** – each year, Board members obtain a quote for landscaping services from the previous year’s service provider. If the Board is satisfied with the provider’s past work and the quoted price, a contract is signed. If the Board has concerns about the price or quality of service, Board members obtain quotes from additional providers. The Board then compares the quotes and votes to determine its selection. The specific landscaping

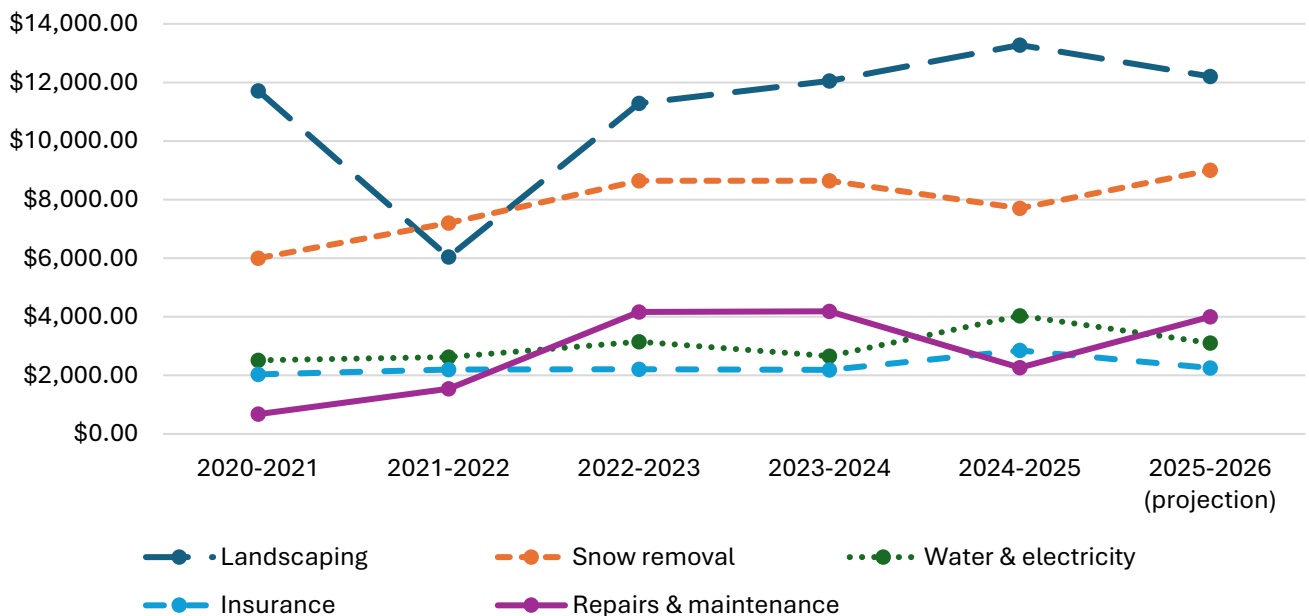
services depend on the contract, but they generally include a spring cleanup, mowing for 26 weeks, application of mulch in bed areas, flower planting, and a fall leaf cleanup. Residents are invited to contact the Board if they have questions or suggestions about landscaping services!

- **Snow removal** – the process for selecting a provider for snow removal is the same as the process for landscaping services. Generally, contracts for snow removal stipulate plowing of subdivision roads for snowfalls over 2 inches. Road salting has not been included in past contracts as mentioned above.



2024-2025 Franklin Valley expenses

Franklin Valley Association expenses



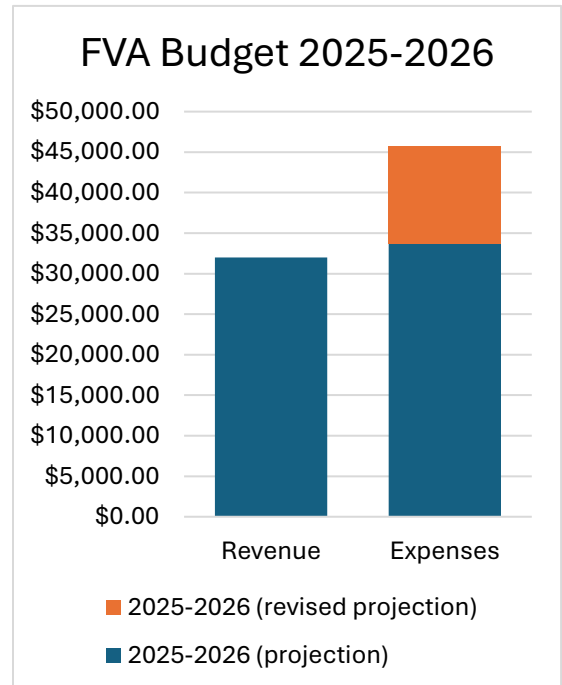
- **Water & electricity** – the water bill is for the sprinklers at the South Pebblecreek entrance. The electricity bill is for the lighting at the North and South Pebblecreek entrances.
- **Insurance** – the annual insurance premium is for a policy that covers physical or digital property that the Association owns and liability at HOA events.
- **Repairs & maintenance** – this includes items like fallen tree limb removal and repairs to the split rail fence along 14 Mile and Middlebelt. As with landscaping and snow removal, the Board obtains multiple quotes for these services as needed.

Looking Ahead

Recently, the expenses projection for the current fiscal year has been revised due to two significant changes. First, the cost for the insurance premium has nearly doubled despite the efforts of Board members to shop around for a lower cost insurance option.

Second, after several years and significant effort by Board members to obtain multiple quotes, the Board has finally obtained a satisfactory quote for rebuilding the North Pebblecreek entrance sign at a cost of about \$10,000. These expenses significantly exceed the Association’s revenue, as shown in the graph on the right, and must be paid using reserve funds.

In summary, the Association’s finances have been close to break-even for the past several years. Expenses continue to rise despite the Board’s efforts to obtain competitive pricing. Expenses in excess of revenue deplete the Association’s reserve funds. Once spent, these reserve funds are not replenished. Collecting unpaid dues from homeowners will not be sufficient to build up reserve funds or adequately cover future costs.



Given these current financial circumstances, homeowners in attendance at the last annual meeting (June 2025) expressed overwhelming support for an increase in dues. The Board supports an increase in the special assessment added to the annual dues, but such a change requires a majority vote of subdivision residents. Homeowners should expect to receive further information and a mail-in ballot in the coming months.

Road Conditions & Repairs

We’ve heard concerns from several residents about the condition of our neighborhood roads, particularly at the entrances and in areas where potholes have worsened over time. It’s important to understand that – because we live in a township – we the homeowners pay for the roads in our subdivision, and maintenance of the roads is the responsibility of the Road Commission for

Oakland County (RCOC). The Association does not have the financial resources or authority to effect road repairs or repaving. However, there are two actions that residents can take to improve the conditions of our roads.

The first thing that residents can do is contact the RCOC to report potholes that need filling. Contact the RCOC by calling 877-858-4804 or by visiting www.rcocweb.org.

The second action that residents can take is to petition the RCOC or West Bloomfield Township for a special assessment to repave the roads. The process begins with gathering signatures from residents on a formal petition. If the petition is successful, the RCOC or West Bloomfield Charter Township would assess the project and determine the cost of road repaving to each homeowner. The project would only move forward after a majority vote in favor of the assessment by the homeowners in our subdivision.

Circulating petitions to gather signatures, as well as canvassing the neighborhood to secure approval from residents for the assessment, requires a large time commitment. Past attempts to repave subdivision roads have failed due to a lack of support from residents. At this time, the Board does not have the capacity to take on this process alone. Significant support from our community will be needed if homeowners want to move forward with repaving our roads.

We encourage residents to attend the upcoming annual meeting in June to better understand the process, ask questions, and participate in the discussion.

Where to Get Update Information

The Franklin Valley website (<http://franklinvalley.org>) is a central resource for residents featuring HOA updates and announcements, board member information, and meeting details. It includes important documents such as bylaws, FAQs (including fences), and helpful information for current and prospective residents, as well as real estate agents. The site also shares community updates, including messages from partners like Richards Lawn Services.

Upcoming Neighborhood Events

Ice Cream Social

May 15

Join us as we kick off spring and reconnect as a community! More details to come – we hope to see you there!

Annual HOA Meeting

June 9 | 6:00 PM | Warner Middle School

Be part of key decisions for the 2026-2027 year. We'll cover the budget, dues increases, capital improvements, and information about road assessment petitions.

New to the neighborhood? Join us to receive a welcome gift and meet your neighbors!

Board Participation & Open Positions

We will be voting on Board positions at the annual meeting, including one open seat. It's a great way to get involved, meet neighbors, and have a voice in the community.

We encourage participation – rotating Board members brings fresh perspectives and keeps the Board representative of our neighborhood. If you're interested, we'd love to have you join!

Monthly Board Meetings & Participation

The Board meets most months, and all residents are welcome. Dates and locations vary, as we rotate homes and adjust meeting schedules based on availability. Please reach out to board@franklinvalley.org for the latest meeting details – your participation is always encouraged. You can also e-mail us if you're interested in volunteering to help keep Franklin Valley a great place to live!

Your HOA Board members are volunteers and neighbors, working to balance safety, finances, and long-term community needs. We appreciate everyone who has reached out with questions and concerns. While we may not always be able to meet every request immediately, we are committed to listening, communicating clearly, and acting responsibly on behalf of our community.

Thank You!

Warm regards,

Your Franklin Valley HOA Board

Melissa Schreiber, Matt Gonderinger, Monika Czaratoryjski, Christine Coffey, Noelle Turner, Patrick West, Greg Knick, and Theresa Rankins

Please visit <http://franklinvalley.org> to find more about the HOA, including recent event updates, general documents, and Board information. Contact the Board by e-mailing board@franklinvalley.org.