Introduction – South End

As you walk along this old Grand Trunk Michigan “Air Line” railroad bed, you are also following the path of a light-rail, mass transit system whose track paralleled the Grand Trunk line. The Detroit and Northwestern Railroad laid the rail. By 1901, this line was purchased by a group of businessmen from Cleveland, Ohio. Under the direction of Jere Hutchins, Detroit’s 30 independent street rail companies were unified and collectively named Detroit United Railway’s interurban line (D.U.R.). The Orchard Lake Division of the Interurban ran along Grand River Avenue from Detroit into Farmington. The line then split at Farmington Junction located at Grand River and Orchard Lake Road. The northern half of the split then ran up Orchard Lake Road into West Bloomfield Township. The D.U.R.’s electric trolleys ran every 20 minutes, carrying passengers and cargo into the Lakes Area and beyond, terminating in Pontiac.