

The City of St. Clair Strategic Plan:

Action Steps for expanding tax base and enhancing quality of life

November 2010

City of St. Clair Strategic Plan

Acknowledgements

SEMOG wishes to thank Superintendent Scott Adkins, Mayor Cedar and City Council for their support and willingness to provide information and engage in several working sessions. SEMOG also appreciates the comments provided by Dan Lockwood of the St. Clair Downtown Development Authority, Jody Skonieczny of the Chamber of Commerce, and Fred Moore.

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Introduction

The City of St. Clair Strategic Plan was developed by SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, at the request of City Superintendent Scott Adkins. The city had previously identified a number of priorities, but felt that SEMCOG's perspective as a regional planning agency would benefit implementation. Additionally, SEMCOG's development of a regional comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) in 2010 and its role in transportation and infrastructure planning were key to providing a framework for decision making within the regional context.

SEMCOG Manager of Community and Economic Development, Naheed Huq, met with Superintendent Adkins in July 2010 and then moderated four working sessions with the mayor and council in July, August, September, and November 2010. The result of this process is a strategic plan that identifies four goals and 21 action steps – each spearheaded by the mayor, a councilmember, or the city superintendent in collaboration with a support team. Collaboration and timeliness are vital to the success of the plan and each action step identifies partners to support the work; performance measures; and a timeframe for implementation.

The process of developing the plan was greatly assisted by the council's previous efforts to identify priorities (in 2009 and 2010); the implementation of a citizen's survey in 2008; support for a Retail Market Strategy in 2008; and the creation of a marketing vision for expanding tourism "A Getaway from the Everyday". These different efforts reflect the issues that key decision makers and stakeholders, as well as residents and the business community, felt were most important to the city. The results of these various efforts provided the framework for the strategic plan, which is focused on implementation of key actions.

When SEMCOG began facilitating the discussion with the mayor, council, and superintendent in July 2010, the focus was on prioritizing each member's main areas of interest and those areas they felt they could have the most impact in a short timeframe. The purpose of the strategic plan is to identify action steps that will help implement key priorities for the council and city as identified in previous efforts – in collaboration with main stakeholders and partners. The DDA and Chamber of Commerce provided input. The city is also in the process of developing a new master plan to address additional land use and development issues.

The mission of the plan and four priority goals as identified by the council are consistent with the priorities recognized previously. Through the working group meetings, the council identified and further developed detailed action steps to achieve the goals.

Mission

Through coordinated leadership, expand tax base, enhance infrastructure and emergency preparedness.

Goals

- Expand business, commercial, and industrial tax base;
- Improve city services and infrastructure;
- Strengthen emergency preparedness; and
- Enhance and promote quality of life.

The next step for the council is to implement the action steps within the identified timeframe in cooperation with partners – both existing and new. The council recognizes that collaboration is key to success in a region undergoing major economic restructuring that will impact future infrastructure needs, population growth, and economic opportunities. The actions will protect the quality of life in the neighborhoods and commercial areas, leverage assets for growth in tourism and commercial/industrial development, and enhance service delivery through increased collaboration and efficiencies.

Goals and Action Steps

Expand business, commercial and industrial tax base;

- Benchmark city's strengths for expanding existing and attracting new businesses as the basis for developing a new marketing plan.
- Develop (or enhance) local business attraction and retention program to address needs of business and residents. Increase collaboration with DDA and other economic development stakeholders to market the community.
- Develop a plan for incorporating existing branding initiatives into the strategic plan.
- Meet with all economic development partners to get updates on successes and challenges.
- Analyze benefits of EDA membership and compare costs of services if provided by other entities.
- Develop a marketing plan for industrial zoned areas including the industrial park.

Improve city services and infrastructure;

- Enhance sidewalk preventive maintenance program.
- Work with MDOT to make M-29 safer for people and vehicles getting to downtown.
- Partner with neighboring communities to explore a preventive maintenance program for critical infrastructure.
- Install cameras in the water system.
- Develop a plan to join East China's sewer authority.
- Develop a framework for contracting out engineer and road services to neighboring communities.
- Continue to seek and expand cooperative opportunities with St. Clair Township and other neighbors in parks and recreation by building on positive relationships on existing projects.
- Implement internal efficiencies that can save costs while maintaining or raising service quality.
- Analyze opportunities for additional authorities for joint service provision with neighboring communities or the county.

Strengthen emergency preparedness:

- Ensure that county and state emergency preparedness plans that impact the city have opportunities for local input.
- Arrange for City Water Department representatives to analyze the County's Emergency Preparedness plan for water.
- Provide a training program for citizens on emergency preparedness in partnership with the county.
- Develop a priority list of projects for presentation to local foundations for funding. –

Enhance and promote quality of life.

- Develop and implement tools to protect quality of life in neighborhoods.
- Support stable residential and property values through maintenance and beautification programs.

Assets, Opportunities, and Challenges

The City of St. Clair is a small community of about five square miles in St. Clair County with a population of 5,655. It is situated on the St. Clair River and surrounded by Marysville to the north, St. Clair Township in the northwest, China Township to the southwest, and East China Township to the south.

Population

According to the 2000 Census, the city has a growing older population with 14.5 percent being over 65 in 2000. This is expected to grow to 25.4 percent by 2035. Thirty-six percent of households have children which is consistent with county and regional averages.

SEMCOG forecast data show that the population of St. Clair will increase by more than 13 percent from 2005-2035, but the population aged 65 plus will grow by nearly 90 percent. There will be a slight decrease in the 18-34 age group, while the 5-17 age group will decline by 13 percent. See Appendix B for more detailed population forecast information.

St. Clair is an affluent community, with household income levels in 2000 at \$52,957, compared to \$46,313 for the county. Poverty rates are at about half the regional rate and significantly lower than the county.

There is a high education level in the city, with 21 percent of the population having a bachelor's degree or above. This is significantly higher than the county, which is at 13 percent. Another 38 percent of people have an associate's degree or some college, which is again significantly higher than the county or region. Educational attainment is an area of opportunity in attracting knowledge or information-based economic development.

These higher education levels partly account for the higher income levels. St. Clair has been fortunate in retaining most businesses and jobs in the recent downturn. The main job losses between 2002 and 2005 have been in retail, leisure, and hospitality and healthcare, while manufacturing actually grew slightly. This is significantly different from both the county and region, which experienced a major decline in manufacturing and growth in healthcare.

Assets

An analysis of city strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) was carried out with council members during working group meetings and in one-on-one discussions during the summer. The city has a number of assets that distinguish it from other communities. There is a commitment among council and local groups to preserve, promote, and enhance these assets. These include the riverfront location, excellent neighborhoods and services, commitment to beautification programs and public art, many parks including the riverfront Palmer Park, diverse housing mix, immediate availability of space in a new industrial park, redevelopment potential in the downtown area, and considerable community and corporate support. The branding of the city as "A Getaway from the Everyday" reflects the desire to make the city a best-in-class location that will attract visitors, by focusing on recreation, art, and quality of life, while also building community pride as a highly desirable place to live, work and play.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite many assets, the City of St. Clair is undergoing considerable fiscal challenges that make it necessary to prioritize where it can most effectively focus resources. Local governments across the region are constrained by several years of declines in local revenues. This is a challenge but also provides the opportunity for working cooperatively in service delivery and infrastructure systems with neighboring communities. Doing more with less is a mantra being heard at local governments throughout the country. Restructuring of services through collaboration and

increased efficiencies will help the city continue to provide essential services, but some other services may have to be reduced. The 2010-11 budget shows a general fund budget that is \$231,500 less than the previous year, requiring reductions in certain service areas.

In St. Clair (and most other communities), declines in property values as a result of job losses and foreclosures have reduced revenues available to communities for service provision and capital improvements. Recent SEMCOG data shows that between 2009 and 2010, St. Clair experienced a decline in taxable value of 7.6%. State equalized value for residential property which closely reflects market values also fell by 8.7% in the same time. While this is less than neighboring communities, it is important for the city to do what it can to maintain and increase residential and property values.

Change in Taxable Value by Community Real Property, 2009-2010

Community	2009	2010	Change	Percent Change
Southeast Michigan	166,029,483,185	149,582,257,685	- 16,447,225,500	- 9.9%
St. Clair County	5,992,269,723	5,322,012,803	- 670,256,920	-11.2%
China Township	476,233,283	393,386,076	- 82,847,207	-17.4%
East China Township	492,578,062	377,263,802	- 115,314,260	-23.4%
Marysville	348,560,732	313,212,432	- 35,348,300	-10.1%
City of St. Clair	202,277,973	186,872,395	- 15,405,578	-7.6%
St. Clair Township	283,576,847	257,934,575	- 25,642,272	-9.0%

Source: SEMCOG

Decline in taxable value in St. Clair is not as dramatic as in some neighboring communities, but this is partly due to greater dependence in some communities on commercial and industrial properties which have declined more in 2009-2010. In 2009, 70.4 percent of taxable value in the city came from residential. Although this has dropped slightly to 69.8 percent in 2010, maintaining the value of the housing stock is vital for the well-being of the community.

The city has a diverse housing mix, made up of older historic homes, single-family subdivisions at different price ranges, senior housing, condominiums, and apartments. This diversity helps provide stability to the community for keeping and attracting residents whose housing needs will change over time. Supporting property values through rental and vacant property ordinances and code enforcement activities, as well as beautification and maintenance programs are key to stabilizing residential and property values.

At the same time, increasing revenues from commercial and industrial properties could help provide additional opportunities. Currently, these two sources each provide about 15 percent of the city's total taxable value. There are several commercial and industrial areas in the city, with the main concentration in the downtown area and in one of the industrial parks. Cargill Salt, Inc. is by far the largest tax payer and employer in the city, but there has been some recent investment in new developments which have created additional jobs.

There are two industrial parks in the city. The older one continues to be largely occupied despite the economy. The newer park called the St. Clair Technology and Research Park is a 114 acre development located just north of the older one. It was originally acquired in 2000 as part of a PA 425 Agreement with St. Clair Township. The park has utilities including water, sewer, and gas and is close to a CSX railroad. In 2008, it was re-platted to attract research and technology firms, but success has been limited due to the economy and the ability of the city to compete with other communities. The City made the site shortlist for two major developments but lost out in the final stage. The experience supports the need for the city to rethink its economic development strategy by improving collaboration with its partners. These include the DDA, the Chamber, Economic Alliance of St. Clair County, and others that can bring vital resources to marketing the city's

development-ready park, riverfront location, access to transportation and deep water ports and other industrial and commercial properties.

Education attainment and workforce skills are also vital to attracting technology and research based firms that are considering locating in the community. Collaborating with East China Schools, the St. Clair Regional Education Service Area, and St. Clair Community College on improving skills/training in high growth areas will make the city more attractive to site selectors.

St. Clair's downtown area overlooks the beautiful St. Clair River. However, the St. Clair Plaza which has the largest concentration of retail in the city is 40% vacant as a result of the economy design challenges. These include walled storefronts, parking design, and traffic speeds that limit pedestrian use. The DDA and Chamber have been working with businesses, foundations and the city in coordinating improvements, including special zoning where possible. They have also focused on ways to enhance walkability within the Plaza, in the neighboring Gas light district and on M-29, and marketing commercial opportunities in the community. However, the complexity of the problems, economic down turn and the city's fiscal constraints will require more coordination and prioritization by key stakeholders.

Another challenge for the city is the aging infrastructure. Expenditures on major streets, and water are higher than revenues, as are expenditures on harbor and equipment pool. This means that the city will have to dip into its fund balance or reduce other services. Collaborating with neighboring communities by sharing personnel, equipment and sewer/water capacity, will help reduce costs of providing essential services.

The Council recognizes these challenges as priorities and has therefore identified action steps that address these concerns. The following sections provide further details about how the council will work with city departments, community groups, business groups, St. Clair County, and other stakeholders to implement the specific strategies.

Mission, Goals and Action Steps

Based on a SWOT exercise at the first working session between SEMCOG and the Council, councilmembers identified the mission of the strategic plan as *Through coordinated leadership, expand tax base, enhance infrastructure and emergency preparedness.*

They then selected key action steps and implementation plans to help achieve the plan goals. Each councilmember as well as the city administrator volunteered to be a champion of action steps based on their own areas of interest and expertise. The champion identified in the action steps below will be responsible for seeing that the goal is achieved by coordinating with the city superintendent and other partners, and then using the performance measures to evaluate short-term and long-term success as identified in the implementation schedule.

There is some overlap between action steps reflecting the complexity of some issues and the need to collaborate on solutions. The following section lists the action steps and the champions.

A. Expand Business, Commercial, and Industrial Tax Base

Tax base is vital to providing and maintaining the services and quality of life for which the City of St. Clair is known. Expanding business, commercial, and industrial activity is key to increasing the general tax base. Benchmarking the city's strengths for expanding and attracting new business is the first step of identifying the potential for expanding tax base. Collaborating with key stakeholders such as the Downtown Development Authority and the Chamber of Commerce will help streamline priorities and enhance specific marketing efforts to the business community. This can then evolve into a plan for incorporating existing city branding initiatives such as *St. Clair on the River* and *A Getaway from the Everyday* to businesses, residents, and tourists.

The active business community is certainly an asset, but additional external resources are required for certain types of economic activity. These include partners such as the Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County (EDA) and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) who bring different opportunities to the city. Addressing challenges and developing strategies for engaging these entities are included in the action steps.

1. *Benchmark city's strengths for expanding existing and attracting new businesses as the basis for developing a new marketing plan. – Councilman Tim Burns*
2. *Develop (or enhance) local business attraction and retention program to address needs of business and residents. Increase collaboration with DDA and other economic development stakeholders to market the community. – Councilman Tom McCartney*
3. *Develop a plan for incorporating existing branding initiatives into the strategic plan. – Councilman Tom Foley*
4. *Meet with all economic development partners to get updates on successes and challenges. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*
5. *Analyze benefits of EDA membership and compare costs of services if provided by other entities. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*
6. *Develop a marketing plan for industrial zoned areas including the industrial park. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*

B. Improve City Services and Infrastructure

According to St. Clair's 2008 citizens' survey, quality of life, public facilities, and city services are very important to residents. The highest-ranked public facilities were parkgrounds, city buildings, and paths. The highest-ranked services were fire, police, tap-water quality, and snow and ice removal from streets. There was less satisfaction with sidewalks and the ice rink. There is generally great pride in the community, resulting from sense of community, overall appearance and feeling welcome and very safe in neighborhoods, the downtown area, and parks. Citizens agreed with continuation of public art displays, aggressive marketing of the community for tourism, and increased code enforcement. However, more than 60 percent of respondents would not be willing to pay additional taxes for improved or new park programs and facilities.

The challenge from the city's perspective is to provide these valued services as efficiently and effectively as possible. This suggests greater emphasis on enhancing services and infrastructure through collaboration with neighboring communities and other partners, and developing internal efficiencies.

1. *Enhance sidewalk preventive maintenance program. – Mayor William Cedar*
2. *Work with MDOT to make M-29 safer for people and vehicles getting to downtown. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*
3. *Partner with neighboring communities to explore a preventive maintenance program for critical infrastructure. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*
4. *Install cameras in the water system. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*
5. *Develop a plan to join East China's sewer authority. – Councilman Mike La Porte*
6. *Develop a framework for contracting out engineer and road services to neighboring communities. – Councilman Mike LaPorte*
7. *Continue to seek and expand cooperative opportunities with St. Clair Township and other neighbors in parks and recreation by building on positive relationships on existing projects. – Councilman Tom Foley*
8. *Implement internal efficiencies that can save costs while maintaining or raising service quality. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*
9. *Analyze opportunities for additional authorities for joint service provision with neighboring communities or the county. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*

C. Strengthen Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness is a priority for the council because of its obligation to be prepared for all natural and man-made incidents that have a potential impact on health, safety, and quality of life. The city's location on an international border makes this more of a concern, and the council plans to work with the County Emergency Management, the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), local police and fire departments, and foundations to ensure that necessary resources are available to prepare the community and citizens to respond to potential emergencies.

1. *Ensure that county and state emergency preparedness plans that impact the city have opportunities for local input. – Councilman Tim Burns*

2. *Arrange for City Water Department representatives to analyze the County's Emergency Preparedness plan for water. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*
3. *Provide a training program for citizens on emergency preparedness in partnership with the county. – Councilman Butch Kindsvater*
4. *Develop a priority list of projects for presentation to local foundations for funding. – Superintendent Scott Adkins*

D. Enhance and Promote Quality of Life

The high quality of life in St. Clair is recognized by residents, businesses, and visitors and is a matter of pride for the community. The city has made a conscious effort to enhance and promote this through marketing programs. However, because of the importance of housing to community tax base, there needs to be greater emphasis on maintaining the quality of life for residents in local neighborhoods. This will increase perceived safety and well-being of residents and can strengthen neighborhood stability. Maintaining residential and property values is a challenge in every community because of the impact of foreclosures, but by developing and enforcing neighborhood stabilization tools, and encouraging community groups that focus on resident's needs, it is possible to control some of the negative effects of blight resulting from increased vacancies.

1. *Develop and implement tools to protect quality of life in neighborhoods. – Councilwoman Jane Krebs*
2. *Support stable residential and property values through maintenance and beautification programs. – Councilwoman Jane Krebs*

Detailed Action Steps

Goal A: Expand Business, Commercial and Industrial Tax Base

1. Benchmark the city's strengths for expanding existing and attracting new businesses as the basis for developing a new marketing plan to establish the City as *Best In Class*

Champion(s): Councilman Tim Burns			
Objective:	Coordinate a thorough and objective assessment of community strengths to establish <i>best-in-class</i> and <i>near best-in-class</i> attractions.		
Outcomes:	More effective/direct marketing. Reduced need for high paid outside consultants. Greater awareness of strengths and areas for improvement. Improved awareness by public of its role in promoting quality of life in the city. Greater cooperation with state, county, and federal agencies.		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish strengths, weaknesses, and areas of opportunity through brainstorming 2. Quantify and prioritize potential opportunities for improvement 3. Identify the new expectations of citizens, business, and interested parties 4. Develop action plans, resources, roles and responsibilities 5. Develop documented training new marketing initiatives 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	DDA	General focus on business	source of expertise and history of success and failure
	City Government	History of local activities, insights on government issues	Knowledge of local activities, resources, expertise
	County EDA	Ensure no duplication of projects, programs	County budget, departmental expertise
	MEDC	Ensure no duplication of projects, programs	State budget, departmental expertise
Performance measures	Development and marketing of list of assets to be marketed Recognition by advertising community.		

Time frame for implementation	<p>January 2011 - list of existing strengths (BIC) and potential new strengths/opportunities for improvement within striking range</p> <p>December 2011 – Overall assessment of Marketing Plan with feedback from advertising community</p>
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2. Develop (or enhance) local business attraction and retention program to address needs of business and residents. Increase collaboration with the DDA and other economic development stakeholders to market the community.

Champion(s): Councilman Tom McCartney in collaboration with Councilman Tim Burns, Jody Skonieczny Chamber Director, and Dan Lockwood, DDA Director			
Objective:	To improve communication between the DDA, Chamber and City Council. To retain and attract business to the community. Better communication will enhance opportunities to attract business as well as seek funding through organizations such as the MEDC and the EDA. Discussions will take place quarterly and recognize budget constraints and priorities.		
Outcomes:	More effective communications Greater awareness of strengths and areas for improvement Greater cooperation within city government More effective budgeting process		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin discussions with the Chamber and DDA as well as other local commissions for input. 2. Institute quarterly meetings with DDA and other key commissions as appropriate to coordinate priority developments and organizational priorities. 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	City Government	History of local activities, insights on near government issues	Knowledge of local activities, resources, expertise
	DDA	Downtown development and funding	Grants, financial resources and a commitment to the community
	Chamber	Business and community involvement and county wide contacts	Great communication and relationship with our local businesses. Great vehicle for getting our message out

Performance measures	<p>Development of common goals and objectives through cooperative meetings.</p> <p>Develop schedule of meetings with the DDA and Chamber as part of council meetings every quarter.</p>
Time frame for implementation	<p>Schedule immediate meeting with both the director of the DDA and Chamber as well as other community leaders by early October.</p> <p>Follow up with scheduled quarterly meetings.</p>

3. Develop a plan for incorporating existing branding initiatives into the strategic plan

Champion(s): Councilman Tom Foley			
Objective:	Recognize <i>Getaway from the Everyday</i> as a city brand/vision, that resonates with residents, businesses and tourists and helps to market the best-in-class commercial, residential, and quality of life assets of the community.		
Outcomes:	The action steps in the St. Clair strategic plan will help lead to opportunities for cross marketing quality of life, emergency preparedness, excellent efficient and effective services, and economic stability.		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with Councilman Burns and Councilman McCartney on action steps A1 and A2, to ensure that benchmarking of assets and increased collaboration with the DDA and Chamber recognize existing branding initiatives. 2. Identify support and resources to help with marketing the brand from foundations and the business community. 3. Meet with all champions to identify potential opportunities to incorporate the brand. 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	City Council	Implementing action steps	
	DDA	Partner involved in marketing	
	Chamber	Partner involved in marketing	
	Foundations	Possible resources to help fund marketing strategies	Funding
Performance measures	Record number of times the brand is referred to in marketing materials related to any of the action steps. Monitor progress and present report after one year.		
Time frame for implementation	On-going, with periodic progress reports.		

4. Meet with all economic development partners to get updates on successes and challenges

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins			
Objective:	Establish a meeting with partners to provide updates. Continue meetings on quarterly basis. All players must discuss action steps to date, and coordinate approaches to marketing for future prospects. The key to success will be coordinated communications and delivery of the same message to prospective investors/developers.		
Outcomes:	Streamlined form of communication Regular meetings Identification of key players and responsibilities Development of common marketing plan Identify strengths, weaknesses and specific plan to address each organization.		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold initial meeting by January 2011 2. Plan and schedule quarterly meetings 3. Develop common marketing strategy 4. Develop listing of successful developments 5. Develop list of available properties (opportunities) 6. Develop contact list of all available resources 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	EDA of St Clair County	Experience and Contacts	Personnel, MEDC resources.
	St Clair Chamber	Local connection	Local leads, local office
	MEDC	Lead Agency in state for economic development	Personnel, prospect list, specialized resources
	SEMCOG	Active partner in regional economic development	Personnel, data, mapping, support resources
Performance measures	Regular reports to Council on updated and detailed economic development. Increase in new/relocated businesses		
Time frame for implementation	Talk to all parties in December 2010, with a view to beginning quarterly meetings in January 2011.		

5. Analyze benefits of EDA membership and compare costs of services if provided by other entities

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins with Councilman Tim Burns			
Objective:	To determine if membership in the EDA is in the best benefit for the City in both terms of cost as well as service delivery and results. Determine if the EDA is the only organization that can provide these services. If not, gather cost comparisons from other organizations. Explore city's commitment to the local economic development to see if city may be better served employing our own development person/employee.		
Outcomes:	<p>Detailed cost analysis of EDA costs</p> <p>Detailed analysis of results obtained from EDA membership</p> <p>Determine other potential service providers and compare costs for services</p> <p>Conduct cost/benefit analysis between economic development organizations, prepare recommendation to City Council for action</p> <p>Enter agreement for economic development services from organization best poised to deliver results in a cost efficient manner</p>		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete summary evaluation of EDA services and results 2. Identify potential economic development organizations and gather cost and service proposals 3. Conduct side-by-side cost/benefit analysis 4. Report findings to Council with action recommendation 5. Enter into agreement with appropriate organization 6. Explore city's commitment to the local EDA to see if we may be better served employing our own development person/employee. 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	EDA of St Clair County	Experience in economic development	Personnel, knowledge
	St Clair Chamber	Knowledge of local community	Local connectivity
Performance measures	Success will be measured by an annual increase in the number of new or enhanced economic development projects.		
Time frame for implementation	<p>Begin review process in January 2011.</p> <p>Prepare summary to Council by March 2011.</p> <p>Establish contractual relationship with economic development organization by July 1, 2011.</p>		

6. Develop a marketing plan for industrial zoned areas including the industrial park

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins			
Objective:	Develop a specific and targeted marketing plan for all industrial areas within the City. For the industrial park, gear plan to specific types of development (alternative energy, R & D, etc). To create a common marketing plan with clear objectives in order to spur both new construction as well as occupancy of existing industrial land/facilities within the City.		
Outcomes:	Common Marketing theme and plan Detailed specific locations for types of industrial development Identification of key resources, incentives, zoning, and infrastructure for development Distribute plan to all key players (EDA, MEDC, etc) Use as a tool to actively pursue development		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold shareholder meetings to develop marketing plan 2. Develop plan by April 1, 2011 3. Actively distribute plan 4. Chart all progress, amend plan as development or opportunities occur 5. Develop list of available properties (opportunities) 6. Develop contact list of all available resources 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	EDA of St Clair County	Experience and Contacts	Personnel, MEDC resources.
	St Clair Chamber	Local connection	Local leads, local office
	MEDC	Lead Agency in state for economic development	Personnel, prospect list, specialized resources
	SEMCOG	Active partner in regional economic development	Personnel, data, mapping, support resources
Performance measures	Measurement by actual results gained (new/relocated businesses)		
Time frame for implementation	Immediate beginning (December 2010). Plan completed by April 2011		

Goal B: Improve city services and infrastructure

1. Enhance sidewalk preventive maintenance program

Champion(s):	Mayor Bill Cedar with Mike Harrington, DPW Director		
Objective:	Enhancements and improvements to city streets, roads and sidewalks. Improve quality of city sidewalks.		
Outcomes:	Better sidewalks that are safer and result in fewer complaints/accidents.		
Definition	Work with Scott Adkins and D.P.W. to identify and fix bad sidewalk areas and develop plans for a longer term maintenance program.		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	Scott Adkins	Will coordinate road improvements	Budgeting expertise
	D.P.W.	Responsibility for overseeing work.	
Performance measures	Positive comments from public Fewer formal complaints Fewer lawsuits		
Time frame for implementation	Begin improvements in the next road construction season, and then monitor after a year.		

2. Work with MDOT to make M-29 safer for people and vehicles getting to Downtown.

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins			
Objective:	Promote safer vehicular and pedestrian movement in the downtown section of M-29 Reduce the number of accidents Improve pedestrian crossings and related markings		
Outcomes:	Reduced number of accidents More visibly marked pedestrian crossings Improved movement of traffic (pedestrian and vehicular) Aesthetic improvements to M-29 downtown corridor		
Definition	Meet with MDOT officials to discuss safety improvements Present proposed improvements to City Council for adoption Present proposed improvement to MDOT for implementation Make improvements Review steps taken and critique Adjust plan as necessary		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	MDOT	Control of Highway	Specialists, funding
	St Clair DPW	Knowledge of streets	Experience, manpower
	St Clair Metro Planning	Planning expertise	Staff, resources
	SEMCOG	Planning, technical assistance	Staff, resources, data
Performance measures	Number of design and physical improvements made to the corridor Decrease in number of traffic crashes and accidents		
Time frame for implementation	Immediate implementation, action plan developed within 6 months from project start, initial improvements made within first 6-months with additional improvements to be completed within the remaining 48 months.		

3. Partner with neighboring communities to explore preventative maintenance programs for critical infrastructure

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins with Mike Harrington (DPW)			
Objective:	Meet with neighboring communities to explore potential joint/cooperative preventative maintenance programs for critical infrastructure		
Outcomes:	<p>Prepare a list of critical infrastructure and related maintenance needs</p> <p>Conduct a meeting with neighboring communities to share lists/needs</p> <p>Develop a list of potential maintenance that may be shared</p> <p>Prepare a plan and draft agreements to share preventative maintenance</p> <p>Implement shared preventative maintenance programs</p> <p>Critique shared preventative maintenance programs</p> <p>Adjust programs as necessary</p>		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare list of critical infrastructure needs 2. Ask local communities to evaluate their needs 3. Meet to share need survey results 4. Develop potential areas of shared preventative maintenance 5. Enter into inter-local agreements for shared preventative maintenance 6. Evaluate success/failure of shared programs 7. Adjust shared programs as necessary 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	City of Marysville, township of St Clair, China and East China, City of Marine City	Neighboring communities with common needs	Personnel, equipment, resources, combined funding
	St Clair County Road Commission	County Road System	Personnel, equipment, resources, combined funding
	St Clair County Drain Commissioner	County Drain system and storm water management	Personnel, equipment, resources, combined funding
Performance measures	<p>Carry out critique of potential shared preventative maintenance programs and resources</p> <p>Increase number of programs</p>		
Time frame for implementation	1 st Quarter 2011		

4. Install cameras in the water system

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins with Keith Eisen, Water Plant Superintendent			
Objective:	To install cameras and other critical monitoring equipment at critical infrastructure points of the water system infrastructure to deter against vandalism and potential acts of terrorism.		
Outcomes:	Cost and technical analysis of cameras and equipment needs Prepare recommendation for installing equipment at critical infrastructure points Develop plan for active monitoring Develop response procedures with police department		
Definition	1. Identify most critical areas for system placement 2. Gather cost proposals 3. Develop monitoring plan 4. Install necessary equipment 5. Evaluate system operations after 6 months		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	St Clair Police Department	Enforcement of laws relating to violations	Personnel, knowledge
	Paul Dingeman/CTV	Knowledge of camera equipment	Knowledge
Performance measures	Elimination of potential threats to critical infrastructure Success in prosecution of violators		
Time frame for implementation	Gather pricing and begin development of monitoring plan in January 2011. Bid for equipment in March 2011, purchase in April 2011, and installation in May 2011. Evaluation of system in Nov 2011		

5. Develop a plan to join East China's sewer authority

Champion(s): Councilman Mike LaPorte			
Objective:	City sewer facilities are close to capacity and joining the East China authority would be more cost effective than expanding city's facility.		
Outcomes:	Improved efficiency in sewer service Reduced duplication Enables long term planning for sewer services		
Definition	Meet with China and East China townships quarterly to develop a process for restructuring the authority to add the city.		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	East China and China townships boards	Establish interest	Decision making
	Sewer authority board	Develop contract/structure	
Performance measures	Quarterly progress in development of a contract Development of a Contract that is agreeable to all parties		
Time frame for implementation	2 years: approval of contract and implementation		

6. **Develop Framework for contracting engineering and road services to neighboring communities**

Champion(s):		Councilman Mike LaPorte with Mike Harrington, DPW Director	
Objective:	Enable long term planning To increase cost efficiencies for all partners		
Outcomes:	Quality and consistent road projects throughout region Improved relations among communities		
Definition	1. Meet with township supervisors on a quarterly/annual basis to establish long term projects and needs 2. Identify types of services that can be contracted out		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	City engineer	Establish capacity	Information
	Neighboring supervisors	Establish interest	Decision making
	City Administrator	Financial considerations	Contract development
Performance measures	Contracts approved by city and neighboring communities Long term collaborative road maintenance program is developed		
Time frame for implementation	12 months: contracts developed and implemented		

7. Continue to seek and expand cooperative opportunities with St. Clair Township and other neighbors in parks and recreation by building on positive relationships on existing projects

Champion(s): Councilman Tom Foley			
Objective:	Develop efficiencies for both communities in parks and recreation and public works. Help out a neighbor		
Outcomes:	Reduction in overhead costs for city Reduced costs for township compared to using contractor Quicker to township parks and recreation needs		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish capacity for city to provide parks and recreation services to the township. 2. Arrange a meeting with St. Clair Township Supervisor 3. Establish a regional retreat for leaders from neighboring communities to establish needs 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	St. Clair township and other neighboring communities	Establish interest	Decision making
	City dept heads	Establish capacity	Information
Performance measures	Positive response to meeting invitations Development and implementation of contracts		
Time frame for implementation	Initial meeting within 3 months Contracts developed within 6 months.		

8. Implement internal efficiencies that can save costs while maintaining or raising service quality

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins			
Objective:	<p>Evaluate all City operations and provide a detailed summary of current operational efficiencies. Detail strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement with specific steps to achieve maximum service delivery in the most cost-efficient manner</p> <p>To eliminate inefficient or cost-draining operations, replacing same with the most efficient and cost-effective methods to provide services to residents.</p>		
Outcomes:	<p>More efficient operations</p> <p>Reduction in cost of services</p> <p>Elimination of duplication in service delivery</p> <p>Combination of departments and personnel where service delivery improvements can be achieved</p> <p>Raise all levels of service delivery</p>		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete summary evaluation of all City operations and services 2. Meet with department heads to develop improvement plan 3. Implement improvement plan 4. Take appropriate steps to reduce costs 5. Evaluate plan at least annually 6. Revise plan as necessary 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	City of St Clair- Department Heads	Experience in department operations	Personnel, knowledge
	Accounting Department	Budgetary information	Data and financial history
Performance measures	<p>Cost reductions in services affected</p> <p>Comments from residents on operational delivery results</p>		
Time frame for implementation	<p>Begin implementation in 1st quarter of Fiscal Year 2011.</p> <p>Monitor annually.</p>		

9. Analyze opportunities for additional authorities for joint service provision with neighboring communities

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins			
Objective:	Complete an analysis to determine if partnership opportunities exist with neighboring communities to provide joint service provision (i.e. utility authorities, public safety authorities, joint recreation, etc)		
Outcomes:	Cost efficiencies and improvements resulting from efficiencies in scale for appropriate service areas without any decrease in quality of service		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a list of local services that could be potential joint service opportunities 2. Establish meeting with neighboring communities based upon joint service opportunities 3. Conduct study of costs, resources, and likelihood of local partnerships 4. Develop inter-local agreement for local joint service provision as necessary 5. Enter into agreement for service provision 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	City of Marysville, township of St Clair, China and East China, City of Marine City	Neighboring communities with common needs	Personnel, equipment, resources, combined funding
	St Clair County Road Commission	County Road System	Personnel, equipment, resources, combined funding
	St Clair County Drain Commissioner	County Drain system and storm water management	Personnel, equipment, resources, combined funding
Performance measures	Critique of joint service provision programs and related costs		
Time frame for implementation	July 2011		

Goal C: Strengthen Emergency Preparedness

1. Ensure that county and state emergency preparedness plans that impact the city have opportunities for local input

Champion(s): Councilman Tim Burns			
Objective:	Best emergency preparedness plan that is recognized nationally for its comprehensive analysis of all potential disasters, including all natural and man made incidents that have a potential impact on health, safety, and quality of life		
Outcomes:	More efficient response to an incident Reduced financial impact on city and its individual residents Reduction in insurance rates Improved training of fire and police Improved awareness of public of its role in minimizing the impact of an incident Greater cooperation with state, county, and federal agencies		
Definition	1. Failure mode analysis to all potential incidents that impact health, safety, and quality of life in city 2. Quantify and prioritize the various potential incidents 3. Identify the potential causes 4. Develop action plans, resources, roles and responsibilities 5. Develop documented training including drills and post mortem analysis following drills and training exercises		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	FEMA	General guidelines and policy makers	source of funding
	City Fire and Police	History of local incidents, insights on near misses	Knowledge of local activities, resources, expertise
	County	Ensure no duplication of projects, programs	County budget, departmental expertise
	State	Ensure no duplication of projects, programs	State budget, departmental expertise
Performance measures	Graded Drills rated by FEMA or other experts Reduction in insurance rates Time for first response Cost avoidance assessed for each emergency response		
Time frame for implementation	September 2011 - Drills designed and conducted by local departments, according to list of potential incidents/conditions. December 2011 – Overall assessment by FEMA of system with national recognition by Dept of Homeland Security.		

2. Arrange for the City Water Department to analyze the Emergency Preparedness Plan for water

Champion(s): City Superintendent Scott Adkins with Keith Eisen, Water Plant Superintendent.			
Objective:	To conduct an analysis of the existing emergency preparedness and response plan for municipal water operations and to conduct a “test exercise” to determine strengths and weaknesses of the plan		
Outcomes	Safer Water supply and reduced threat of terrorism affecting water service and supply		
Definition	<p>Critique current plan, noting strengths and weaknesses, make improvements and corrections to plan as necessary.</p> <p>Conduct a drill or test exercise of plan to determine responsiveness</p> <p>Critique response to drill and make corrections as needed</p> <p>Train water department staff on plan and procedures</p> <p>Educate citizens</p> <p>Involve local emergency response partners</p>		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	St Clair County Emergency Management	Resources, Coordinating unit for County Emergency Plan	Experience in drills/exercises, resources
	St Clair Regional Water Monitoring Consortium	Cooperative plan	Expert resources, monitoring equipment
	St Clair Water Department	Municipal water provider	Licensed and trained water operators
Performance measures	Addressing any problems with the plan raised in the original analysis		
Time frame for implementation	<p>Analysis within 2nd quarter of 2011.</p> <p>Resolve any identified problems within one year.</p>		

3. Provide a training program for citizens on emergency preparedness in partnership with the county.

Champion(s)	Councilman Butch Kindsvater with City Superintendent Scott Adkins		
Objective:	To provide citizens important basis training on Emergency Preparedness		
Outcomes:	Residents will be educated on basic preparedness steps, such as 72-hour sustainability, Emergency Sirens, Alert FM and Select Alert warning systems, shelter-in-place procedures, emergency reception centers and evacuation procedures		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist residents in preparing a 72-hour sustainability kit 2. Provide residents information on emergency warning systems 3. Teach residents proper shelter-in-place methods 4. Teach awareness on evacuation, evacuation routes, and emergency reception centers 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	St Clair County Emergency Management	Resources, specialized training	Training materials, trainers
	FEMA	Media resources, communications	Trainers, educational materials, training aids
	Michigan State Police	State Emergency Management coordination	Trainers, educational materials, training aids
Performance measures	Number or participants in training programs, Number of 72-hour kits distributes, Reduction in number of casualties in an actual emergency		
Time frame for implementation	Immediate implementation – beginning first quarter 2011.		

4. Develop a priority list of projects for presentation to local foundations for funding

Champion(s):		City Superintendent Scott Adkins	
Objective:	To prepare a list and submit same list to local foundations for funding support of Emergency Preparedness programs		
Outcomes:	Secure funding assistance for local emergency preparedness programs		
Definition	1. Prepare a list of potential programs 2. Prioritize list of programs 3. Prepare budgetary needs list for each program 4. Submit list to local foundations for funding assistance 5. Implement programs as funded		
Partners (who/what needs to be part of successful implementation)	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	St Clair County Emergency Management	Resources, direct link to FEMA funding	Experience in receiving funding
	FEMA	Funding resources	Trainers, educational materials, training aids and funding
	Community Foundation of St Clair County	Funding Resource	Funding administration
Performance measures	Success in receiving funding support to sponsor local emergency preparedness programs		
Time frame for implementation	Immediate implementation – first quarter 2011.		

Goal D: Enhance and Promote Quality of Life

1. Develop and implement tools to protect quality of life in neighborhoods

Champion(s):	Councilwoman Jane Krebs		
Objective:	To control blight and make the city neighborhoods a safe and pleasing place to live specially in light of increasing number of rental and vacant properties.		
Outcomes:	Blight- free neighborhoods that are up to standard.		
Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educate and get information out to the public and businesses on new ordinances in the form of a letter put in bills or direct mailings. 2. Enforce existing ordinances, and develop new ones to fight blight. 3. Increase hours for code enforcement officers until problems are solved. 4. Meet with four or five neighborhood groups to develop additional initiatives to address neighborhood challenges. 		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	Citizens	Report problems, anonymously to code enforcers or to directly to city council	Neighborhood knowledge
	Code enforcement	Will write up ordinances	Knowledge of ordinances and ability to act on referrals
	City council	Review ordinances related to blight and introduce new ones to curtail future blight.	Ability to create ordinances
	Police department	Detect blight during drives around the city to notify code enforcers and also help enforce ordinances.	Information on impact on neighborhoods
	Department of Public Works	Maintain empty homes if there is a problem	Equipment to fix problems

Performance measures	Provide quarterly reports to council on: Increased number of tickets Reduced time in responding to blight reports
Time frame for implementation	Begin January 2011 with review of existing ordinances. Monitor results during 2011 and report back to council in December 2011.

2. Support Stable Residential and Property Values through maintenance and beautification programs

Champion(s):		Councilwoman Jane Krebs	
Objective:	Help maintain residential and property values so residents and businesses see these as a good investment.		
Outcomes:	Stable or improved property values		
Definition	<div>1. Help homeowners maintain their property by contracting with companies, and/or engaging agencies and community groups to help remove dead trees or help with maintenance.</div> <div>2. Reinstate beautification programs such as Yard of the Year.</div> <div>3. The city will identify rental properties to ensure they do not devalue property values or cause neighborhood decline.</div>		
Partners	Name of organization	Why are they important?	What resources do they bring?
	Building department	Can help with permits, building codes	Monitor progress
	City Council	Pass new rental ordinances, and contract with firms/organizations for dead tree removal as appropriate	Decision making
	Council on Aging	Help elderly with housing needs	Funding and service provision
	Community groups/ Neighborhood Improvements Committee	Engage community groups that can provide seniors with maintenance help	Commitment to neighborhoods.
Performance measures	Reduce rate of decline in property values in short term Increased property values in long term		
Time frame for implementation	Benchmark change in values from 2009-2010 Compare with changing values in 2010 – 2011 and 2011-2012		

Conclusion

The 2010 City of St. Clair strategic plan provides a framework for focused action for expanding the tax base; improving the efficiency of city services and infrastructure; strengthening emergency preparedness; and enhancing quality of life through coordinated leadership. The plan was coordinated by SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments with the active participation of the Mayor and each councilmember as well as the City Administrator. The plan was created as an action based plan, focused on steps that are reasonable and implementable within the fiscal realities facing the city and the general economy. It was not developed to be a comprehensive framework to reach the vision of the community, rather a series of implementable steps in the right direction.

Each of the 21 action steps were developed by the mayor, individual council members or the city superintendent. Each committed to overseeing implementation of the action in the specified timeframe and to take responsibility for measuring success using specific performance metrics. SEMCOG has offered to evaluate progress after a period of six months or one year depending on the action.

While the goals and range of actions are quite broad, it is clear that in the economic climate facing Michigan's communities, fiscal constraints will largely determine the order and implementation of actions. The long term vision of the community is to improve the quality of life for residents and businesses and to promote this to visitors as a *getaway from the everyday*. The Council has selected specific actions that are within their powers and are achievable in the short term. However, there is an understanding that even the simplest of the action steps will require partnerships with agencies such as the DDA, Chamber, and neighboring communities; coordination of city departments, personnel and resources; and coordinated leadership by each champion.

Appendix A

City of St. Clair Government:

Mayor and Council (All Current 2 year terms expire in 2011)

Mayor: Bill Cedar Jr.

City Council

Ward 1: Tim Burns
Tom Foley

Ward 2: Mike LaPorte
Tom McCartney

Ward 3: Butch Kindsvater
Jane Krebs

Key City Personnel with Responsibility for Action Step Implementation

Scott Adkins	City Superintendent
Mike Booth	Accountant
D.J. Boulter	Building Inspector
Keith Eisen	Water Plant Superintendent
Mike Harrington	Director of Public Works/City Engineer
Eric Hall	Parks/Grounds/Facilities Manager
Trice Hawkins	Recreation Director
Lynn Houston	Assessor
Rick Jefferson	Police Chief
D.J. McLeod	Code Enforcement Officer
Russ Mollan	Treasurer
Janice Winn	City Clerk

Appendix B: SEMCOG 2035 Forecast for St. Clair

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