

City of St. Clair

Community Comprehensive Plan



Adopted
May 9, 2012

The City of St. Clair Planning Commission has formulated and approved this Community Comprehensive Plan as a guide for the future development of the City of St. Clair.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry Beier", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Terry Beier,
Planning Commission Chair

Date: June 27, 2012

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Executive Summary

The St. Clair Community Comprehensive Plan is a policy statement setting a land use vision, goals, and attainable actions. The plan is a commitment of citizens and City officials to protect and support the residential, business, recreation, and environmental character of the community. It provides a framework to realize these commitments through the analysis and understanding of issues and opportunities. The Plan addresses the following:

- Where is St. Clair today?
- Where does St. Clair want to be in 5 years, 10 years and 20 years?
- How does the City get there?

All citizens of St. Clair will likely be affected by decisions made in this Plan. The social makeup has changed over the past 50 years. A nuclear family with two parents and two children is no longer the norm. Empty nesters and single professionals are increasingly filling the neighborhoods. The realities of population profiles and projections are that the City will get older and continue to have a permanent shift in the job market. Public participation in the development of the Plan was critical in both understanding the dynamic changes and giving input on the path St. Clair should consider.

A Plan embracing the public's values and principles is likely to have a lasting and stable constituency. Topics of importance brought forward by the public are maintaining high-quality neighborhoods, improving housing values, safety and security, and high levels of City services. The community also placed an emphasis on arts and culture, recreation opportunity, and walkability.

The essence of the Plan maintains long-standing assets as defined areas for new investment. Residential neighborhoods and the local business community are assets that are not tampered with. They preserve history, provide a regional aura, and give reason to live and work here. There is also reason to change and refresh the City. The Plan does this by defining the Downtown, central Clinton Avenue area, and the Pine River frontage as areas open to change. Proposed changes are flexible and incremental.

The Plan evolved in three general phases. Phase I allowed the Planning Commission to analyze population, housing, economic, traffic, and land use information. The findings of these analyses were used to prepare land use concepts and seek public input. Phase II used the findings to craft and refine actions for land use, transportation, economic investment, and design goals. Phase III subjected the plan to public scrutiny and secured adoption.

The executive summary highlights key points but does not substitute for reading the details each chapter provide. The Plan has ten chapters.

- The INTRODUCTION describes the reason a City plans for its future, legal requirements, and the process this Plan took.
- CONTEXT discusses the City's population, housing, and workforce according to the 2010 U.S. Census and projections of these components provided by regional agencies. Description of existing land use, natural features, streets and transportation facilities, and community services form the base for succeeding chapters on these topics. The St. Clair Community Comprehensive Plan and a summary of this plan's public engagement add to the findings that the Planning Commission considered as it crafted goals and actions.
- LAND USE is the first chapter that sets the future development policy into place. The findings of the CONTEXT chapter and the assets of the community are integrated into a future land use plan. This chapter provides a "snapshot" of the City in 20 years. It stands in conjunction with the other chapters of the Plan.
- TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION describes funding mechanisms for repairs, traffic conditions and methods of minimizing accident hazards.
- PARKS, RECREATION, CULTURE, AND HISTORY summarizes and incorporates the City's official Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan. A summary of the arts, culture, and history activities being undertaken is provided.
- ECONOMIC INVESTMENT describes the assets of the City that can entice business and development investment. Opportunities to enact global marketing and networking partnerships are encouraged.
- CITY SERVICES and LEADERSHIP describes the services the City provides, location of the public buildings and large capital improvements that can be expected over the next five years. The chapter also describes environmental measures that the City can take leadership on.
- PLACEMAKING: CITY DESIGN is an urban design guide that enhances the City's move into the global economy and freshens its regional appeal as a place to live and work. A general design framework, the use of "complete streets" as promoted by the State, and development criteria for the Development Focus Areas are presented.
- The ZONING PLAN chapter links the policy and vision of the Comprehensive Plan to the Zoning Ordinance as the vision is translated to implementable regulations.
- IMPLEMENTATION lists zoning and non-zoning actions that should occur over the ensuing five years to move the Comprehensive Plan forward.

The future land use plan identifies 11 land use categories. Low-Density Residential and Traditional Neighborhood designations continue to occupy the greatest number of acres. Single-family neighborhoods remain the foundation for St. Clair. Moderate-Density Neighborhoods and Multiple-Family Residential categories provide for residents' need for higher-density living. These areas are confined to current locales.

The Downtown and Development Focus areas allow for mixed-use urban living alternatives. Development of these areas is built on design criteria and enhances the creation of "place" that St. Clair is endeared for.

The Neighborhood Commercial/Office and Commerce/Office designations provide for the business concentrations as commonly interpreted. The Neighborhood Commercial/Office category is intended to serve nearby residents and businesses. These are typically smaller establishments that will serve a higher percentage of pedestrian customers. The Commerce/Office category serves customers that travel by auto and from surrounding townships and cities.

Land planned for Industry is similar to the land currently in industrial use with the exception that industries located on Fred Moore Highway and Clinton Avenue are phased out as businesses fail to operate or voluntarily relocate.

The final categories are Parks/Open Space and Public/Quasi-Public lands. These categories designate City offices, water and sewage facilities, utilities, parks, churches, schools, and similar public places that are vital components of quality living.

The City of St. Clair has experienced many changes in land use, housing ownership and the job market since the 1995 Community Comprehensive Plan. This Plan makes great effort to retain the delicate balance between single-family residential neighborhoods that serve as the City's foundation and emerging forms of new development that will propel it into the global economy. It recognizes that St. Clair never has survived with a single land use, and will not through the life of this Plan.

Introduction

The purpose of St. Clair Community Comprehensive Plan is to articulate a vision for the City's future growth and development and provide a statement of goals and policies based on the preferred community vision.

The City of St. Clair Community Comprehensive Plan articulates a vision for the City's future growth and development. It brings together several planning efforts that the City has undertaken to guide its future decision making. The Plan was developed using input from a variety of sources including a public input process, the 1995 Community Comprehensive Plan, the City's Zoning Ordinance, the 2007 Retail Market Strategy, the 2007 Downtown Development Plan, the 2010 M-29 Corridor Analysis, the 2010 Downtown Redevelopment District, and the 2011 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

Once adopted, the Community Comprehensive Plan is the official policy to be used by the St. Clair City Council and Planning Commission to guide land use decisions and to solve community development issues. This Plan is a vision statement towards future growth and development and a document that ensures continuity in development policies over the years.

How is the Plan to be Used

The City of St. Clair Community Comprehensive Plan sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies and provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made. The Plan serves many functions and is to be used in a variety of ways.

- It is a general statement of the City's goals and policies and provides a comprehensive vision of the community's desire for the future.
- The Plan serves as an aid in daily decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in this Plan guide the Planning Commission and City Council in their deliberations on zoning, capital improvements, and other matters relating to land use and development. The Plan provides a stable, long-term basis for decision-making.
- It provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The Michigan Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008 as amended, requires that communities have a Master Plan as the foundation for the zoning ordinance and other regulations that shape the physical and social development of the community.
- The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private development by aligning future land uses and future public infrastructure investments, and working collaboratively with external funding sources including federal, state, and county agencies.
- Finally, this Community Comprehensive Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers, and adjacent communities a clear indication of the City's direction for the future.

What the Plan Contains

The Community Comprehensive Plan begins with an overview of St. Clair's current context with information on the social, economic, and physical characteristics of the community as well as a summary of the public engagement process. The community vision, goals, and policies are then presented by theme, which include:

- Land use
- Transportation and circulation
- Parks, recreation, culture, and history
- Economic investment
- City services and leadership.

Strategic areas for future redevelopment efforts and stimulate economic investment are identified in the chapter entitled Placemaking: City Design. Finally, the Zoning Plan and Implementation chapters provide the ways in which this Community Comprehensive Plan can be achieved. The appendix lists the public input received during the May 2011 Open House.

Planning Process

St. Clair's first Community Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1965. It included an economic development program, a parks and recreation plan, a central business district plan, a six-year capital improvement program, and a land use plan. The 1987 Community Comprehensive Plan update addressed issues such as future commercial expansion, industrial growth, and anticipated single-family and multi-family residential development. The 1994 update included a waterfront development plan, industrial development plan and a Capital Improvement Plan along with a citizen survey results.

Recognizing the importance of public involvement in the planning process, this Community Comprehensive Plan was developed using input from City officials, staff, and residents. The process followed a logical sequence of tasks:

- Kick-off meeting – September 2010
- Community involvement – Neighborhood walk and open house – November 2010 and May 2011
- Background studies including demographic data update and review of existing documents – December 2010 to September 2011
- Planning sessions with the Planning Commission – January 2011 to December 2011
- Community Comprehensive Plan preparation – January 2011 to December 2011
- Statutory public review – January 2012 - April 2012.
- Final Adoption – May 9, 2012.

Context

St. Clair's key demographic and socio-economic characteristics and trends, and a summary of the public input findings are identified in this chapter. Key trends and issues include:

- Preserve existing neighborhoods while encouraging housing choices and mixed-use developments;
- Invest in non-motorized transportation facilities;
- Link open space, parks, communities facilities, and cultural assets
- Expand economic opportunities;
- Handle the challenges related to the need to become more sustainable; and
- Address place-making, streetscape, and urban design issues.

Figure 1. Location Map



The City of St. Clair is located at the confluence of the Pine River and the St. Clair River in the southeast portion of St. Clair County, directly across from Canada. Port Huron, the largest City in the County, is seven miles to the north and Detroit is approximately 41 miles to the southeast. M-29, or Riverside Avenue, is the major street in St. Clair and Fred Moore Highway provides access to Interstate I-94.

The St. Clair River has played a major role in the settlement, growth, and development of the County and the City. The City of St. Clair developed and prospered through waterborne commerce. Early settlers used the river as a means of transportation. Ship building was a major source of employment during the early years until the 1920s when an increased reliance on rail and automobiles as well as changing economic needs caused a shift away from water transportation. Today, salt products and plastics remain as the City's major employment and source of tax revenue.

Commercial development and tourism are vital to the local economy. In addition to the St. Clair Inn, the City has annual art fairs, winter festival, a Historic Home Tour, and a City Museum which attract numerous visitors. The St. Clair Harbor and boat marinas are also a major attraction and are an important source of outside revenue. Although the St. Clair River is no longer a major source of local water transportation and industry employment, it remains along with the Pine River important assets for water-based recreation and tourism. The Pine River meanders through the southern part of the City and provide access to the two harbors. It is used by canoers and kayakers as a blue way from the St. Clair River to the BP Dome Petroleum Corporation property and nature trails located south of the Fred W. Moore Highway bridge.

People

The population of St. Clair has seen continued, steady growth over the past thirty years, consistent with the rate of growth experienced by St. Clair County as a whole. However, this increase has occurred at a slower rate than has occurred in the adjacent townships. Indeed, by 2000, the population of St. Clair Township exceeded the population of the City.

Projections provided by the Southeast Michigan Council of Government (SEMCOG) indicate a similar pattern for future growth. Growth will occur at a much slower rate for the City, while adjacent townships will continue to experience substantial growth.

Table 1. Historical Population: City of St. Clair and Environs

	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Increase 1970-2000
City of St. Clair	4,780	5,116	5,802	5,485	21.6%
St. Clair Twp.	3,965	4,614	6,423	6,817	107.8%
China Twp.	2,466	2,644	3,340	3,551	58.6%
East China Twp.	3,122	3,216	3,630	3,788	69.7%
City + Townships	14,333	15,590	19,195	19,641	58.6%
County	138,802	145,607	164,235	163,040	36.7%
Region	4,682,726	4,521,177	4,833,493	4,704,743	2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census Data

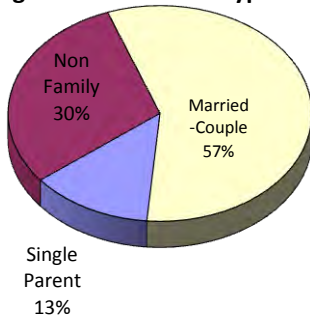
Table 2. Population Projections: City of St. Clair and Environs

	2010	2035	% Increase 2010-2035
City of St. Clair	5,485	6,556	12.9 %
St. Clair Twp.	6,817	8,134	26.6%
China Twp.	3,551	4,354	30.4%
East China Twp.	3,788	5,288	45.7%
County	163,040	192,167	17.0%
Region	4,704,743	5,062,552	4.7%

Source: SEMCOG

Based on the most up-to-date census information and projections by SEMCOG, St. Clair's population characteristics and trends are highlighted as follows:

Figure 2. Household Types



- Children below the age of 18 make up about 24 percent of the total population in St. Clair. The proportion of children in the City is projected to decrease represent about 20 percent of the total population in 2035.
- Seniors will be the fastest growing segment of the population through 2035. The proportion of the population over 65 years of age is projected to increase in the City from 15 to 25 percent.
- St. Clair is predominantly white. Native American, blacks, and other races make up less than 3 percent of the population. The other minority groups include people of Asian descent as well as people of other or mixed race origins. About 1.5 percent of the population of St. Clair is of Hispanic origin.
- Nearly 66 percent of the City's population is living in family households and most of these are married-couple families (51% of total households). The remainder of the City's population is made up of non-family households (34%). Non-family households are households which comprise a group of unrelated persons or one person living alone.
- About 36 percent of the City's households have children under 18 and 27 percent of households have seniors 65 years or older. (Census 2000 data)
- The number of households with children is projected to remain fairly stable through 2035, while the proportion of households with children will decrease from 36 to 30 percent. (SEMCOG – Census 2000 data)
- At the same time, the number of households with seniors will significantly increase from 632 to 1,066, representing an increase from 27 to 38 percent of households. This is consistent with the population age trends discussed previously. (SEMCOG – Census 2000 data)
- According to Census information, personal income for St. Clair residents increased by 21 percent between 1990 and 2000. The 2000 median household income was \$52,957.
- The percentage of people living in poverty decreased between 1990 and 2000, to 4 percent of the total adult population.
- According to SEMCOG, the largest employment industries in St. Clair include manufacturing, leisure and hospitality, retail trade, and education services. Projections to 2035 anticipate a shift in employment from manufacturing and retail trade to leisure and hospitality, health care and social assistance, and financial activities.

While projections call for population growth to 2035 in St. Clair, this growth may be modest in the next few years as a result of the weak economy and loss of jobs. However, the increase of seniors in St Clair is a significant trend to note. It will be critical to providing targeted City and health services.

Housing Trends

St. Clair enjoys a large supply of attractive, quality housing. The number of housing units in St. Clair has increased from 2,121 in 1990 to 2,454 in 2000. While single family homes are predominant accounting for 73 percent of the housing stock, 19 percent of housing units are composed of apartments, and 7 percent are single-family attached or duplex units. The median house value for the City in 2000 was \$137,100, up from \$91,893 in 1990.

Table 3. Housing Type, 1900-2000 and Building Permits

	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990-2000	New Units Permitted 2000-2011
Single Family Detached	1,475	1,793		318	64
Duplex	148	105		-43	18
Townhouse / Attached Condo	46	64		18	65
Multi-Unit Apartment	432	475		43	5
Mobile Home / Manufactured Housing	2	17		15	0
Other	18	0		-18	-
Total	2,121	2,454	2,523	333	152

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 and SEMCOG

Despite the general increase in population, households, and housing units from 1990 to 2000, the Southeast Michigan region has experienced a slowdown in residential construction. According to SEMCOG, there has been a continuous decline in building permits issued since 2002 with no permits issued since 2007.

Long-term housing trends suggest new housing units will grow at a slower pace.

With the drop in new residential building permits issued, the national and regional economy contracting, along with a high employment rate and rising costs for builders and consumers alike, recovery in the region will be a slow process.



Land Use Patterns and Neighborhood Character

Land use patterns in existence today are largely the result of St. Clair's early platting. The City includes four distinct residential neighborhoods. The Old Town Neighborhood located west of the Downtown. It contains the City's oldest housing stock between Second and Ninth streets and newer homes from Ninth Street to the rail line. The Oakland Neighborhood, located south of the Pine River and the North Neighborhood, north of Brown Street, was developed largely in the 1940's through 1960's. The West Neighborhood was built in the 1980's and 1990's and has some of the newest homes in St. Clair.

Figure 3. St. Clair Neighborhoods



A key part of the overall image of the City is defined by the Old Town. Maintaining the viability of the older housing stock is important to maintaining the City's character.

Three distinct commercial areas are located in St. Clair: the Downtown, Clinton Avenue, and the intersection of Fred Moore Highway and Carney Drive. The Downtown is dominated by Riverview Plaza, a shopping mall with surrounding surface parking lots. It also includes the St. Clair Inn and the riverfront Palmer Park, two major City landmarks. Clinton Avenue, to the south, is lined with offices and restaurants. A car-oriented commercial/retail node is found around the intersection of Fred Moore Highway and Carney Drive. Linking and diversifying uses in those areas will contribute to making St. Clair a destination and enhance the quality lifestyle for City residents.

The area bordering the Pine River includes a mix of uses from golf course, residential, to industrial uses with a large area of underutilized or vacant properties. Stimulating redevelopment of this area will contribute to St. Clair's future success.

Industrial areas are located at the north and south end of the City. Larger operations are the BP Dome Petroleum Corporation property on S. Carney, manufacturing plants on Range Road, Cargill Salt at the confluence of the St. Clair and Pine rivers, and Biewer Lumber, south of the Pine River. Modest sized industrial operations are located on Fred Moore Highway south of Carney Drive. Many industrial sites are bordered by the Pine River. These areas include enough vacant properties to support future growth and added tax base.

Other than the primary historic core of the City, many neighborhoods lack street connectivity challenging walking, dispersing car trips to major roads, and providing optimum movement for emergency vehicles. This development pattern should adapt to provide for sustainable development.



Natural Features

The natural features of the City of St. Clair have played a major role in influencing and attracting growth and development. Like much of Michigan's southern lower peninsula, the City's landscape was formed through glacial action. The glaciers movement shaped the topography and created many different types of soils. Plant communities, in turn, developed in response to soil conditions.

Topography

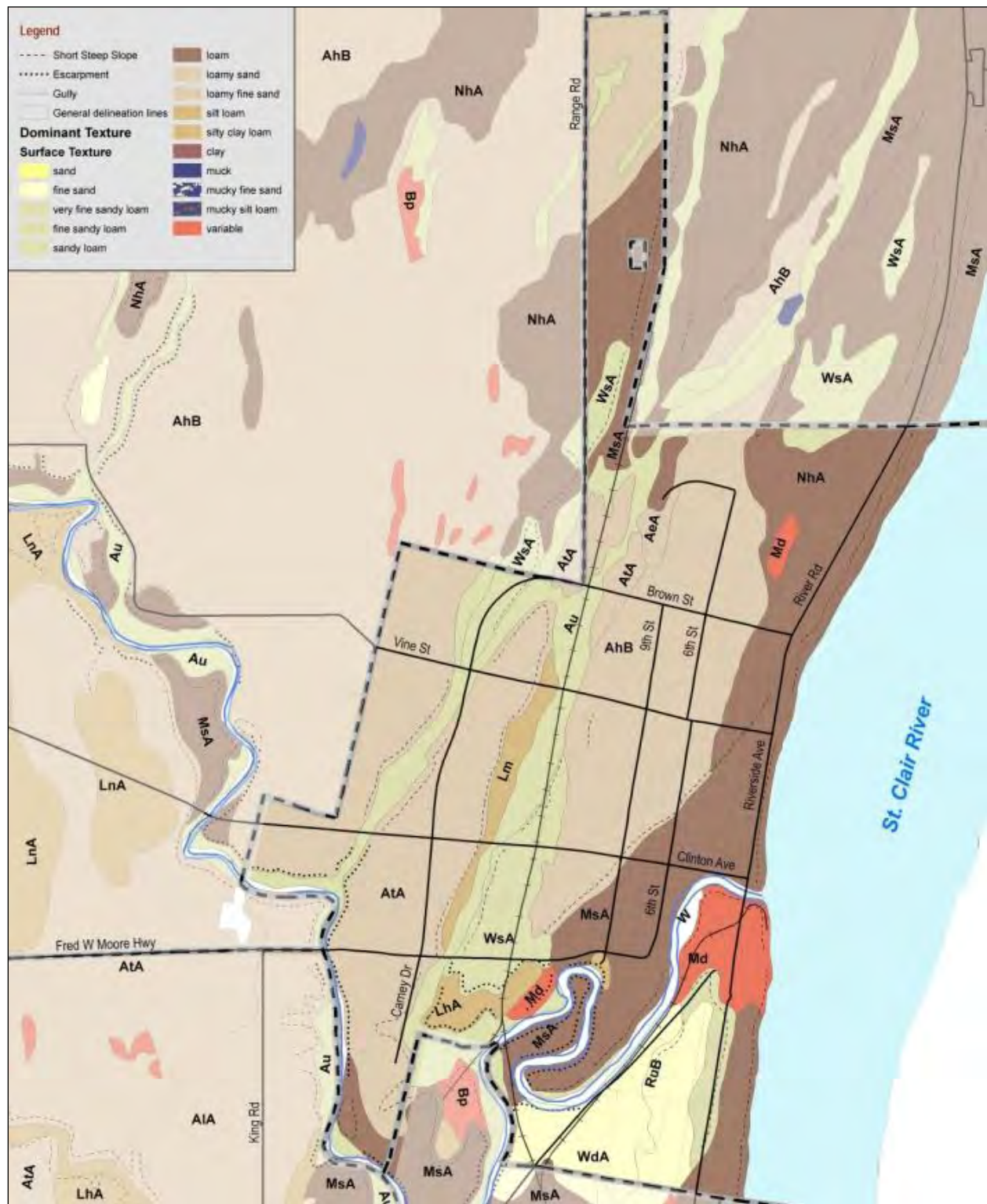
St. Clair is located in an area which is characterized by relatively flat to gently undulating topography. The land surface consists of a broad, clay-based glacial lake plain with several end moraines that are one to three miles wide and which have been reshaped by water and runoff. Elevations throughout the City range from approximately 580 feet to 605 feet above sea level. The highest natural point is located northwest of the City and the lowest area is located along the St. Clair River shoreline. The land is gently sloping from the northwest to the southeast.

Soils and Vegetation

Soil types found in the City are composed of clays and loamy sand over clay which exhibit poor drainage, according to the U.S. Conservation Service (Figure 4). Old beach ridges and dunes run parallel to the Lake Huron and the St. Clair River shores. Evidence of this type of terrain can be seen at Greig Park. The City also contains a number of wetland and woodland areas, largely preserved, along the waterways and within the City's parks and open spaces.



Figure 4. Soils



Map prepared by the County of St. Clair Metropolitan Planning Commission

Water Resources

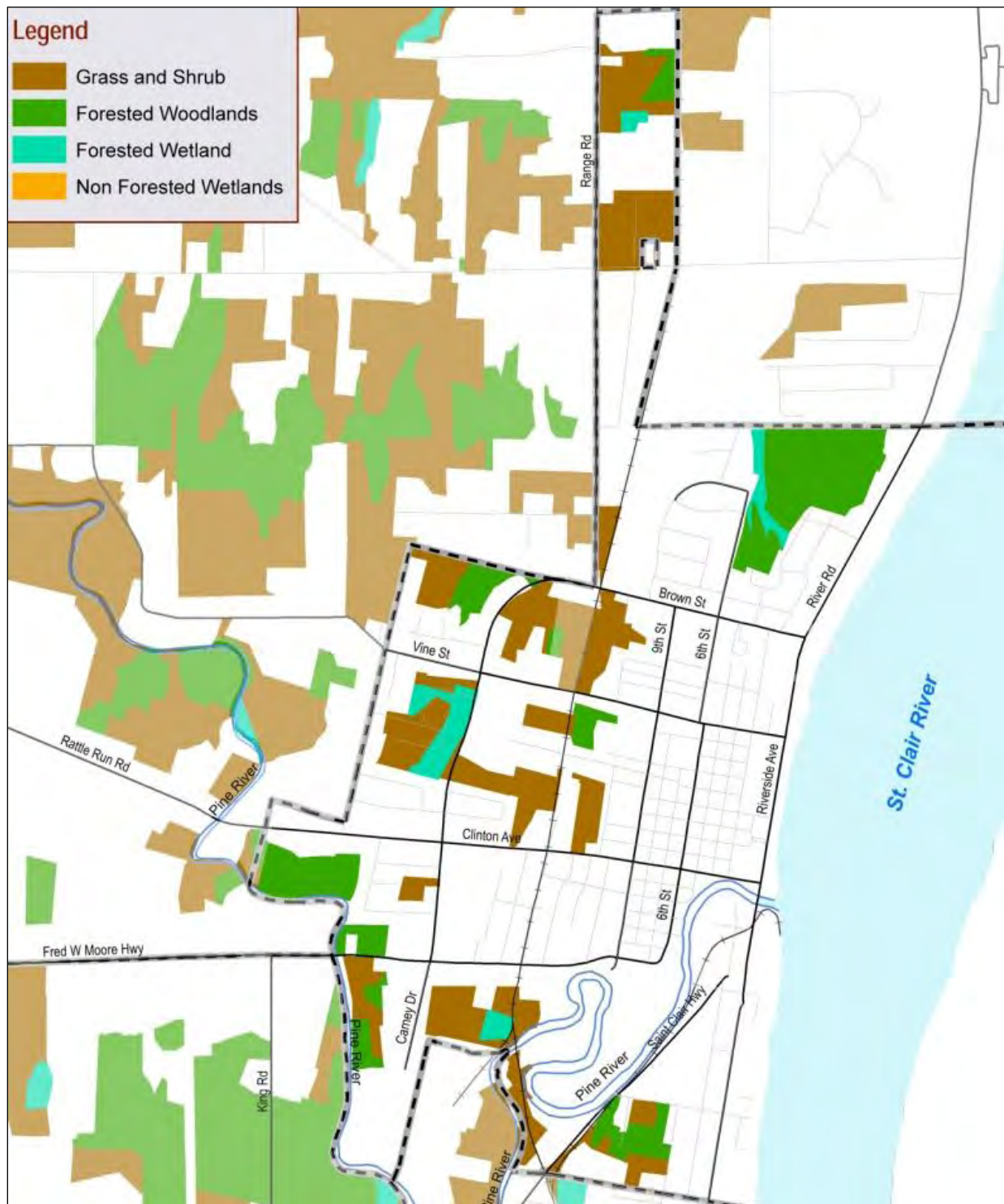
The most important water feature of the community is the St. Clair River. It extends from Lake Huron to Lake St. Clair for a distance of about 34 miles. The St. Clair River provides fishing opportunities for anglers and a great location for sailboarders when the winds are strong. It is lined by some parkland and older buildings which provide a pleasant place for people to stroll and enjoy a close look at Great Lakes freighters that pass along the waterway. The Pine River, a tributary of the St. Clair River, also runs through the City of St. Clair and includes the County's largest watershed at about 126,000 acres.

Both the St. Clair and Pine Rivers are good fishing areas for brown trout, lake trout, steelhead, salmon, smelt, walleye, perch, bass, pike, muskellunge, carp, catfish, and pan fish. These open waters and varied ecosystems support a wide variety of wildlife resources. The Great Lakes Basin is also a major flyway for thousands of North American waterfowl and bird species. Bird watching is an extremely popular recreational activity in St. Clair County.

Small forested wetlands can be found west of Carney Drive, in Greig Park, and in the Alice Woods Nature Sanctuary (Figure 5). Generally, floodplains identified for St. Clair are associated with Jordan Creek and the Pine River (Figure 6). Protecting these environmentally sensitive areas is important to maintaining a healthy community.

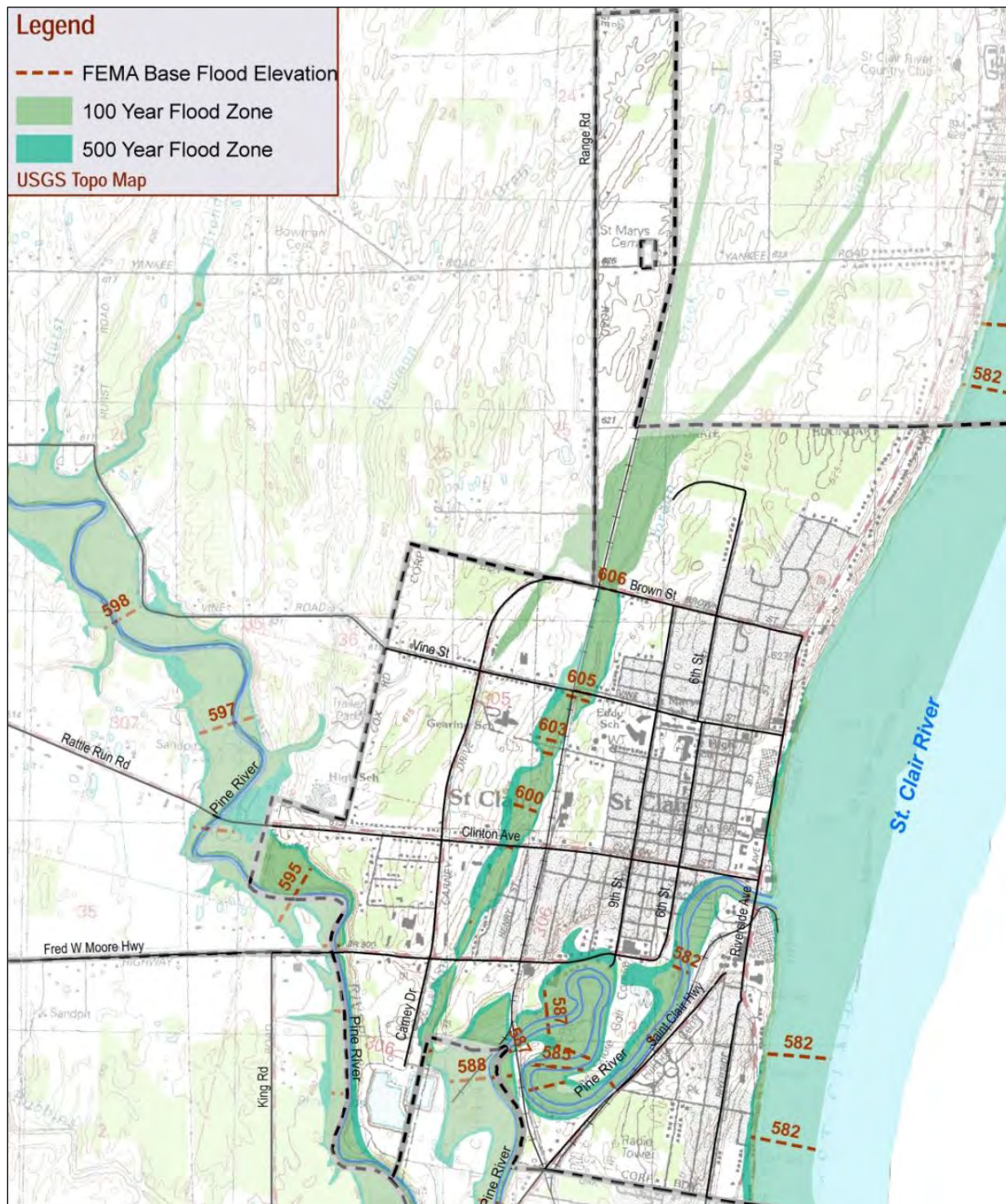


Figure 5. Woodlands and Wetlands



Map prepared by the County of St. Clair Metropolitan Planning Commission

Figure 6. Floodplains



Map prepared by the County of St. Clair Metropolitan Planning Commission

St Clair County Master Plan

The St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission adopted a county-wide master plan in June 2009. Some components directly relate to the City of St. Clair.

Workforce Mobility

A significant portion of St. Clair County's workforce commutes to their jobs outside of the county each day. According to the 2000 Census, over 63% of St. Clair County workers that live within the county also work in St. Clair County. The percentage (37%) of the workforce that travels to jobs outside St. Clair County is higher than the state average of people working outside their county.

Residents of St. Clair County tend to leave for work earlier than the state average, which means that the morning peak hours are earlier than in most counties.

For residents who work within the county, the amount of time it takes to get to work is less than the state average. This is due to the relative compactness of employment centers in Port Huron, Marysville, and St. Clair.

Commuting within St. Clair County will likely increase as centers of population increase in the southern and western parts of the County, while centers of employment remain mostly unchanged except for a slight shift southward. In 2030, St. Clair County's population will be concentrated in Port Huron, Marysville, and the townships of Fort Gratiot, Kimball, Port Huron, and Clay. In contrast, the employment centers will be in Port Huron, St. Clair, Marysville, and the townships of China, East China, and Ira. Lack of public transportation between these residential and employment areas may make it difficult for some residents to access available jobs.

Employers in St. Clair County

The top 20 employers in St. Clair County include a mix of institutions, health care providers, manufacturing companies, and retail trade. No employers in the top 20 are located in the City of St. Clair. The Big Three automakers have created a demand for educated and technically skilled workers, many of whom commute from St. Clair County.

St. Clair County's business and financial, educational, and governmental institutions will continue to be challenged to provide the jobs, workforce, technology, financing, and other resources needed to help industry remain competitive and to create growth. It can no longer rely on manufacturing to provide sustainable, high-paying jobs. The economy has become more knowledge-based and service-based and, thus, our workforce will need to be highly educated and technologically savvy.

The Knowledge Economy –Where Does St. Clair Fit In?

Using the five Knowledge Economy Indicators developed by Michigan State University, St. Clair County is considered a “contender” overall when stacked against other Michigan counties. The ranking is county-wide and the City may or may not rank in the same manner. However, the Michigan State University document allows City officials and department directors an opportunity to evaluate the criteria and decide if local change in practice or process is important.

What are knowledge economy jobs:

- Information Technology
- Computer Systems Design
- Software Developers
- Architects
- Engineers
- Management Professionals
- Life Sciences/Biosciences
- Scientific Research and Development
- Nanotechnology
- Education & Training
- Social Sciences
- Telecommunications
- Financial Services
- Health Care Professionals
- Data Processing
- Attorneys
- Alternative Energy Professionals
- Homeland Security Professionals
- Digital Media

- **Knowledge Jobs:** As knowledge and information continue to drive economic growth, providing knowledge jobs is increasingly critical to generating economic growth. FOLLOWER (46)
- **Digital Economy:** New technologies facilitate the increasingly rapid communication of ideas and exchange of information. Economic development relies on effective uses of such technology by citizens, governments, and businesses. CONTENDER (41)
- **Innovation Capacity:** In a knowledge economy, the ability of communities to transform new ideas into economic opportunities for new firms and skilled workers is critical to continued vitality. CONTENDER (31)
- **Globalization:** To be competitive in the new economy, cities and regions must operate in the global economy. LEADER (14)
- **Economic Dynamism:** In an environment marked by rapid changes, adaptation to a changing environment is crucial. Such adaptation is often evidenced by “churn” in the workforce, as new jobs replace old jobs in the economy, and new enterprises form and aging enterprises transform themselves. LAGGARD (63)

Leader = Ranks in top 20

Contender = Ranks between 21-40

Follower = Ranks between 41-60

Laggard = Ranks in the bottom 20

*** Ranking out of 83 total counties in Michigan*

Source: LaMore, Rex L., Melcher, John, Supanich-Goldner, Faron, and Kyle Wilkes. Michigan Knowledge Economy Index: A County-Level Assessment of Michigan's Knowledge Economy, Michigan State University, Office of University Outreach and Engagement, Center for Community and Economic Development, May 2007.

County Future Land Use Plan

The St. Clair County Master Plan describes a land use vision. However, due to the geographic size, a generalized approach is the preferred method of recording a vision. A local master plan will be more detailed in regards to attributing a land use to specific property. The future land use vision of the county master plan supports the City's future land use intent.

Applicable excerpts from the county master plan are reproduced below. St. Clair and other urban areas in the county are part of an "Urban and General Services" district. In addition, the downtown and core neighborhoods are shown as "Redevelopment and Renewal Area."

Urban and General Services District

The Urban and General Services District (UGSD) is along the eastern and southern shore and in inland communities of Adair, Allenton, Avoca, Berville, Capac, Goodells, Memphis, Rattle Run, and Yale. These are areas of existing higher residential, commercial, and in several cases industrial use densities. Investing in public infrastructure will lead to even higher densities capable of supporting infrastructure. With planned developments and proper provision of public services, the UGSD has more than sufficient land area to accommodate all of the residential, commercial, and industrial growth expected within St. Clair County between 2008 and 2030.

This Plan update incorporates a 10-year and 20-year development area within the UGSD. The new 10-year and 20-year boundaries closely approximates the differences between existing water and sewer service areas and planned water and sewer service areas. By directing growth toward this district, we can preserve the rural character and agricultural quality that exists in the northwest part of the county.

Redevelopment and Renewal Areas

Redevelopment and Renewal Areas are communities or parts of communities that, for any of several reasons, are in apparent decline. Development and Renewal Areas include neighborhoods with rundown houses, designated brownfields, and sites that may have contaminated soil due to previous industrial or commercial uses. Physical improvements and environmental clean-up are recommended for these areas.

Transportation and Circulation

Between 2007 and 2020, the major employment center within St. Clair County is expected to shift from the Port Huron/Marysville area to the southern part of the county. However, the primary residential centers will remain in Port Huron and Marysville. Therefore, a public transportation corridor will be desirable, if not necessary, to help people travel from their homes to places of employment and to regional shipping and educational centers. Buses would likely be the primary public vehicles on this corridor, but other forms of public or non-motorized transportation could also be possible.

Applicable Recommendations:

- *Direct residential, commercial, and industrial growth to the Urban and General Services District.*
- *Provide and extend a full-range of public services, including water and sewer lines, in a managed, phased, and incremental manner as populations increase in the Urban and General Services Districts.*

Applicable Recommendations:

- *Direct public funding and create legislation to improve and revitalize redevelopment and renewal Areas.*
- *Encourage home improvement, Brownfield restoration, and site cleanup projects within Redevelopment and Renewal Areas.*

Public Facilities and Services

Public facilities and services are those buildings, land, equipment, and activities owned and operated by the public for the benefit of the community. They include schools, parks and recreation facilities, water and wastewater systems, and other facilities such as the library, police stations, fire stations, and government buildings (Figure 7).

The City of St. Clair is served by the East China School District which operates a High School and Middle School located just outside City limits in St. Clair Township. Two elementary schools are included within City boundaries. City residents are well-served by existing schools and this is not expected to change since the school-aged population is anticipated to remain fairly stable.

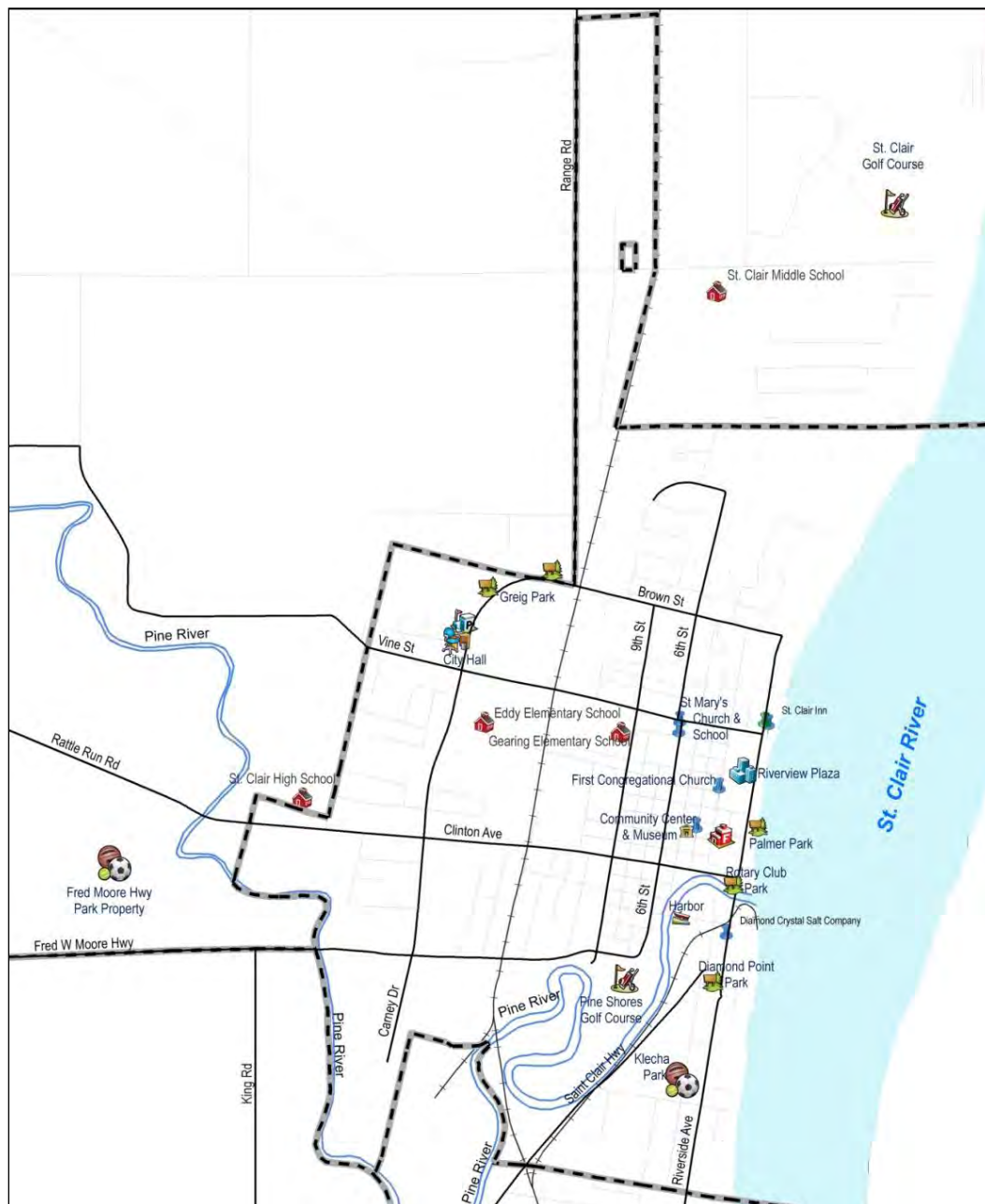
The City's park system encompasses 210 acres of park land which extends outside City limits into St. Clair Township. It also includes almost 2 miles of a paved multi-use pathway along Carney Drive and Fred Moore Highway. This is part of the Bridge to Bay Trail regional network of planned greenways for St. Clair County. Connecting these facilities into a continuous interconnected system of greenways and open spaces is an important priority for St. Clair. While recreation programming has kept pace with residents' recreation needs, the demand for a family aquatic facility is not being met by the current municipal pool and will need to be considered in the future.

Providing a clean potable water supply and disposing of storm water and sanitary sewage are major responsibilities of the City. The community water filtration plant has extra capacity to serve the City's current and future needs. A large elevated water tank is needed in the City's north end to increase pressure. In addition, the water distribution system is in good condition. The treatment of sanitary sewage is adequate for a foreseeable future. Descriptions of capital improvements are described in the City Services Chapter.

The City's police and fire services are adequate to protect the City as currently developed. Expansion may be required if a partnership opportunity with a surrounding community takes place.

In addition, the City needs to move ahead in promoting methods of development and conservation that improve the long-term health of human and ecological systems. This should include sustainability efforts such as energy conservation, recycling, solid waste management, and environmentally sensitive building and development practices such as green buildings and low-impact development.

Figure 7. Community Facilities



Map prepared by the County of St. Clair Metropolitan Planning Commission

Public Engagement

Successful outcome of the planning process relied on the active participation of the community. A public outreach process established a solid foundation for enlisting community support and interest, and the shared commitment needed for development of the Community Comprehensive Plan.

Throughout the planning process, multiple opportunities for community interaction and input were provided. This was facilitated first and foremost by the broad based representation of Planning Commission members. Two major events took place: a neighborhood walk on November 6, 2010, and a public open house on May 11, 2011.

Neighborhood Walk

The public was given an opportunity to walk through neighborhoods, take photographs, and record observations. Small groups were assigned specific neighborhoods or geographic areas of the City to tour. Information provided foundation for the future land use and the goals and objectives.

Some of the major observations included the lack of sidewalk continuity, well-used sidewalks, vast differences in home and property maintenance, and a need to control blights and outdoor storage.

Public Open House

Residents were invited to attend a public open house on May 11, 2011. A notice was published in the local newspaper, and flyers were posted at several locations as well as on the City's website. The meeting was held at City Hall and attracted over 30 participants.



Attendees were asked to provide input and comments at five different stations. Planning Commission members and staff were present at each station to provide information and receive comments. The stations focused on the following:

1. Neighborhoods
2. Parks, Open Space, and Recreation
3. Economic Development
4. City Services
5. General.

In summary, comments regarding **Neighborhoods** focused on a need for increasing housing types including single-family homes, handicapped housing, co-housing, and condominiums. The creation of an historic district with incentives and guidelines for restoration is desired. In addition, residential neighborhoods should provide common park area, paved streets, sidewalks, street trees, and encourage well-maintained yards. Code enforcement is recognized as a way to maintain neighborhoods.

Suggestions regarding **Parks, Open Spaces, and Paths** included developing new park facilities such as a children's discovery garden, soccer fields, a pier, splash park, indoor/outdoor swimming pool, outdoor skating rink, a sledding hill, and a community recreation center with pool, gym, and fitness facilities. The redevelopment of Pine Shores Golf Course was also recommended with year-round activities such as cross-country skiing, a lodge with fireplace, and fitness facility. The development of design guidelines for parks and public spaces was suggested to bring cohesion to the appearance of City parks, neighborhoods, and districts. Additional ideas included the continuation of multi-use pathways, particularly the connections along Brown Street and from Fred Moore Highway to the new City park property. Establishing bike lanes on major City streets is also desired to serve those who use bicycles for transportation as opposed to recreation. Working with adjacent communities and schools to continue successful partnership is also seen as important.

The **Economic Development** station brought comments regarding the desire for promoting a pedestrian friendly downtown environment with the redevelopment of M-29. Neighborhood commercial uses such as grocery stores were noted as desired. Suggestions were also made to develop design guidelines for the Downtown that would guide the selection of streetscape, street banners, pedestrian amenities, and other features, and bring cohesion to the appearance of the City's Downtown and commercial nodes.

Additional street, sidewalk, and pathway connections, repair, and maintenance were noted for the **City Services** station along with making use of non-dedicated City rights-of-way such as a north-south segment west of the railroad line from Vine to Clinton Avenues. Arts, history, and culture should be the focus of the City of St. Clair.



Land Use

Smart Growth America, a national non-profit organization promoting strong neighborhoods, set forth 10 tenets for creating great places, although many organizations promote similar lists. St. Clair has engaged in many of these tenets:

1. *Range of housing opportunities and choices*
2. *Walkable neighborhoods*
3. *Open stakeholder collaboration in development decisions*
4. *Distinctive and attractive communities*
5. *Predictable, fair, and cost-effective development decisions*
6. *Integrated mix of land uses*
7. *Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas*
8. *Variety of transportation options*
9. *Direct development towards existing communities*
10. *Compact building design*

The ways a community utilizes land should be a reflection of the values and goals of that community. Often times this is not the case. An existing land use inventory is the first step in determining which uses are in concert with community values and goals. It provides a record of how land areas are used to help in evaluating strengths, needs, and future development patterns.

Land use policy shapes the urban form, creating memorable places and amenities that help compete for businesses and residents. A community should be poised with a strategy to react to planned and unplanned changes in land use due to natural or man-made disasters, economic changes, or other events.

The land use strategy of this Plan starts with maintaining the existing assets that attract families and a strong workforce. These assets are the neighborhoods, schools, parks, businesses, volunteer organizations, and City services. They are in very good condition and simply need maintenance and continued commitment from the elected and appointed officials to consider different viewpoints. For businesses, this commitment includes assisting entrepreneurs and business types not seen to date. For neighborhoods, it is inspection, code enforcement, and maintaining strong customer service at the counter. It is not a glamorous strategy but a vital one.

Effective actions, cost, and service delivery are vital. Exploring creative partnerships with cities, townships, St. Clair County, non-profit groups, and the schools is one method. A second action is initiating a marketing and promotional campaign.

Another follow-up action is to plan in greater detail for high-impact redevelopment sites. This is a longer-range endeavor but one that needs to have early community support. Downtown, the Pine River/Fred Moore Highway frontage, and the mixed-use node at Clinton and Whiting streets are the most apparent target areas.

Existing Land Use and Community Assets

The predominant land use in St. Clair is single-family residential land uses. It comprises almost half of the City's land area at 50 percent according to 2008 SEMCOG data. Multi-family homes make up another 2 percent. Industrial, commercial, and government/institutional land uses amount to 29 percent of the City's land area. Finally, park, recreation, and open space along with transportation, communication, and utility as well as water, make up the balance of the land uses (17%). According to SEMCOG, a small amount of land is still dedicated to agriculture (2%).

Table 4 and Figure 8 present and depict the existing land use of the City of St. Clair.

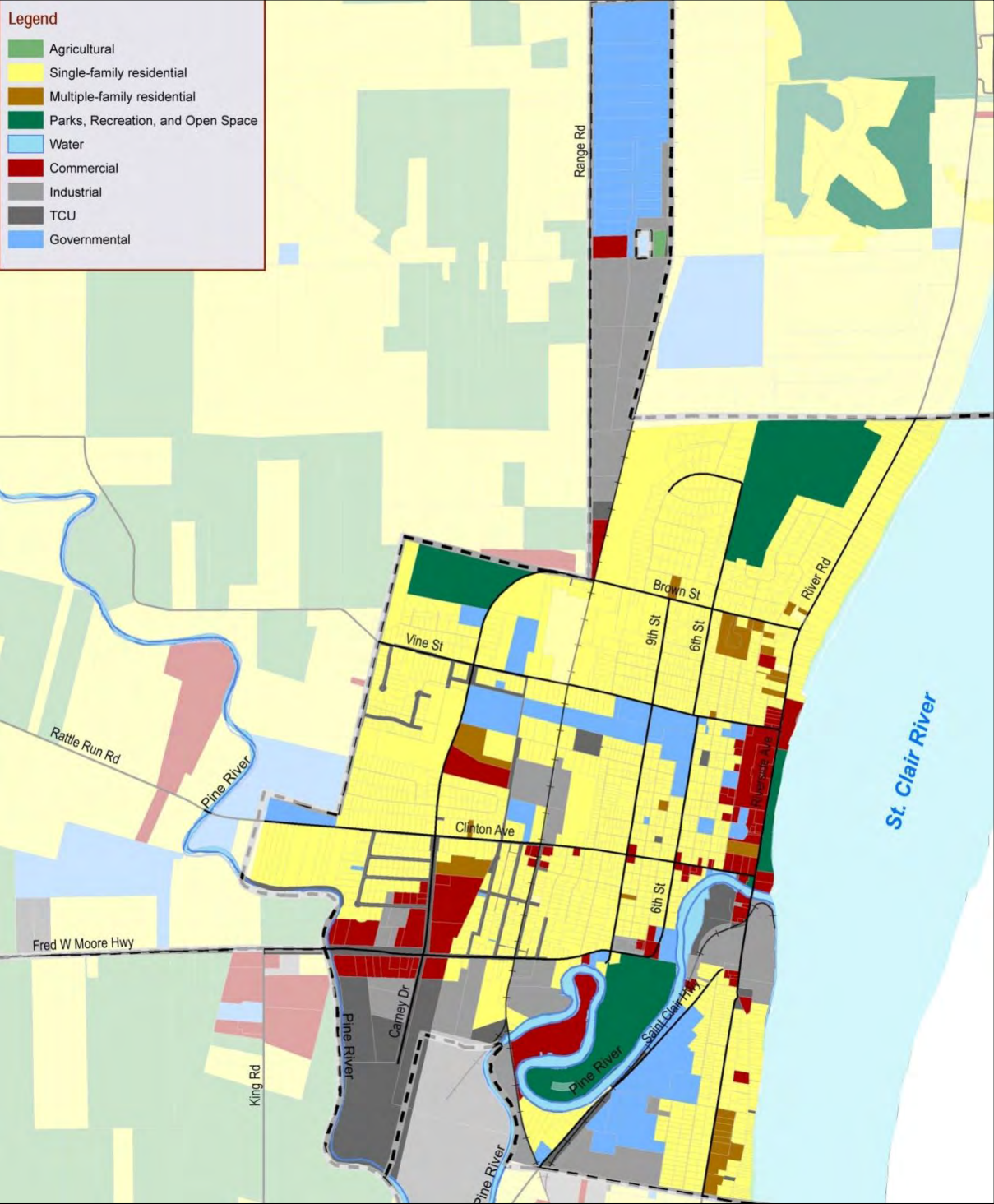
Table 4. City of St. Clair 2008 Land Use Acreage

	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	2	0.1%
Single-Family Residential	934	49.6%
Multi-Family Residential	38	2.0%
Commercial	125	6.7%
Industrial	197	10.5%
Government/Institutional	224	11.9%
Park, Recreation, and Open Space	155	8.2%
Transportation, Communication, and Utility	166	8.8%
Water	41	2.2%
Total	1,882	100.0%

Source: SEMCOG



Figure 8. 2008 Land Use



Map prepared by the County of St. Clair Metropolitan Planning Commission

The City of St. Clair's assets are the residential neighborhoods, local businesses, cultural amenities, the St. Clair and Pine rivers, the downtown and the St. Clair Inn, and its close proximity to Ontario, Canada. Opportunities abound to stimulate redevelopment, reuse vacant buildings and properties, and prepare for future populations. A comprehensive strategy for promoting these assets is a primary goal of this Plan.



The City is a community of many outstanding residential neighborhoods with well-maintained homes and properties. The diversity of architectural styles, many of which are historic, is a resource along with mature tree-lined streets with sidewalks. The residents inhabiting these homes come from a mix of backgrounds, which contributes to the interesting flavor of the City.

Stores, shops, offices, industries, and manufactures are found in many sizes and locations. The Downtown was once as walkable grid pattern of stores and shops. It was transformed in the 1960's with construction of the Riverview Plaza shopping mall. The St. Clair Inn, north of the downtown, provided a destination for tourists and visitors for decades. Its regional appeal has waned but committed reinvestment can restore the original luster.

A concentration of businesses emphasizing drivable shopping is centered at the intersection of Fred Moore Highway and Carney Drive. Single businesses or modest concentrations of businesses are also located within neighborhoods and service local needs.

The massive Cargill salt operation is a long-standing stalwart that employs many workers, is reinvesting in its plant, occupies both St. Clair and Pine River frontages, and is a dominant visual feature. BP Dome Petroleum Corporation has a natural gas liquid storage facility occupying a large property in the southwest corner of the City. A large and linear protrusion of City also extends along Range Road north into St. Clair Township. It is occupied by industry but also retains significant vacant land prime for industrial development.



The St. Clair and Pine Rivers are two of the greatest City assets. These waterways gave St. Clair its origins as a water transportation center. The St. Clair River is lined with the Downtown, Palmer Park, St. Clair Inn, Cargill Salt plant, and several large homes. The Pine River frontage has the public golf course, marinas, the south edge of the Downtown, and opportunity for redevelopment.



The City has many other attributes. It has a rich history and a solid reputation as a destination to live in, work in, or visit. A regional bike path along N. Carney Drive has been constructed with plans to connect the system through parks, neighborhoods, commercial areas, and the region. The East China school district provides a magnet for families. The City and the schools partner for the use of facilities and programs that enable more participants and cost efficiency. An art society, beautification commission, athletic groups, historical society, chamber of commerce, and many other volunteer and philanthropic organizations flourish.

The government is responsive. It looks for new ways to conduct business and has engaged in a land transference agreement with St. Clair Township to jointly seek development of new industry. This attitude is the leadership needed to allow the City and surrounding communities to prosper as a whole.



Future Land Use Goals

The City of St. Clair has experienced changes in land use since the 1995 Community Comprehensive Plan:

- New homes have been constructed in the N. Carney Drive vicinity;
- Downtown businesses have reinvigorated and created a redevelopment vision, new zoning district, and is home to exciting events and public art;
- The St. Clair school district has consolidated with East China schools;
- The population is aging; and
- The economy has shifted from a manufacturing to knowledge base.

The City is resilient and has grown as a high-quality place to live, shop, and work. This Plan recognizes that St. Clair never has had a single land use; it is a “place” that will continue to be a home for residents and businesses alike. It intends to retain the delicate balance between alternative forms of new development and maintaining single-family residential neighborhoods that are its foundation.

Goal 1: Preserve the viability and character of existing neighborhoods.

The residential neighborhoods are a key link in maintaining St. Clair’s social and economic health. The diversity of housing types and sizes, interesting architectural features, tree-lined streets and sidewalks are found in most of the City. Challenges are present. Continual upkeep and the financial ability to do so present the greatest threats. Another item worthy of consideration is the design of infill homes. The following actions are recommended to support Goal 1:

- Stimulate greater care in home maintenance and improvement through the availability of design guidelines and educational materials.
- Program appropriate street lighting, reforestation and other physical improvements into the City’s Capital Improvement Plan.
- Maintain a housing registration and inspection program.
- Enforce building codes and blight ordinances.
- Adopt design standards for infill development.
- Connect the sidewalk/path system.

Goal 2: Provide sufficient housing alternatives for future populations.

Projections indicate that the preference for rental housing will increase. Young adults are mobile and job locations are often moved in the global economy. Active mature adults no longer with children in the house are selecting to lessen the maintenance costs and responsibilities associated with a large home and property. The senior population is projected to increase to 25 percent of the City's population by 2035. The following actions are recommended:

- Permit moderate-density home ownership opportunities, such as pocket neighborhoods, cottage-style housing, and condominiums in strategic locations.
- Permit senior housing developments with independent, semi-dependent, and dependent care options to occupy a single site.
- Adopt Zoning Ordinance provisions that adapt to changing housing typologies.
- Adopt Zoning Ordinance provisions allowing the repurposing of non-residential vacant and underutilized buildings for residential living.

Goal 3: Provide for mixed-use developments in strategic locations.

The Community Comprehensive Plan allows mixed-use development in a planned, integrated manner. The intent is not to permit isolated development in these areas. The mixing of uses is not a new concept for St. Clair. Residential and business mixed uses are found on Third and Fourth streets, Clinton Avenue, and Fred Moore and St. Clair highways. They are intermittent and have occurred over time in an unintended fashion. They are often home conversions. Zoning regulations currently permit mixed-uses in the Downtown and on Fourth Street. The following actions are recommended:

- Allow and promote redevelopment in the Downtown area as a dense walkable destination of shops, offices, restaurants, and parks.
- Prepare more specific sub-area redevelopment studies for the Pine River frontage and Clinton Avenue corridor development focus areas.
- Consider artist studios or communities as acceptable parts of a mixed-use composite.

Goal 4: Limit proposed industrial and large-scale commercial development to properties currently zoned for such uses.

The City currently has vacant property available for manufacturing uses along the Range Road corridor. In contrast, industrial businesses have vacated and left unoccupied or underutilized buildings in the Fred Moore Highway corridor and north of the Pine River. General commercial uses should remain concentrated to the Downtown and Fred Moore Highway/Carney Drive areas. The following actions are recommended:

- Focus industrial development efforts to the Range Road corridor.
- Eliminate industrial zoning on properties fronting Fred Moore Highway as businesses vacate.
- Consider rezoning property to industrial or commercial districts only when proposed development cannot locate on appropriately zoned properties as mapped.

Goal 5: Provide a balanced mix of land uses promoting the values and lifestyles unique to St. Clair.

The future land use pattern provides a balance between preserving much of the current property usage while projecting a need for moderate-density mixed-use districts in strategic locations on the Pine River and Clinton Avenue. The future land use pattern is based on how neighborhoods and districts function as much as the type of uses occupying property. This integrated approach to development is preferred as the City meets the expected demand of workers in the knowledge-based economy. The following actions are recommended:

- Maintain and continually review the Community Comprehensive Plan.
- Use the future land use plan when considering Zoning Ordinance amendments, capital improvement projects, or the merits of a development proposal.
- Enact Zoning Ordinance revisions as identified in the zoning plan chapter.
- Seek public participation early in the process of preparing development plans and ordinance changes.

Future Land Use Plan

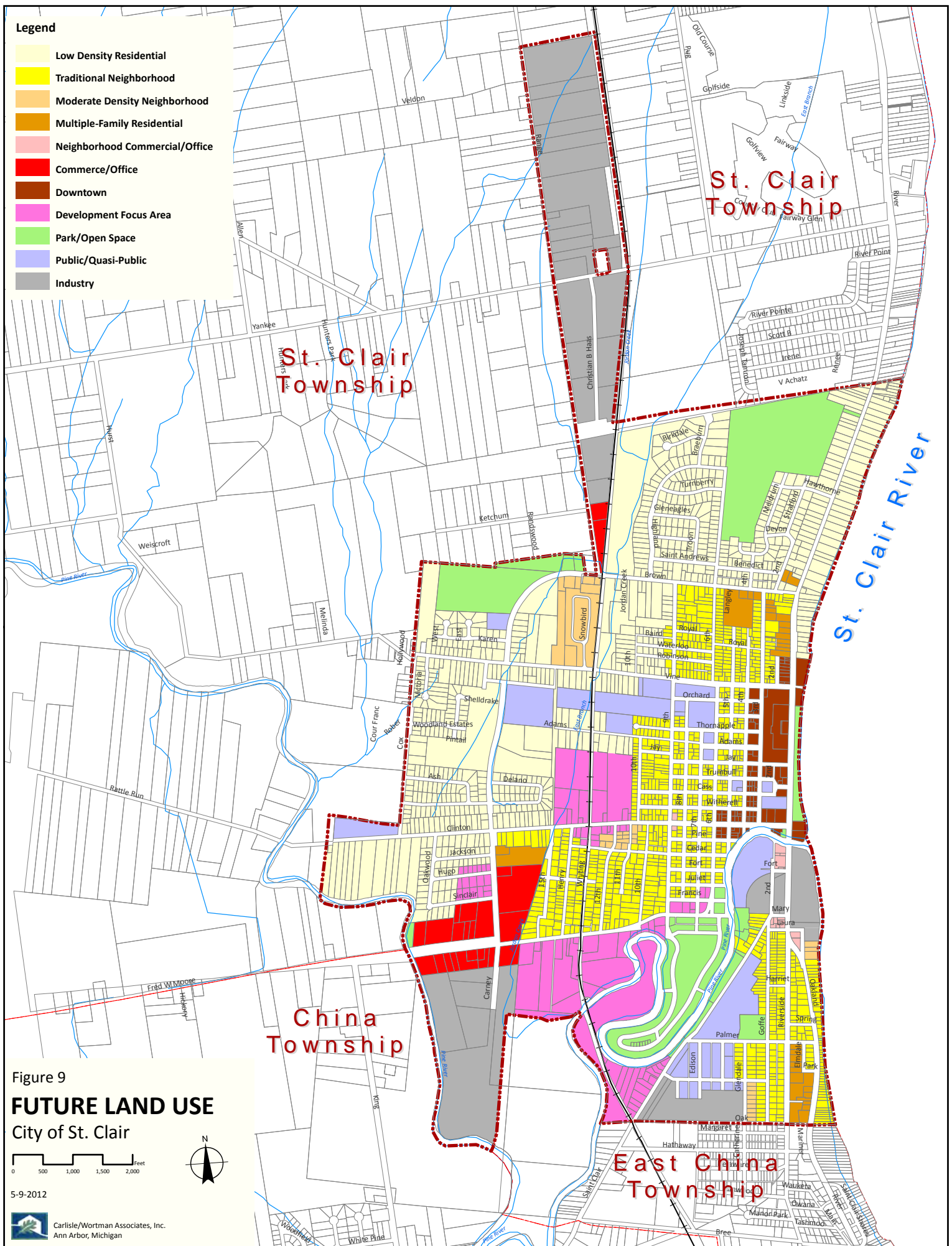
The Future Land Use Plan is just that, a plan, and one that requires regular review and updating. The Plan identifies areas not simply by land use, but as districts with emphasis on how it functions. Direct comparison between existing and future land use allocation is not possible with this approach. However, when planning for integration rather than segregation of uses, comparative acreages become less important.

Overall, the vision retains much of the land use pattern as it exists in 2011. Single-family neighborhoods remain as the physical and social anchor of the City. The Downtown continues as the regional destination focus. Commercial, office, and industrial areas do not expand, but the plan does not preclude expansion of existing businesses provided their impact on surrounding areas are minimized.

Changes in the pattern are also important to the vision. Land zoned for industry along Fred Moore Highway and Clinton Avenue is planned as mixed-use. Changes in these areas allow different uses to co-exist in a positive way such as a local business serving customers within a walkable distance.

Parks, sidewalks, paths, and street trees lend visual character, soften the environment, and enhance the neighborhoods. Rights-of-way are more than movers of vehicles. They act as park connectors and contribute as an informal social catalyst. A priority is the enhancement of Clinton Avenue as a “complete” street. It is an urban design spine connecting Downtown, several residential neighborhoods, a potential mixed-use node, regional path connector on N. Carney Drive, St. Clair High School, and the Fred Moore Highway park property.

Five land use categories emphasize residential neighborhoods. These include two single-family categories (Low Density Residential and Traditional Neighborhood), a two-family residential category (Moderate Density Neighborhood), a Multiple-Family Residential category, the Downtown district, and a mixed-use category (Development Focus Area). Commerce, office, industry, parks, and public uses have descriptions pertaining to their specific intents. The following land use map and description provide the location and details of each planned future land use designations.



Low Density Residential Neighborhood

Location: Low-density residential neighborhoods are located north of Brown Street, along Riverside Avenue north of Downtown, and west of the rail line.

Existing Development Pattern: The styles of existing homes are varied with ranches, bungalows, and two-story structures. The lots are generally greater in area than in the Traditional Neighborhoods. Sidewalks are often lacking. These neighborhoods are served by the non-motorized multi-use path along N. Carney Drive and Brown Street. City hall, police station, and the St. Clair High School are located in this area. Isolated small apartment complexes or attached single-family townhomes are mixed in with the neighborhoods.

Land Use Intent: The intent of this category is maintaining the low density detached single-family development pattern. Multiple-family housing should be constrained to existing locations. Churches, schools, and public facilities typically found in these areas are allowable but should be constrained to areas offering thoroughfare or collector street frontages. Features found in the majority of St. Clair homes such as prominent front entries and porches, street trees, and internal and external sidewalks are important and should be encouraged.

Planning Considerations

- Adopt design and performance criteria for development proposals involving reuse of church sites, attached single-family, and multiple-family residential uses.
- Connect missing sidewalks at the time of development or through the City Capital Improvement Plan.
- Allow neighborhood convenience stores but strictly regulate impact on surrounding properties.
- Maintain dimensional requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Adopt requirements to include a community park or open space within large-scale development.
- Adopt design standards for infill and conversion construction.
- Include right-of-way maintenance for walks and street tree plantings in the Capital Improvement Plan.
- Connect new development to adjacent neighborhoods through the use of bike/walkways and streets.



Traditional Single-family Neighborhood

Location: Traditional single-family neighborhoods are located in the Old Town and Oakland neighborhoods. The Old Town neighborhood is bounded by Brown Street, Fourth Street, Fred Moore Highway, and the rail line, and extends west of the rail line between Clinton Avenue and Fred Moore Highway. The Oakland neighborhood, south of the Pine River, is located between St. Clair Highway, Goffe Street, Glendale Street, the City southern limits, and the St. Clair River.



Existing Development Pattern: These neighborhoods are primarily characterized by detached single-family residences on modest sized lots (averaging 50' X 120') but lot sizes fluctuate. The street pattern is primarily a rectilinear grid. They accommodate a range of housing styles: one-story ranches, 1-1/2 story bungalows, two-story colonial and farmhouse styles, as well as a host of other architectural types. A common theme is the use of prominent front entries with porches or stoops, sidewalks, street trees, and detached rear yard garages. Several schools and churches are part of the traditional neighborhoods.

Land Use Intent: Traditional neighborhoods should continue to function with detached single-family residences in a grid street pattern. New residential development should front public streets, create a grid street pattern, and include sidewalks linking to the City-wide bike/walkway system. Schools, churches, and parks are acceptable, provided design and performance planning criteria are considered. Conversion of the ground level floors of large historic homes to professional office uses may be considered in keeping with design standards. Conversion of large homes to more than two living units is not acceptable. Construction of two-family and multiple-family residences is also not acceptable. Public parks, either individually or as part of a school property, are important enhancements and should remain.

Planning Considerations:

- Adopt performance planning and design criteria for development proposals involving reuse of church sites, and large home conversion and infill construction.
- Connect missing sidewalks at time of development or through the City Capital Improvement Plan.
- Maintain dimensional requirements set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Adopt requirements to include a community park or open space within large-scale development.
- Include right-of-way maintenance for sidewalks and street tree plantings in the Capital Improvement Plan.
- Connect new development to adjacent neighborhoods with walkways and streets.

Moderate Density Residential Neighborhood

Location: Moderate density residential designations are concentrated in two locations:

- In a irregular area generally bounded by 11th, Cedar, and Whiting streets, and Clinton Avenue; and
- Glendale Street near Oak Street at the City's south end.

Existing Development Pattern: This neighborhood partners with the traditional neighborhood as the core of the community. The housing scale and character is similar to the Traditional Neighborhoods but home conversions to two- and three-family structures are more prevalent. The primary street pattern is a rectilinear grid street pattern. A common theme is the use of prominent front entries with porches or stoops, sidewalks, street trees and detached rear yard garages.

Land Use Intent: Neighborhoods continue to function with detached single-family residences. The classic grid street pattern with sidewalks is preferred. New residential development is encouraged to front existing public streets, create an internal grid street pattern and install walkable sidewalks linking to the public system. Schools, churches, parks and home conversions are acceptable provided design considerations are considered. Conversion of large homes to more than two living units is not preferred.

Planning Considerations:

- Adopt design and performance criteria for conversion of single-family homes.
- Connect missing public sidewalks at the time of development or as part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan.
- Dimensional requirements as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance remain valid.
- Adopt design standards for infill and conversion construction.

Multi-Family Residential Use

Location: Multiple-family complexes are scattered throughout the City. They are located on Riverside Drive, Brown Street, Carney Drive, Vine Street and Oakland Street. A mid-rise public senior housing building is on Third Street in the downtown area. Some of the large older single-family homes in the neighborhood west of downtown have been converted to three or four units.

Existing Development Pattern: The primary pattern is low-rise one or two story structures. The two-story units are of style commonly known as garden apartments where a single entry provides access to four to eight apartments. The one-story complexes have an individual front door for each unit.

Land Use Intent: New multiple-family development is confined to areas currently zoned for multiple-family. Expansion of multiple-family housing will be permitted but strictly regulated in the Downtown Redevelopment Zoning District or in the Clinton Street or Pine River Development Target areas following the specific criteria. Existing apartment communities should maintain their structures and property. Planning considerations are as follows.

Planning Considerations:

- Traffic generated by any multiple-family use will not negatively impact single-family neighborhoods.
- A framework for site and building design criteria should be developed and followed.

Downtown

Location: The Downtown is bounded by the St. Clair River, Pine River, Fred Moore Highway, Sixth, Witherell, Fourth, and Vine streets, and includes the St. Clair Inn property. This area generally correlates to the Zoning Ordinance Downtown Redevelopment District.

Existing Development Pattern: St. Clair's Downtown has evolved into a suburban pattern of semi-isolated buildings and land uses since the 1970's. Prior to 1970, the building pattern included shoulder to shoulder structures housing a range of retail businesses. The periphery of the Downtown still embodies remnants the pre-1970's pattern. The building height does not exceed two stories except for the St. Clair Inn and the Third Street churches. The street pattern remains in the typical grid pattern except for the shopping mall superblock. Three park, library, senior housing tower, and fire station are the public facilities. The U.S. Post Office is expected to relocate outside of downtown.

Land Use Intent: The intent is to promote and support the Downtown as a regional destination for shopping, arts, events, commerce, and housing. A form-sensitive district permitting a tightly woven network of buildings, sidewalks, and a flexible fabric of mixed land uses is important. Uses that are isolated and do not promote social interactions, as well as drive-through windows and vehicle-dominated customer businesses are discouraged. The Downtown Redevelopment Zoning District places regulations that meet this intent.

Planning Considerations:

- Follow building and site design criteria established in the Downtown Redevelopment District.
- Encourage public art.
- Permit on-street parking.
- Redesign Riverside Avenue (M-29) as a complete street with convenient and safe access between the Downtown buildings and Palmer Park.
- Discourage drive-through windows or vehicle-dominated businesses.



Development Focus Area

Location: Three areas are specifically planned as redevelopment areas:

- The Pine River area located south of Fred Moore and north of St. Clair highways,
- A central area at the intersection of Clinton Avenue, and
- A small group of undeveloped parcels focused on the unimproved Hugo Street between Jackson Street, N. Carney Drive, and Sinclair Street.



Existing Development Pattern: The Pine River and Clinton Avenue areas exhibit a pre-existing mix of uses, large vacant or underutilized parcels of land, river or creek frontage, the ability to knit the Downtown to Carney Drive, and the ability to use planned development design criteria to a full extent.

The south shore of the Pine River area includes a marina, active rail line, private boathouses, residences, and a lodge. It has an industrial image with the marina operations and the rail line. Single-family homes front St. Clair Highway. The north shore of the Pine River is bordered and accessed by Fred Moore Highway and includes Pine Shores Golf Course, light industries, a private school, a barge operation, offices, and scattered residences. Many industries are currently vacant.



The Clinton Avenue corridor has a concentration of commercial and industrial uses near the intersection with the rail line. These uses are modest in scale with buildings not exceeding two stories in height. Large vacant parcels are located north of Clinton Avenue.

The Hugo Street area includes vacant properties that are surrounded by commercial and office uses facing Sinclair Street and Carney Drive. Single-family homes are to the north facing Jackson Street and to the west.

Land Use Intent (Pine River and Clinton Avenue): The intent of these areas is to create a vibrant, high quality environment of detached single-family, attached single-family, or low-density multiple-family homes. Local businesses targeting nearby residents and businesses as customers are acceptable. Businesses competing with the downtown or the Carney Drive commerce are not acceptable. Public access to the Pine River should be provided by new development.

Planning Considerations (Pine River and Clinton Avenue):

- Encourage a mixed-use environment with a range of housing types and local businesses.
- Use walks and landscaping to improve public connectivity and enhance the mixed use areas.
- Allow flexibility with vacant building reuse provided impacts are not experienced in the surrounding areas.
- Adhere to screening and performance criteria for sites in near proximity to residences.
- Allow of maximum of three stories for building height.
- Develop guidelines and performance standards, including 'green' building techniques.
- Adopt a complete streets ordinance and attempt to secure enhancement grants for establishing trees and walks.
- Encourage eco-friendly site design practice.
- Reserve the Pine River riverfront for public access.
- Create a sub-area concept plan for the Pine River mixed use area to understand the extent of the flood plain and other sensitive natural areas, property ownership, preferred density and to stimulate development interest.
- Consider alternative types of small scale business uses, including community gardens, for the industrial property when the redevelopment opportunity presents itself. Any use should serve the surrounding neighborhoods and not compete with the Downtown or the Fred Moore Highway/Carney Drive business area. The extent of soil contamination is a consideration.
- Create a sub-area concept plan for the Clinton Avenue corridor as a residential community of mixed-housing types. Design should encourage residents with an active lifestyle with pedestrian connection to the City-wide bike/walkway system. Alternative types of housing including cottage style homes should be considered.

Land Use Intent (Hugo Street): The intent of the Hugo Street Development Focus Area is to allow off-street parking for Sinclair Street offices, single-family homes, or be left in a natural state as a park or open space. Planning considerations should meet the design standards outlined in the City Design Chapter.

Commerce and Office

Location: Commercial and office uses are located throughout the City, including the areas designated as Downtown or mixed-use. The greatest concentration outside of Downtown is centered on the Fred Moore Highway and Carney Drive intersection. Smaller concentrations are found on Clinton Avenue and Riverside Avenue south of the Pine River.

Existing Land Use Pattern: Overall, commercial uses throughout the City are one-story in height and have large parking lots serving the motorized customer. Local businesses serving neighborhoods are scattered on Clinton Avenue, Fred Moore Highway, Third Street, and South Riverside Avenue.

Land Use Intent: Businesses serving a large portion of customer base from surrounding communities concentrate on Fred Moore Highway, adjacent Carney Drive, and the triangular land area on Range Road at Brown Street. Businesses in other locations should primarily meet the needs of adjacent neighborhoods or businesses. Businesses in the Downtown and Mixed-Use districts follow the intents of those specific land use designations. Industry is phased out.

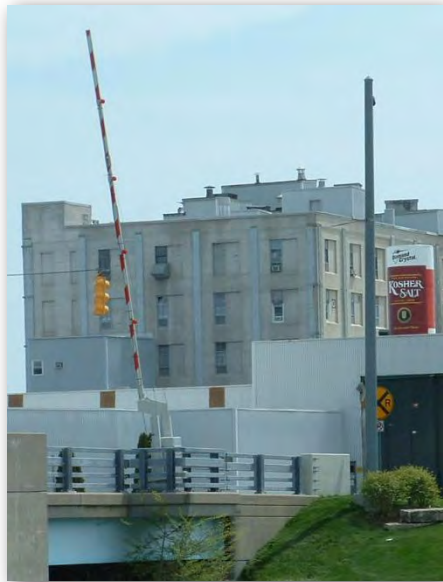
Planning Considerations:

- Incorporate design and access management standards as code.
- Encourage eco-friendly site design practice.
- Adhere to screening and performance criteria for sites in near proximity to residences and mixed-use districts.



Industry

Location: Industrial land uses are located throughout the City. Cargill Salt is on the St. Clair Riverfront (Pine River Mixed-Use District). BP Dome Petroleum Corporation and other industry occupy a large area on the south at the end of Carney Drive. Biewer Lumber is located on St. Clair Highway and Oak Street adjacent to East China Township. The Range Road corridor is a northern extension of City dedicated to industrial uses. Isolated industrial businesses are also located on Fred Moore Highway and Clinton Avenue.



Existing Development Pattern: Cargill Salt (S. Riverside Drive), Biewer Lumber (Oak Street), and BP Dome Petroleum (S. Carney Drive) are large single-use sites. These uses have been operating for decades. The Range Road corridor is the focus for more recent industrial development. Modest sized industrial businesses are found on Fred Moore Highway and Clinton Avenue with a noticeable number of building vacancies on Fred Moore Highway east of Carney Drive.

Land Use Intent: The intent is to continue industrial uses on property as they exist. Retaining existing businesses is imperative for economic and work force development. New industry should occupy the Range Road corridor. Industry along Fred Moore Highway and Clinton Avenue should be phased out unless a commercial or artistic component is a key part of the business. Adherence to performance criteria is crucial due to the close proximity of residences.

Planning Considerations:

- Adhere to screening and performance criteria for sites in near proximity to residences and business nodes.
- Eliminate or strictly curtail industrial truck traffic through residential neighborhoods and mixed-use areas.
- Encourage eco-friendly site design practice.
- Consider alternative types of uses on the existing Fred Moore Highway and Clinton Avenue industrial sites that combine retail, service, or artistic uses and follow strict performance standards.

Parks and Open Space

Location: Parks and open spaces are located throughout the City. The Community Comprehensive Plan also includes long-range planning for the Fred Moore Highway park property located west of the City in St. Clair Township.

Existing Development Pattern: The parks and open spaces as shown include Greig Park, Alice W. Moore Woods Nature Sanctuary, Pine Shores Golf Course, Palmer Park, Klecha Park, Rotary Club Park, Diamond Point Park, and open shore along the Pine River. As important but not explicitly shown, the Fred Moore Highway park property west of the City in St. Clair Township, the multi-use pathway system, and play areas provided by the schools are other integral parts of the park and open space system.

Land Use Intent: Parks and open spaces remain unchanged as mapped. However, the Community Comprehensive Plan promotes park expansion and the inclusion of dedicated public and private open spaces in new residential developments. The Pine River mixed-use area encourages development of a continuous linear park and nature area along the Pine River shore. The goals and actions adopted in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan are incorporated into this plan.

Planning Considerations:

- Use the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan as a guide for land use decisions.
- Connect parks, open spaces, and multi-use bike/walkways into an interconnected system.
- Require community open spaces or gathering places such as plazas as part of residential development proposals.
- Require development along the Pine River to dedicate the river frontage as a public linear park.



Public and Quasi-Public

Location: Public and quasi-public uses are located throughout the City.

Existing Development Pattern: City buildings, utilities, schools, churches and Hillside Cemetery are captured in this category of uses. In general, a concentration of public facilities, schools, and churches occurs in the core of the City south of Vine Street. City offices, recreation rooms, and police station are located on Carney Drive. St. Clair High School is on Clinton Avenue west of Carney, and the DPS office and yard are located on Palmer Street at St. Clair Highway.

Land Use Intent: Schools, religious, and civic uses are important to St. Clair. They contribute to the quality of life. Some public uses, such as the DPS facilities and water plant, City storage yards and others, may not directly support neighborhood or business development, but are essential. The land use intent is to continue as currently exist but use design and performance considerations when expansion or new locations are proposed.

Planning Considerations:

- Reuse or conversion of these sites must consider the surrounding land use context.
- Reuse of a school or religious facility in a single-family neighborhood continues as exists or converted to a residential community with a similar density, scale, and visual character.
- Public policy and design criteria guide development of traffic, building scale and density, and yard privacy.



Transportation and Circulation

A safe and efficient vehicle and pedestrian circulation system is essential to commerce and daily activities and a major consideration in the City's development. The transportation network of streets, rail, and sidewalks is the City's lifeblood.

Land use patterns are important to the size and use of adjacent streets. It has a significant effect on trip generation and travel behavior. Compact, mixed-use and walkable developments mitigate traffic generation and thoroughfare impacts by shortening trip distances, capturing a greater share of trips internally, and facilitating transit and non-motorized trip-making.

The transportation and circulation chapter of this master plan:

- Serves as a reference guide regarding the transportation system within the City;
- Sets a vision for future motorized and non-motorized transportation needs within the City;
- Promotes a better understanding of the strong relationship between transportation and land development patterns and how planning can be better integrated; and
- Identifies opportunities for change, including better management of parking, access management techniques, traffic counts, and creating corridor improvement authorities.



Existing Transportation System

Approximately 34 miles of public road and two bridges are located in the City of St. Clair. Fred Moore Highway provides a link to I-94 and to the City of Richmond. Local residents are able to access the Greater Detroit Metropolitan Area by traveling west on Interstate 94. Nearby cities of Marysville and Port Huron to the north and Marine City to the south are connected by Riverside Avenue/River Road (M-29). Within St. Clair, M-29 has a drawbridge connecting the north and south sides of the Pine River.

Rail and water are also important to moving people and goods. An active rail line travels through the City and connects to the BP Dome Petroleum liquid natural gas storage and distribution operation and continues south to the St. Clair power station. A deep water port on the St. Clair River owned by Cargill Salt Company can dock freighters. The Pine River provides access to the City harbor and boat launch, a private marina, and a tug and barge operation. The Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron offers an entry point to Canada.

Administration and Funding

Administrative jurisdictions identify roads in terms of governmental responsibility for construction and maintenance. The two classifying jurisdictions that affect the St. Clair street system include the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Act 51 fund allotment and the federal government's National Functional Classification (NFC) system. These classifications determine eligibility for state funding and federal aid. Each classification system is used for a different purpose.

Act 51 of Public Acts of 1951 is a main source of funding for street repairs. Act 51 is administered by the State and serves as a funding tool for projects involving allocation of state taxes. It creates a depository fund for specific transportation taxes as placed on fuel and license plates. It prescribes the purpose for how revenues are to be distributed. It establishes jurisdictional road networks including state/county roads and City/village streets, set priorities for the use of transportation revenues, and can guaranty repayment of bonding debt.

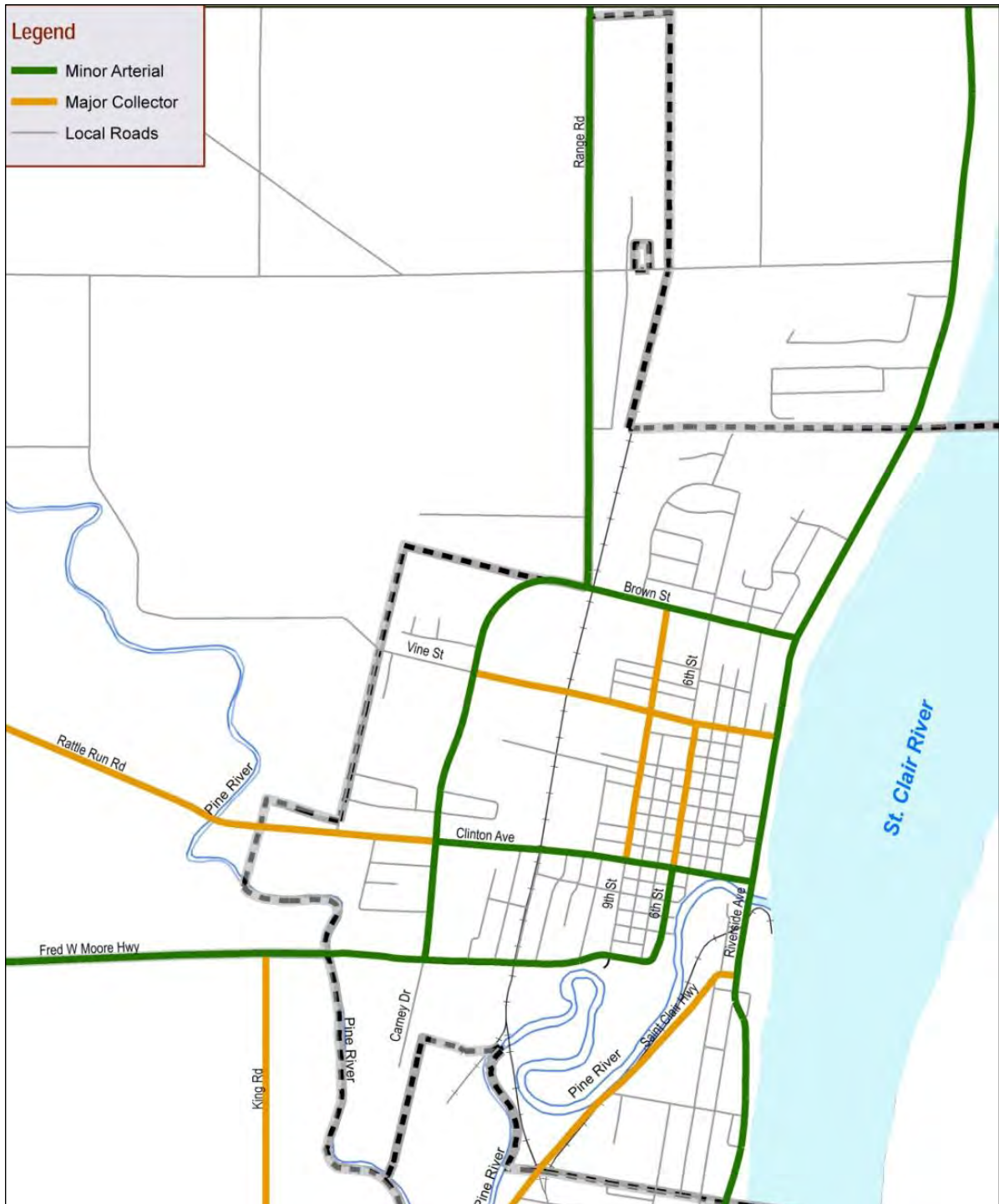
The NFC system is set by the federal government and is used for federal agency funding. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the NFC system of classifying all streets, roads, and highways according to their function in the late 1960's. As shown on Figure 10, road classifications in St. Clair include:

- Principal Arterials – These roads generally carry long distance, through-travel movements and provide access to important traffic generators, such as major airports or regional shopping centers. There are no principal arterials in St. Clair.
- Minor Arterials – These roads are similar in function to principal arterials but carry trips of shorter distance and of lesser traffic generation. Minor arterials in St. Clair include Riverside Avenue, Fred W. Moore Highway, Carney Drive, Range Road, Brown Street, 6th Street from Fred Moore Highway to Clinton Avenue, Clinton Avenue, and St. Clair Highway.
- Major Collectors – Major collector streets connect traffic from residential areas to arterials. These streets often provide more access to property. St. Clair's collector streets are Vine Street, 6th Street from Clinton Avenue to Vine Street, and 9th Street from Clinton Avenue to Brown Street.
- Local – These streets provide access to property. Streets not previously mentioned are classified as local roads for St. Clair.

MDOT is responsible for maintenance and improvements to M-29, Riverside Avenue. The St. Clair County Road Commission is responsible for maintenance and improvements to Range and Cox roads. The balance of roads is controlled and maintained by the City of St. Clair or are private roads or lanes.

According to SEMCOG's Regional Transportation Plan of 2035, one road reconstruction project is expected within the City: the reconstruction of St. Clair Highway from Palmer Street to Riverside Avenue in 2013 (RTP 6264, \$794,000).

Figure 10. National Functional Classification Map



Map prepared by the County of St. Clair Metropolitan Planning Commission

Traffic Volumes and Safety

SEMOG collects and provides traffic volume data. Based on the data, the City has limited traffic congestion except on days of special events. As depicted on Figure 11, the highest average daily traffic is found on Riverside Avenue with a volume of 12,191 and Fred Moore Highway (Carriage to King) at 11,560. Other high volume roads include Clinton Avenue (7,600), Range Road (7,880), and Brown Street (4,414).

Since 2005, 474 crashes have been reported. Of these, 84% have resulted in property only damage. The three intersections which received the most crashes include Clinton Avenue at Riverside Avenue North (36 crashes), Carney Drive South at Fred Moore Highway (25 crashes), and Carney Drive South at Clinton Avenue (24 crashes). They rank in the top 100 in frequency for St. Clair County. Table 5 indicates the number of crashes by road segment. Table 6 lists the crashes by severity.

Table 5. City of St. Clair Crashes

Local Rank	County Rank	Region Rank	Intersection	2005-09 Total	Annual Ave. 2005-09
1	31	2165	Clinton Ave @ Riverside Ave N	36	7.2
2	57	3442	Carney Dr S @ Fred Moore Hwy	25	5
3	64	3619	Carney Dr S @ Clinton Ave	24	4.8
4	107	5029	6th St S @ Clinton Ave	18	3.6
5	113	5334	Range Rd S @ Yankee Rd	17	3.4
6	197	7673	Brown St @ River Rd	12	2.4
7	239	9232	Clinton Ave @ Cox Rd	10	2
8	268	10225	Mary St @ Riverside Ave S	9	1.8
9	268	10225	Riverside Ave N @ Vine St	9	1.8
10	268	10225	Jay St @ Riverside Ave N	9	1.8

*Note: Intersections are ranked by the number of reported crashes, which does not take into account traffic volume. Crashes reported occurred within 150 feet of the intersection.

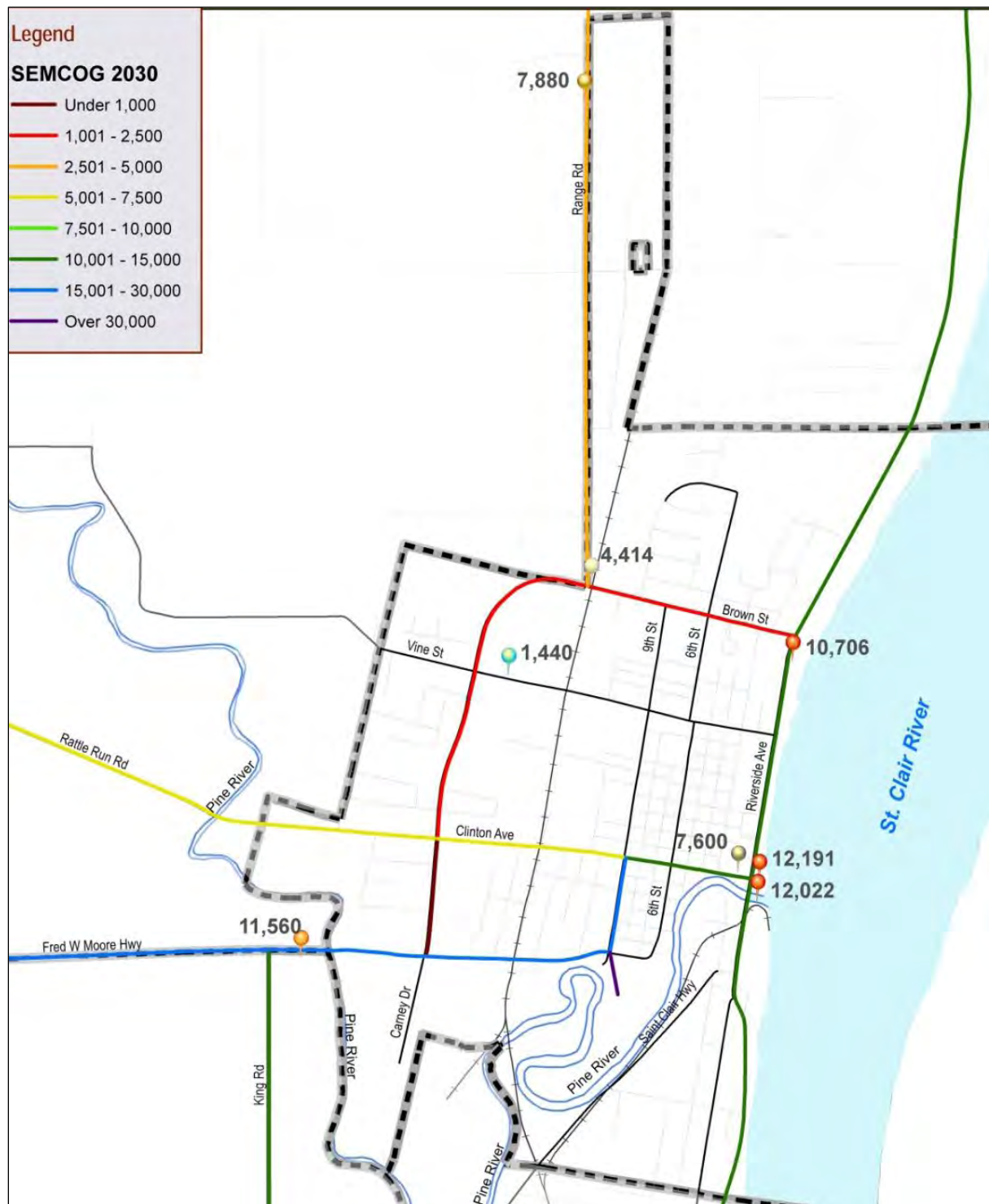
Source: SEMCOG Data

Table 6. Crash Severity

Crash Severity	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Average 2005-09
Fatal	1	0	1	0	0	0.40%
Incapacitating Injury	3	0	1	3	2	1.90%
Other Injury	13	16	9	15	11	13.50%
Property damage only	80	71	92	82	74	84.2%
Total Crashes	97	87	103	100	87	100%

Source: SEMCOG Data

Figure 11. Traffic Volumes and Crash Locations



Map prepared by the County of St. Clair Metropolitan Planning Commission

Other Modes of Transportation

An active rail line travels through the City. Public transit and water routes are also available.

Public Transit

Public transportation is available through the Blue Water Area Transit Commission. A stop is provided on Riverside Avenue at Jay Street for a route connecting Port Huron with a large retail center in Chesterfield Township. Southbound and northbound stops are scheduled on weekdays once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Airports

Passenger air travel is primarily provided by Detroit Wayne County Metropolitan Airport (70 miles) and Flint Bishop International Airport (80 miles). Both facilities also offer large scale air freight service.

The St. Clair County International Airport, the nearest airport (10 miles), offers corporate, general aviation, cargo and medivac/lifeline services. Marine City (private) and Romeo State Airports are other nearby facilities offering general aviation services.

Rail

Passenger rail is available via Amtrak stations in Port Huron, Pontiac, Birmingham, and Detroit. The Port Huron station is the nearest facility at 10 miles. Rail freight is provided by CSX Transportation, the rail line that runs from Port Huron through Marysville, St. Clair, and Marine City.

Water Routes

St. Clair was originally settled as a river town. The St. Clair River offered business and job opportunities as a port, water transportation, and shipbuilding center. The river continues to provide water transportation enterprises but none currently in the City. Passenger and freight access to Ontario, Canada is provided via ship ferry service to the south in Marine City. Farther south, passenger access via ship ferry to Walpole Island and Ontario is provided in Algonac. The Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron offers one of four primary entry points to Canada in Michigan. A deep water port capable of accommodating large freight ships is available at the Cargill Salt Business south of the Pine River.

Non-motorized Transportation

Sidewalks or pathways line many of the streets within the City. These provide safe and accessible ways to reach parks, local schools, business district and other community resources. The grid street pattern as it exists permits continuity for bicycle travel and walking in all directions.

Traffic Management Opportunities

Traffic and accident concerns can be mitigated through planning and design solutions. The potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles are an important consideration especially as St. Clair strives to build a connected bike/walkway system. Several opportunities for initiating safer movement are provided.

Basic design techniques used to achieve access management include:

- *Provision of a specialized road system that is designed and managed according to the function they intend to provide*
- *Direct access limitations to major roadways to preserve traffic function of higher volume roadways*
- *An hierarchy for intersections which reflect roadway hierarchy*
- *Traffic signals favoring through movements*
- *Reduction of conflict points among vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users*
- *Removal of turning vehicles from through traffic lanes*
- *Use of non-traversable medians to limit left-turn movements*

Access Management

Access management is a set of planning and design techniques to control access to a street system. Techniques include access drive placement, access design, intersections, crosswalks, signals, and roadway design. Many communities incorporate the techniques as a guideline plan or in their code of ordinances. Management of the street system benefits a community by:

- Reducing the number and severity of traffic crashes;
- Preserving traffic flow;
- Reducing traffic congestion;
- Preserving public investment in roads by reducing the need for additional lanes;
- Promoting or requiring safety improvement;
- Supporting community goals;
- Enhancing private land values; and
- Sustaining vibrant business districts.

Access management techniques are described in the sidebar.



Example of Access Management Techniques

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming is a method of encouraging drivers to decrease speed by the use of physical and visual prompt. It slows but does not stop traffic. The purpose is to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Traffic calming reduces traffic speeds, accidents, and noise levels. Less measurable benefits also include improving air pollution and the environment for residents. Measures are intended to achieve one or more of the following strategies

- Improve neighborhoods through reduction in speed and traffic conflicts;
- Reduce vehicular speeds by making motorists more aware of the street's function; and
- Minimize conflicts between motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and others without the need to separate street users.

There are numerous techniques that communities have successfully used for calming traffic. In some instances a single technique may be exercised, while others may need a combination to reach the desired outcome. Traffic calming techniques are described in the sidebar.



Example of Traffic Calming Techniques

Typical traffic calming measures include:

- Gateways and entryway, designed to narrow a street at a neighborhood entryway
- Speed bumps or speed tables to reduce speeds and traffic volumes
- Dead ends or cul-de-sacs to limit through-traffic in residential areas for very limited situations
- Alternative pavement surfaces to increase driver's awareness of the area
- Curvilinear roads to break up the motorists' line of sight, require more alertness, and reduce speed
- Roundabouts or traffic circles for streets where speeds, volumes and safety are problems but large vehicle traffic is not a concern
- On-street parking and street trees, to help physically and visually minimize street width, and slowing traffic. Ordinances and private road standards can be modified to allow less road width in many instances

Transportation Goals

Transportation goals propose a range of directions that the City should use to create a system of safe and efficient transportation alternatives for pedestrians, personal vehicles, mass transit users, and commercial deliveries. The goals of this chapter support a transportation system that serves new and existing residential and commercial areas, preserves and enhances neighborhood livability, and provides for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Goal 1: Maintain a safe and efficient network of streets.

Vehicles are vital providers for moving people, goods and services. St. Clair is also an active pedestrian and bicycling community. These sometimes conflicting movements must be balanced so that equal and safe access can be enjoyed by all.

The City's streets should be viewed as a network of linear parks. Private vehicles will continue to provide the common method of transportation for residents. However, the use of the public street system for walkers, runners, bicyclists, and other forms of non-motorized transportation are noticeable.

The State of Michigan Department of Transportation has adopted a complete streets policy encouraging multiple uses of right-of-ways. The following actions are recommended:

- Design and maintain safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing streets.
- Adopt street design regulations that reflect the goals of this chapter.
- Develop and adopt a complete streets ordinance that meets the State of Michigan complete streets policy.
- Design walkable and bikable streets with bike lanes, sidewalks, multi-use paths, trees, contextually sensitive signage, public art, bicycle racks and other amenities promoting pedestrian activity and healthy lifestyles.
- City officials actively participate in the design of streets.

With the projected aging of the population, the City may be subject to alternative forms of transportation through increased reliance on public transportation or private shuttle services.

Goal 2: Minimize traffic accidents.

SEMOG traffic records show that the City has its share of accidents. Riverside Drive, Carney Drive, and Clinton Avenue are named in nine of the top ten crash locations in St. Clair. The following actions are recommended:

- Adopt access management standards.
- Redesign high accident zones with traffic calming measures.

Goal 3: Allow walkers, runners, bicyclists, and other non-motorized movement the opportunity to move throughout the City and the region.

St. Clair has a population active in walking, running, and bicycling. Recognizing these activities, the City has constructed part of the regional pathway system along Carney Drive. A goal of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is to continue constructing non-motorized bike/walkways. During the resident survey of neighborhoods, participants recorded a lack of sidewalk connections. This plan supports sidewalks and multi-use paths as assets to retain and attract residents and businesses. The following actions are recommended:

- Construct a non-motorized bike/walkway system linking the entire City and the region.
- Construct all pathways to Americans with Disabilities Act design standards.

Goal 4: Clearly direct visitors to the Downtown, parks, historic resources and places of interest.

The intent of this plan is to strengthen the City as a regional destination for restaurants, parks, events, and recreation. The City has two rivers, a Downtown and historic resources that draw visitors. Directional signage to these venues helps lessen confusion and create a positive experience for visitors. The following action is recommended:

- Implement a way finding system as part of the street, sidewalk, and multi-use pathway system.

Parks, Recreation, Culture, and History

Well-designed, programmed, and maintained parks and community amenities provide a higher-quality of life for residents. St. Clair has parks, open spaces, golf course, harbors, marina, historic resources, an active arts community, and museums. Arts, culture, and history are an integral part of a City's enduring spirit and vitality. This is demonstrated in St. Clair's thriving art, entertainment venues, and cultural events. It enriches the daily lives of all its residents.

The purpose of the parks, recreation, culture, and history chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is to set goals and actions to guide the programming, management, and development of these amenities. The City has an adopted Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan, which is referred to for a more in-depth understanding of the City's goals and objectives pertaining to parks, recreation, and open spaces.

This chapter addresses the following major issues:

- Maintain and improve existing parks and recreation facilities;
- Address the need for walkable neighborhoods in existing and newer parts of the City;
- Acquire adequate land for future park development;
- Provide better interconnectivity between the parks, pathways, and open space system locally and regionally;
- Integrate the parks and open space system into a broader context of green infrastructure to maximize a healthy ecosystem;
- Implement a comprehensive public art program with minimal funds;
- Create incentives that would encourage artists to select St. Clair as their preferred location.

Parks and Recreation

The City of St. Clair operates a park and open space system encompassing 210 acres of park land which extends outside City limits into St. Clair Township. The City operates four community parks, a multi-use path along Carney Drive, a community center, a public outdoor pool, a municipal golf course, and a boat harbor. The schools provide additional recreation facilities and a few private recreation facilities include a nature preserve, marina, and nature trails (Figure 12).



St. Clair is responsible for four community parks: Greig, Klecha, Palmer, and Fred Moore Highway/St. Clair Little League parks. Greig Park, located on Carney Drive, includes both active and passive activities. Klecha Park, on the south part of the City, includes the former Little League ball fields. Palmer Park is a passive riverfront park on the St. Clair River. The newest community park on Fred Moore Highway includes the new Little League ball fields. This property has access to the Pine River and includes about 26 acres of undeveloped park land. The City also owns 1.7 acres of undeveloped park land along the Pine River.

The City also maintains three small parks: Diamond Point, Patrick Sinclair, and Rotary Club Park which include walking paths, landscaped, and seating areas. In addition, the City maintains a multi-use path along Carney Drive and Fred Moore Highway, and a pathway segment which connects to St. Clair Middle School.

The Community Center includes a multi-purpose room used for senior and youth programs, and available for public or private use. The Historical Museum, located on the upper floor, occupies most of the building for display and storage. An annex and customs house is also on-site. The outdoor pool provides swim lessons, competitive, and synchronized team, open, and family swim for City residents during the summer. Year-round aquatic programs are offered by the Recreation Department at the schools' indoor pool.

The East China School District includes a High School and Middle School located on the outskirts of the City. Riverview East High School, two public elementary schools, and other private or parochial schools are located within St. Clair. These schools provide recreation facilities for City residents and include playgrounds, athletic fields, open space, and indoor facilities for both students and residents.

Private recreational facilities in St. Clair include a marina, BP Dome Petroleum Corporation nature trails, and Alice Woods Nature Sanctuary, a Michigan Nature Association property.

Culture and History

St. Clair is home to a thriving arts, culture, and history community. Several organizations are active and include a Beautification Commission, an Arts Association, the Alice W. Moore Center for the Arts, many local artists, a gallery, theater, and museum. These organizations in addition to many concerned citizens are stimulating an interest in the arts, history, and culture of St. Clair.

The annual International St. Clair Art Fair features artists with varied creative talents displayed on the shores of the St. Clair River. The arts gallery provides a showcase for artists to display their creations. There are also classes, designed for all ages and abilities, with other programs including lectures, demonstrations, tours, and trips. St. Clair parks exhibit many statues that were commissioned by the Moore family, who founded the Diamond Crystal Salt company in 1886.



Parks, Recreation, Culture, and History Goals

The focus of parks, recreation, cultural, and historical amenities should focus on the maintenance and improvement of existing parks, the establishment of a community-wide bike/walkway system, and maintaining and improving the City's cultural and historical amenities. The following goals and actions will add greatly to a vibrant urban experience, stimulate development, and maintain and attract families to St. Clair.

Goal 1: Maintain a current Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

The recently adopted Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master plan needs to be updated every five years. There is a need to keep this plan as well as any other special purpose parks and recreation planning document current through a regular schedule of updates and re-examinations, including the five-year updates to the recreation plan:

- Monitor residents' needs.
- Remain current with State of Michigan guidelines for community recreation planning.
- Maintain and update the five year capital improvement program for facilities, buildings, and equipment.
- Capitalize on grant opportunities that become available.

Goal 2: Maintain and improve existing parks.

The continued maintenance, update, and improvement of park facilities are important to the quality of parks and recreation in St. Clair. Park facilities should be safe, functional, and well maintained. This includes upgrading aging facilities, removing barriers to accessibility, and maintaining the parks. There is also a desire to continue improving park facilities to respond to the changing needs of residents. Recommended actions include:

- Replace or repair old equipment and facilities.
- Maintain and refurbish safety, athletic field, and pavement surfaces.
- Improve the appearance of City parks through appropriate landscaping and maintenance.
- Improve Palmer and Greig parks by providing additional park facilities as detailed in the community recreation plan.
- Improve the remaining undeveloped portion of the Fred Moore Highway park property.
- Redevelop Klecha Park as a neighborhood park.

Goal 3: Establish a continuous City-wide bike/walkway system to link parks, open spaces, and cultural and historical amenities.

Forming a continuous network of bike and walkways system is a continued priority for St. Clair. This City-wide system should be tied to a complete streets policy for the City of St. Clair. Coordination with City Council, Planning Commission, Beautification Commission, and DDA will be necessary.

- Link existing parks, community facilities, open spaces, cultural and historical amenities, and natural resources.
- Expand public access and opportunities along the St. Clair and Pine rivers.
- Update the City's vision for an interconnected system of bike/walkway system with the preparation of a City of St. Clair Non-Motorized Transportation Plan or Complete Streets Plan.
- Develop the following priority multi-use pathway connections: Fred Moore Highway to the new park property, Rattle Run Road to Fred Moore Highway through cemetery and park properties, Carney Drive to High School, Rotary Park extension, M-29 segment, and Brown Street.
- Incorporate accommodations for people of all ages and abilities including on-street bike lanes, safe crosswalks, and amenities.
- Develop guidelines for site amenities such as kiosks, benches, trash receptacles, mile markers, bike racks, and signage.

Goal 4: Strengthen the City as a regional arts and cultural destination.

- Promote the City as a regional destination for arts, music, history, theater, entertainment, and literary events.
- Support the efforts of public, private, and non-profit organizations dedicated to arts, culture, and history.

Goal 5: Preserve the unique history of St. Clair.

- Adopt reasonable measures in the Zoning Ordinance that support preservation of historic structures and sites.
- Assist interested persons with cost effective design suggestions to preserve structures.
- Publish and distribute guides to historic resources.
- Conduct events focusing on St. Clair's history.
- Locate the history museum to a larger space in a convenient pedestrian accessible place.

Economic Investment

Economic investment is often dependent on the physical and social assets that a place provides. The City is projected to grow older like other cities in Michigan. Families have been raised and the children have moved someplace else for job opportunities in many instances. The City must look to retain the long-term parents as they provide leadership, history and volunteerism. However, the City should equally strive to capture young singles and families.

The CONTEXT chapter of this plan lists St. Clair County's effort to understand where the county fits in the global economy. Its analysis shows that St. Clair County, when compared to other Michigan counties, is strongest in operating in the global economy, stronger in being involved in the digital economy and innovation, needs to strengthen in providing "knowledge-based" jobs, and must accelerate its ability to adapt to change and create an economic dynamism.

Economic investment is a task that the City can contribute to but ultimately requires the assistance and capacity of the County, non-profit organizations and private companies. Partnerships of a type and magnitude not often previously seen are necessary.

Inventorying, maintaining, and enhancing the City's unique assets is an important component that the City can prepare on its own. The City and economic organizations cannot create jobs and tax base but they create a dynamic climate and remove barriers for private and non-profit employers.

Economic prosperity is a result of generating ideas, nurturing partnerships, and attracting talented people. This thinking is reversed from economic development during the industrial age of the 20th century where equipment,

capital appreciation, and basic employment skills were the priority. In the 1990's, communication technology gave most places around the globe an equal chance to compete.



The foremost assets of a region are its people and talent. As the national and regional economies have shifted to depend on knowledge-based industries, a skilled and trained workforce has become essential for new businesses to compete successfully. Providing all residents with

good jobs is dependent on helping them prepare themselves with the full range of necessary skills, starting with basic literacy and life skills and extending through college and post-graduate training. St. Clair's many assets and attributes must be recognized, built on, and actively promoted.

"Placemaking" is important to attracting a skilled workforce. Features such as trails, parks, bike paths, green amenities, along with opportunities for professional and personal growth, and dynamic energetic thinking among its leaders are a necessity. Michigan Futures, Inc. estimates that 45 percent of the young millennial generation search for a high density urban neighborhoods mixing housing types, commercial uses, arts and entertainment activity, and a walkable environment.

"Clustering" similar economic activity in close proximity to one another to combine assets and services is a technique. This approach is not new for St. Clair as it has an agreement with St. Clair Township for development of industrial land along Range Road.

Evolving the City – Economic Investment Goals

The goals of economic development are summed up in the ideals of building on the internal strengths, partnerships, and creating a welcoming ambience.

Goal 1: Create and maintain an economic development vision and strategy

The economic investment vision is to build off the City's proud history and strong assets. It will lead and vocalize the need for a regional economic development approach. It will engage in positive and inclusive partnerships. The City will stand in support of entrepreneurship, education and knowledge, collaboration, resident safety, health and wellness, energy efficiency, healthy communities, diverse culture, and new ideas and innovation.

- Prepare an economic development vision and statement that guides staff.
- Identify and promote the assets to build future investment on.
- Partner with St. Clair County and the surrounding communities to enhance the strategy into a regional approach.
- Target "growth" sectors and build a marketing campaign.

Goal 2: Catalyze new investment.

New development needs to be enticed in the competitive marketplace. Businesses have many options open. It is equally important to retain existing businesses, maintaining the residential neighborhoods, and providing access to the water, parks, and bike/walkway systems. Public enhancement of streets, walks, parks, plazas, and similar public places serving areas prime for investment is a strong partnering approach that enhances the environment.

- Prepare and maintain a long-range Capital Improvement Plan that focuses a portion of public investment into the investment areas.
- Prepare sub-area plans for the Pine River and Clinton corridor mixed-use areas that set forth a development pattern supported by the public.
- Maintain an open and transparent review process that is inclusive of the investors and the public.

Goal 3: Retain the City's strong assets.

St. Clair will remain in a healthy state if it focuses on maintaining its neighborhoods and existing businesses. Those that reside, including business owners, have staked a good portion of their lives in the City and will volunteer and support improvement.

- Conduct an inventory of physical, social, and economic assets.
- Conduct an opinion survey of businesses to note their current and future needs to remain fiscally healthy.
- Promote the positive conclusions as part of a business or tourism attraction campaign.

Goal 4: Increase economic development capacity.

As economic development becomes increasingly regional and global in scope, the capacity of one local government unit to reach out becomes constricted. Three avenues to increasing promotional capacity are present. The first is to retain additional staff but this can be costly and does not guarantee that markets outside of the Blue Water area are reached. A second avenue is to partner with a county or regional economic development agency, a business organization, and other local governments. A third is to use technology to increase the range of exposure.

- Inventory and evaluate the successes of similar cities.
- Partner with other organizations and agencies to increase capacity.
- Review the current use of technology and improve the hardware and software systems as budget permits.

Goal 5: Challenge conventional thinking.

The industrial age relied on the workforce and residents following industry. St. Clair has several family names that have been in place for decades because a family member worked at Diamond Salt or in Port Huron. Job producers are now not always the large plants but mid-size employers. Many of the entrepreneurial type businesses will be founded by a mature workforce. The City is ready to capitalize on this if it stays diligent in maintaining its tight knit neighborhoods, parks and path systems, and is flexible for denser mixed-use districts to evolve.

- Elected, appointed, and administrative officials remain open-minded when reviewing alternative types of development projects.
- City relies on design and performance standards in combination with a land use framework to guide development.

City Services and Leadership

Any City needs to take an aggressive and strong leadership role in the physical and social planning of their community. As public and private partnerships are becoming the norm to providing service, the City should maintain a strong leadership position and control its destiny.

St. Clair can be an environmental leader, demonstrating to others how to grow while embracing its natural resources and making wise use of energy resources. It is a vibrant and engaging place to live and work, where environmental and ecological resources can play a role in creating a community that draws the best workforce in the region. The City's natural environment is a large part of its enviable image. It borders the St. Clair River, and includes portions of the Pine River and Jordan Creek. Natural settings and habitat are integrated with these water systems such as the large natural wooded areas that are preserved in Greig Park and the Alice W. Moore Woods Nature Sanctuary.

City Services and Capital Improvements

The quality of the community facilities directly reflects the quality of life that a City can provide. As community facilities age, continual improvements and updates are required to stay current with changing demands and needs. A Capital Improvement Plan is a guide for planning a community's expenditures.

Capital planning identifies purchases of physical assets or construction, major repair, reconstruction or replacement of capital items, such as buildings, utility systems, roadways, bridges, parks, heavy equipment, and extensive internal office needs which are of high cost and have a longer useful life. This section is one of the implementing measures prescribed by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

City Administration

City Administration operates from its offices at 547 N. Carney Drive. It includes the offices of City superintendent, clerk, assessing, treasury, accounting, building, and code enforcement. Administrative offices are staffed by ten employees. Cable TV operates remotely from the community center.

Five Year Capital Improvements – City Administration:

- Significantly upgrade the BS & A software to a web-based application.
- No need for expanding or relocating to a larger site.

Police Department

The Police Department operates at 547 N. Carney Drive. The Department consists of a chief, three command officers, five patrol officers, five seasonal cadets, and one clerical support person. It provides public safety, crime prevention, and emergency response within the boundaries of the City. The Department currently responds to the needs of nearby communities based on a

mutual assistance agreement. However, it is prepared to expand its service area to surrounding townships if an agreement or authority is created.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Police Department:

- Firing range and strengthening center for officers to maintain peak conditioning. Strengthening center should be located within the same building as the police offices.
- Continuously maintain the vehicle fleet and equipment and replace/repair as needed.
- No need for expanding or relocating to a larger site.

Fire Department

The Fire Department operates from one station located on Trumbull Street at Third Street. A boathouse for water fire and rescue operations is located on the Pine River. Personnel include a chief, two assistant chiefs, one captain, two lieutenants, two sergeants, and 24 firefighters. The Department provides land based firefighting and rescue operations within the City limits. The marine unit provides rescue and fire operations on the Pine and St. Clair Rivers. It responds to the needs of nearby communities through a mutual assistance agreement.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Fire Department:

- Construct new station with four drive-through bays and a training tower.
- Replace or significantly improve the Pine River boathouse.
- Construct an additional elevated water tower in the north end of the City near the industrial park to maintain adequate pressure.

Department of Public Services

The Department of Public Services (DPS) is located at 515 Palmer Avenue. The wastewater treatment facility is located on Second Street north of St. Clair Highway. The water treatment facility and elevated water tank is on Adams.

DPS is responsible for maintaining City streets and sidewalks, water and sewer lines, drinking water supply, sewage treatment, and public buildings and facilities. It coordinates with private utilities for electrical and gas transmission and maintenance projects. The St. Clair County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation coordinate street construction and maintenance for non-local streets. A consulting civil engineer provides guidance.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Waste Water Operations:

- Improve significantly the plant buildings, lift stations, and pumps and HVAC equipment.
- No need for expanding or relocating to a larger site.
- Upgrade, as a longer-range action, the digester, replacing filter media, and increase the capacity of the sludge tank.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Water Operations:

- Construct a 500,000 gallon elevated tank in the City’s north end.
- Improve equipment efficiency, pave the parking lot, and replace the chlorine tanks.
- No need for expanding or relocating to a larger site.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Streets:

DPS has rated the condition of its streets and categorized each street by the type of rehabilitation needed as shown on Figure 13. The 2008 Road Ratings map has a numerical scale of 1 to 10 with 1 showing streets in the worst condition to 10 showing newly constructed streets. This is the basis for determining the types of road rehabilitation needed as shown on Figure 14. The City has budgeted \$585,000 for improvements. The extent and timing of improvements is dependent on budgets, grants, and other sources of funding.

- Concentrate street reconstruction in the neighborhoods east of Ninth Street, several streets south of Clinton Avenue, the neighborhood north of Brown west of Riverside, Goffe Street, and the neighborhood west of Carney and south of Clinton.
- Reconstruct, in part, several streets in the Highlands subdivision, part of E. Tenth Street, part of Glendale Street, and in the industrial park.
- Mill and resurface several other streets scattered throughout the City.
- Routinely maintain the primary traffic carrying streets in the City’s jurisdiction that are in good condition.
- MDOT and St. Clair County Road Commission to maintain and improve M-29/Riverside Avenue, Range Road, Yankee Road, and Cox Road.

Boat Harbor

The Boat Harbor is located on the south shore of the Pine River and accessed from Second Street. The harbor employs a harbormaster and eight seasonal attendants. It accommodates seasonal warm weather use with docks and 120 boat wells and two launch ramps. A bathhouse, pavilion, and sand volleyball area provide support.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Boat Harbor:

- Renovate and expand the harbormaster’s office to two stories, the bathhouse, and pavilions.
- Add a recreation attraction for younger children.
- Add a recreational vehicle park.
- Acquire the adjacent private marina if offered to the City, as a longer range consideration.

Figure 13. 2008 Road Ratings

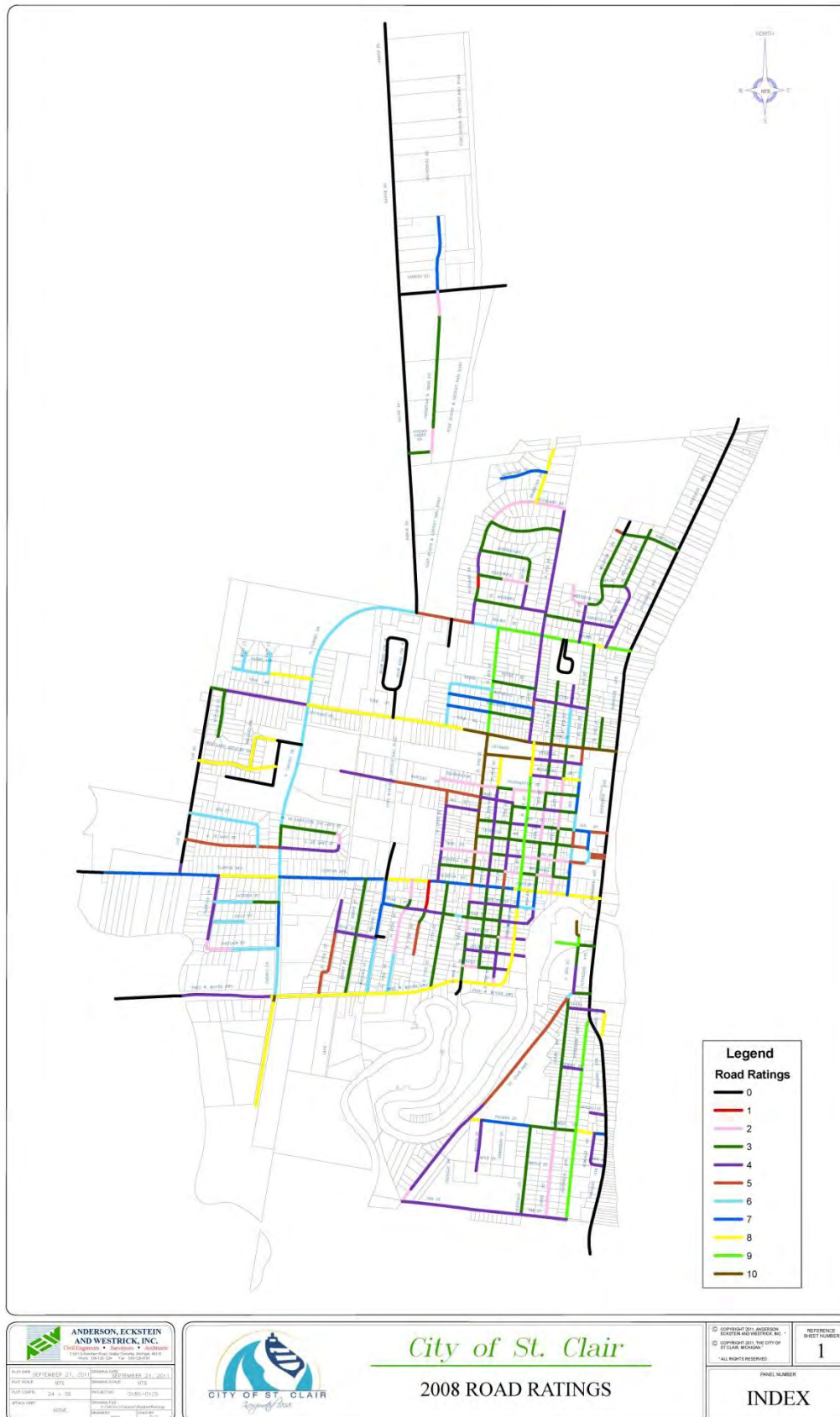
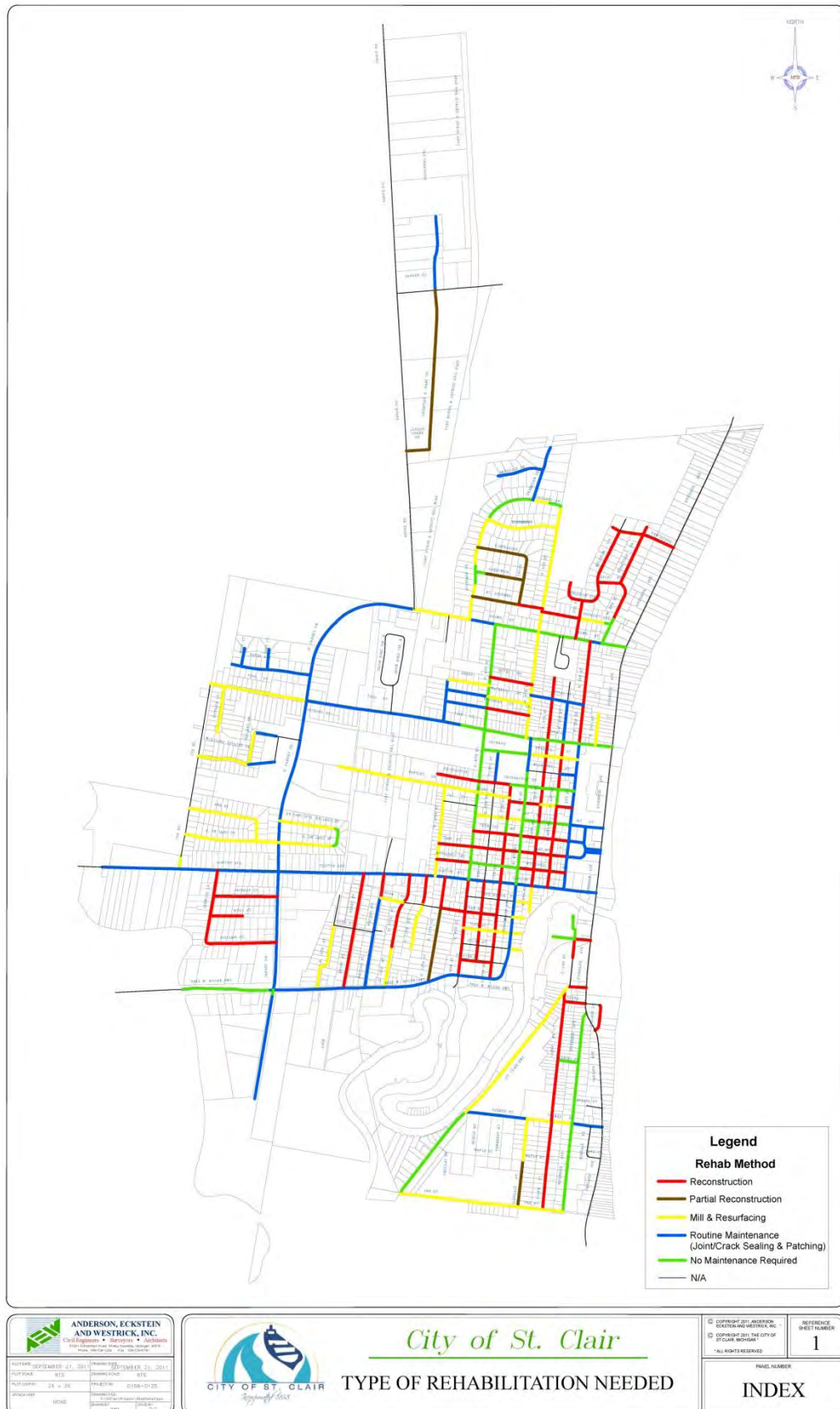


Figure 14. Type of Road Rehabilitation Needed



Golf Course

The 81-year old municipal golf course is located on the north shore of the Pine River near downtown. It is an executive nine-hole facility with a small banquet facility. It includes seven seasonal employees. The golf course is expected to remain in place. Expansion is welcomed but not likely due to the physical constraints of the Pine River.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Golf Course:

Severe or extended wet weather causes closure because of standing water and poor drainage. Improvements can extend the playing season.

- Install detention ponds and rain gardens to drain the grass areas.
- Raise the cart path to allow passage in wet conditions.
- Replace the irrigation system due to Zebra Mussel damage.

Five Year Capital Improvements – Building and Parking:

The banquet facility and parking lots require improvement to stay competitive.

- Expand the banquet hall to 2,000 square feet.
- Repave and landscape the main and auxiliary parking lots.
- Install a well-lit crosswalk across Fred Moore Highway from the auxiliary lot to the main parking lot to alleviate hazards.

Recreation Department

The Recreation Department is administered from the City administration offices at 547 N. Carney Drive. The department has a director and 15 part-time and seasonal employees. It coordinates with the Department of Public Services to maintain parks, buildings, and equipment. A distinct Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan, incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan by reference, describes the five-year capital improvements in detail.

Long Range Capital Improvements

A recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan is to prepare a formal five-year Capital Improvement Plan. The improvements described above were recorded through department interviews. A more extensive Capital Improvement Plan has a number of advantages including:

- Facilitates coordination between capital needs and operational budgets.
- Allows for better scheduling of public improvements and coordination of construction.
- Enhances the community's credit rating, control of its tax rate, and avoids sudden changes in its debt service requirements.

Environmental Sustainability

Economic growth and environmental preservation are elements that are often perceived as two forces at odds. However, environmental considerations have the ability to enhance economic development. The value of homes adjacent to open space, parks, wetlands, and other green amenities are greater, all things being equal, to similar sites not adjacent to such amenities.

Encouraging natural resource preservation can be accomplished through ordinance regulations to ensure the least amount of impact on a site. This can be done by implementing Low Impact Development (LID) techniques that manage rainfall using design treatments that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain storm water runoff close to the source.

St. Clair should engage its neighbors in preserving features that cross more than one jurisdiction, such as the waterfront. Natural features provide significantly more benefits if they are maintained in larger units, such as a complex system of woodlands, wetlands, rivers, or streams. These larger, connected systems are more successful at maintaining their ecological integrity than the fragmented natural features.

While ordinance regulations can encourage sustainable development, there are also incentive-based techniques that can be employed:

- Fee adjustments for infill housing such as grading permit fees and water distribution fees.
- Smart Growth Zones reducing the fees for zoning, subdivision, and site plan applications, and for water and wastewater.
- Primary employer incentives such as application fee waivers, utility and transportation improvements, streetscape improvements, and expedited processing of development applications.
- Built Green Program promoting best known practices in energy, air quality, storm water management, and water efficiency to give homeowners added value and home builders a competitive advantage.

Green Buildings and Neighborhoods

There is a global trend to encourage the development of environmentally sustainable buildings and neighborhoods. This trend has been fueled by numerous organizations who have worked to develop standards around which architects and builders can design their projects.

Communities can develop incentives to encourage green buildings and site design techniques such as property tax credits, tax abatement, tax exemptions, density bonuses, expedited permit review, and waiving of permit fees. Neighborhoods can be designed to reduce energy consumption by providing opportunities for shorter vehicle trips and the use of alternative forms of transportation. Some techniques include locating residential units near shops

LID advances the idea that runoff can be a resource and that almost all site plan elements can be used for storm water control such as parking lots using porous pavement. When storm water drains through the pavement, it recharges the groundwater. Similarly, rooftops can be used as planting areas, soaking up rainwater and reducing runoff.

LID techniques often cost less to construct than traditional storm water closed designs. Case studies conducted by the Low Impact Development Center show a 25 to 30 percent reduction in site development costs over traditional techniques. One reason for the lower costs is that LID techniques keep storm water on top of the ground, rather than building the infrastructure underground to handle storm water. Another reason is that small infiltration areas are generally less expensive to construct than one large detention area.

and existing utilities, the provision of bicycle and transit facilities, and proximity to schools and parks.

The U.S. Green Building Council is piloting a program for energy-efficient neighborhoods. The LEED Neighborhood Development Program includes many site design techniques that preserve natural features, habitat, and open space, such as:

- Limit parking to encourage people to use alternative methods of transportation, like walking or bicycling.
- Promote local food production to minimize the impacts of transporting food long distances such as farmer's markets.
- Use energy saving technology for infrastructure needs such as street lights, water, and waste water pumps.
- Capture and use storm water runoff and use in place of potable water for irrigation and toilet flushing.
- Use recycled concrete and asphalt for roadways and parking lots.

Community Energy Planning

Communities are looking for ways to reduce their energy consumption and their carbon footprint. Community energy planning is being used to closely analyze transportation and land use planning for energy efficiency and consumption.

St. Clair may consider developing a Comprehensive Energy Plan (CEP), focused on energy efficiency and how the City can reach energy goals. A CEP includes an energy profile identifying where the community's energy comes from, how much it costs, and how it affects the local and global environment. Involvement of local energy and water utilities in the plan development process is important. Elements could include:

- Land use planning and transportation to develop compact land use patterns where a variety of uses are mixed to increase alternatives to automobile travel. Strategies include contiguous development patterns, parking plans, street design, and trip reduction measures.
- Site planning and building design to increase energy performance, including building and appliance efficiency, building solar orientation, landscaping, wind shielding, pedestrian facilities, and transit facilities.
- Infrastructure efficiency to increase the use of energy-efficient infrastructure and the production of energy from municipal facilities. Areas where the City can analyze energy efficiency are water supply and use, wastewater collection, storm drainage, recycling programs, heat and power recovery, and infrastructure planning and services.
- Alternative energy supply to increase local and high efficiency energy supply options including waste heat utilization, heat pumps, co-generation of heat and power, wood-waste systems, solar technologies, and alternative fuels.

City Services and Leadership Goals

The goals and objectives for maintaining strong leadership are intentionally broad and wide-ranging to cover the many aspects of leadership. They focus on being a leader both in the City and within the region.

City wide, goals speak internally to ensure efficient and responsive service to residents, business owners, and property owners of the City. The goals also establish a model in the regional context for partnering, environmental sustainability, and cultural opportunities.

In addition, they recognize that the City through policy and ordinance can support the local and regional natural environment without sacrificing economic development.

Goal 1: City balances high quality services with fiscal responsibility.

- Allow City payments to be conducted via credit card and web-based online methods.
- Study improved levels of service for curbside garbage pickup, street cleaning, and similar services.
- Study infrastructure capacity in areas planned for greater intensity of land use.
- Maintain an expedient code enforcement program.
- Effectively communicate and engage residents, stakeholders and investors on all aspects of City government through the use of newsletters, website, and regular meetings

Goal 2: City Council, Commissions, and Boards are active partners and supporters of sound planning and economic development.

- City implements the goals, objectives and actions set forth in the Community Comprehensive Plan.
- City Council conducts an annual joint meeting with the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Parks and Recreation Commission, Downtown Development Authority, and other commissions affecting development and land use.
- Planning Commission presents annual report of activity to the City Council as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act 33 of 2008, as amended.

Goal 3: City actively partners with St. Clair County and local jurisdictions in regional planning, transportation, environment, recreation and other similar matters.

- Partner with St. Clair County, St. Clair, East China, and China townships to address issues of interest to all governmental entities.
- Partner with the East China school system to address City image and consolidation of facilities and services.
- Initiate a task force of elected and staff representatives to address common environmental concerns.
- Aggressively pursue grants and other funding opportunities as a joint consortium seeking regional solutions.

Goal 4: Provide “green” City services, procedures, and public buildings.

- Purchase fuel efficient vehicles when option is present.
- Enact policies that are environmentally friendly for internal operations.
- Strive to have public buildings meet LEED standards for building, site, and neighborhood design.
- Adopt zoning regulations incenting green design and building practice.

Goal 5: Preserve and enhance the natural environment.

- Encourage integration of natural features such as woodlands and wetlands into site development proposals as aesthetic and functional features.
- Promote development offering public access opportunities along the waterfront which will compliment the City’s water resources and offer access opportunities.
- Study the use of review and permit incentives for those developments implementing environmentally friendly practices.
- Consider applying the programs and techniques described earlier and preparing a priority schedule based on resource availability.

Placemaking: City Design

The context, goals, and actions formulated in the previous chapters provide the foundation for placemaking and planning the future of St. Clair when taken together. This chapter takes those elements and synthesizes them into a City design framework, design criteria, and design goals. It sets forth a vision for how the City should grow by identifying areas for mixed-use redevelopment and defining priority multi-modal corridors. It has implications in terms of urban form and design as well as placemaking and the image the City wishes to portray.



City Design Framework Plan

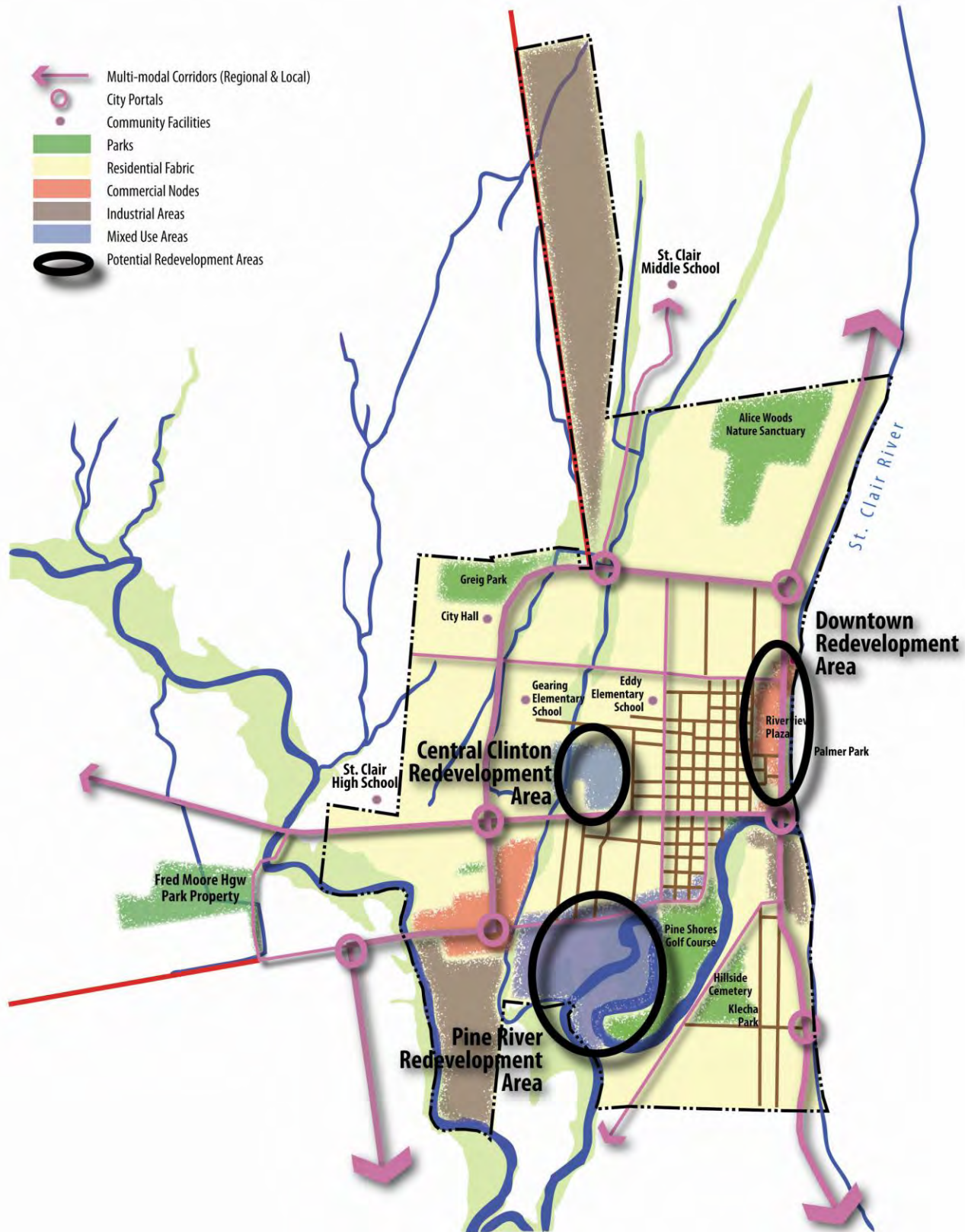
The framework concept plan shown on Figure 15 represents a vision for St. Clair's growth. The framework plan includes four distinct land use components:

1. The residential fabric of the City which forms the base layer and the plan's main component.
2. Two commercial nodes: the first one located at the intersection of Fred Moore Highway and Carney Drive and, the second, located in the Downtown and centered on Riverview Plaza
3. Three industrial areas on the outer edges of the City to the north on Range Road, centered on Cargill Salt Company, and the BP Dome Petroleum Corporation.
4. Three major potential redevelopment areas encompassing the Downtown, the area centered at the intersection of Clinton Avenue and the rail line, and the Pine River area.

These components also incorporate the community's parks, public spaces, and facilities.

- Greenways positioned along environmentally sensitive areas located along the Pine River and along Jordan Creek, which may include floodplains, wetlands, and woodlands.
- A regional multimodal corridor formed by Riverside Avenue, Carney Drive, Fred Moore Highway, King Road, and Clinton Avenue/Rattle Run Road which include the Bridge to Bay Trail and are proposed as Complete Streets with multi-use pathways, bike lanes, safe crossings, and a high level of pedestrian amenities. Clinton Avenue, from an urban design perspective, is a primary connector between the Downtown, Carney Drive, St. Clair High School and Fred Moore/Little League Park and should be enhanced to promote its importance.
- A local multimodal corridor along Vine, a portion of Fred Moore Highway, Ninth Street, and St. Clair Highway which are proposed as streets complete with bike lanes, sidewalk or multi-use pathways, safe crossings, and a moderate amount of pedestrian amenities.
- Multimodal portals at key intersections enhanced with wayfinding and pedestrian amenities such as a multimodal system map, directional signs, benches, small shelters, picnic tables, and other amenities.
- The existing local street grid with sidewalks.

Figure 15. St. Clair's Framework for the Future



Complete Streets

The City recognizes the importance of developing a balanced, efficient, multi-modal transportation network that reinforces the livability of neighborhoods. Encouraging the development of multi-modal corridors or complete streets that specifically address pedestrian and bicycle uses, is a priority for the community.

Following the adoption of two bills in 2010 by the Michigan legislature, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33) was amended to require communities to consider “complete streets” as part of their Master Plans. Complete Streets is a new way of thinking about streets as strictly transportation means for motorists to travel ways for users of all ages and abilities including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and others. Complete streets encompass the usual sidewalks or bicycle paths and incorporate other features such as on-street bike lanes, crosswalks, pedestrian refuges, pedestrian signals, landscaped medians, and more. Instituting a complete streets policy or adopting a complete streets ordinance can ensure that roadways will be designed with all users in mind.

In planning, designing, and constructing new roads or improving existing roadways, complete streets infrastructures and design features should be evaluated, encouraged, and incorporated to create safe and inviting environments for all users to walk, bicycle, and use public transportation. This may include the features listed above and other design features that improve the safety and comfort of users such as pedestrian oriented signs and lighting, benches, bicycle racks, street trees, and other amenities.

A variety of strategies can work for complete streets in St. Clair. Some of these strategies were addressed in the Transportation and Circulation chapter as well as in the Parks, Recreation, Culture, and History chapter. These include:

- Adopt a “Complete Streets” policy or ordinance that meets the needs of the community in accordance with the State of Michigan Complete Streets policy;
- Encourage the improvement of roadways with street trees, way finding signage, bicycle accommodations, and other amenities promoting pedestrian activity;
- Encourage the creation of high-quality community gathering places, common areas, and public open spaces;
- Encourage residential developments whose physical layout and land use mix promote walking, bicycling, and public transportation use as a means of accessing services, food, retail, employment, education, childcare, recreation, and other destinations;
- Require street design that creates a safe and welcoming environment for pedestrians;
- Encourage street-oriented buildings and locating parking lots in rear of retail and business centers;
- Encourage the creation of pedestrian pathways from the street to the

entrance where parking lots are located between commercial buildings and streets;

- Increase street connectivity;
- Establish infrastructure for safe crossings, refuge islands, crosswalks, pedestrian signals and other accommodations to meet the needs of people of all abilities and ages;
- Provide pedestrian-oriented signs, pedestrian-scale lighting, benches and other street furniture, bicycle parking facilities, and comfortable and attractive public transportation stops and facilities;
- Develop a long-term plan for a bicycle and pedestrian network that meets the needs of the community and users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and people of all ages and abilities particularly children, families, older adults, and individuals with disabilities;
- Integrate bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation facility planning into regional and local transportation planning programs and agencies In collaboration with the St. Clair County Road Commission and St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission; and
- Collaborate with the schools and other agencies to provide community education about safe travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders, and others.



Example of a Complete Street

Development Focus Areas

Three areas are specifically planned as mixed use environments and should be promoted for redevelopment: St. Clair's Downtown, the Pine River area, and the Clinton Avenue area. Hugo Street, a fourth area, has recommended design criteria because of its small size and proximity to established neighborhoods.

Downtown

Location: The Downtown is bounded by the St. Clair and Pine rivers; Fred Moore Highway, Sixth Street, Witherell, Fourth, Vine, and the St. Clair Inn property. This area corresponds to the Zoning Ordinance Downtown Redevelopment District except for extension west to Fourth Street and north to include properties fronting Riverside Avenue across from the St. Clair Inn.

Existing Development Pattern: St. Clair's Downtown has evolved into a suburban pattern of isolated buildings and land uses since construction of Riverview Plaza in the 1970's. The original building pattern included shoulder to shoulder building housing a range of retail businesses. The periphery of the Downtown still embodies remnants of an earlier pattern with the St. Clair Inn, large churches, and homes between Third and Fourth Streets, and many businesses and homes fronting Clinton Avenue. The building height does not exceed two stories except for the St. Clair Inn and the Third Street churches. The street pattern remains in the typical grid except for the shopping mall superblock. The riverfront Palmer Park, library, senior housing tower, and fire station are the public facilities that continue to function in the Downtown.

Land Use Intent: The intent is to promote and support the Downtown as a regional destination for shopping, arts, events, commerce, and housing. A form-sensitive district permitting a tightly woven network of buildings, sidewalks, and a flexible fabric of mixed land uses was adopted in 2009. This redevelopment area was built on a vision plan which is further supported as public policy through this Plan. Uses that are isolated and do not promote social interactions, as well as drive-through windows and vehicle-dominated customer businesses are discouraged.

Planning Considerations:

- Follow building and site design criteria established in the Downtown Redevelopment District.
- Encourage public art.
- Permit on-street parking.
- Redesign Riverside Avenue (M-29) as a complete street with convenient and safe access between the Downtown buildings and Palmer Park.
- Discourage drive-through windows or vehicle-dominated businesses.



Pine River

Location: The Pine River area generally follows properties adjacent to the Pine River from the Downtown to Jordan Creek. Property included in the Downtown District is not included.

Existing Development Pattern: This large mixed-use area includes different characters. Distinguishing between the physical characteristics is an important guide for future land use decisions. Description of the existing land use pattern is separated to land north and south of the Pine River. A portion of the entire mixed-use district is subject to floodplain regulations.

A marina, active rail line, private boathouses, residences and a lodge are located in the south Pine River area. It has an industrial image with the marina operations, intermittent scrub-shrub forestation and an active rail line paralleling Marine Drive, the only entry. The marina is on a peninsula.

The North Pine River area is accessed by Fred Moore Highway. The Pine Shores Golf Course occupies nearly half of the land mass. It is situated on a peninsula that interlocks with the marina property on the south shore. Light industry, a barge operation, offices and scattered single-family homes complete the inventory of land uses. Many of the industrial buildings are vacant. A traditional single-family neighborhood is adjacent to this area.

Land Use Intent: The redevelopment intent takes advantage of the Pine River frontage with higher quality moderate density housing mixed with local businesses that target the residents and nearby businesses as customers and public access to the riverfront. The construction of a linear park and nature conservation area, pathway, boardwalk or a similar means of accommodating the public is encouraged. Connection to the Downtown is important. The intent is an incremental approach whereby property redevelops as owners approach the City. A sub-area plan should be developed to understand the floodplain, property ownership, acceptable housing density, alternative housing types and alternative uses for the golf course.

A possibility exists to combine a residential and marina community in the South Pine River area. Benefits include proximity to the riverfront and visual and physical connection to new development the north side of the Pine River. Challenges are the extent of the floodplain and active rail lines through and west of the area. Buildings should remain modest in scale and not exceed three stories in height.

The preferred land use in the North Pine River area is moderate-density residences supported by small scale neighborhood commercial businesses and personal service offices. The immediate riverfront should be constructed as a linear park and path system allowing the general public access and connecting to the Downtown and proposed Fred Moore Highway path. Small business meeting demand for canoes, kayaks, bait, bicycles and other park-supporting goods can locate along the riverfront. Residential development can occur as

individual developments or pocket neighborhoods but planned with connections to adjacent areas. Priority action is to get vacant buildings re-occupied. Buildings should not exceed three stories in height.

Planning Considerations:

- The City encourages a mixed-use environment with a range of housing types and local businesses.
- Walks and landscaping will be used to improve public connectivity and enhance the district.
- City is flexible with vacant building reuse provided impacts are not experienced in the surrounding areas.
- Development guidelines and performance standards, including 'green' building techniques are set in place.
- Riverfront is reserved for public access for new development.
- Building height is maximized at three stories.
- Redevelopment of City property is governed by a developer agreement containing design guidelines.
- A sub-area concept plan for the Pine River Development Focus Area should be created to understand the extent of the flood plain and other sensitive natural areas, property ownership, preferred density and to stimulate development interest.
- Prepare a Planned Unit Development or overlay zoning amendment.
- Evaluate extent of the flood plain and natural areas, property ownership, public access and preferred density.

Design Standards:

North Pine River

Residential Plan

1. Residential uses are permitted in any area. Maximum building height is three stories.
2. Higher-density multiple-family housing is permitted but is encouraged to follow the Planned Unit Development option.
3. Location of parking, utilities, and waste storage for higher-density housing should be located away from adjacent single-family neighborhoods.
4. Setback and height requirements for like residential types within the Zoning Ordinance should be followed.

Non-Residential Plan

1. Commercial use supporting public activity on the Pine River, such as canoe/kayak livery, food/refreshment vendors and similar is permitted.
2. Maximum height of a mixed-use building is three stories.
3. Reuse of vacant industrial buildings is confined to residential conversion, artist and performance studios and professional and

medical offices. Uses of a similar character and intensity may be permitted following Planning Commission approval.

4. Strict adherence to screening, buffering and performance ordinances is required.

Infrastructure Plan

1. Development should allow for pedestrian and vehicle cross connection between property.

South Pine River

Residential Plan

1. Single-family residences are permitted in any area.
2. Moderate and higher density multiple-family housing is permitted but is encouraged to follow the Planned Unit Development option.

Non-Residential Plan

1. Recreation and marina uses permitted.
2. Commercial and industrial use is not expanded.

Infrastructure Plan

1. Non-motorized path along St. Clair Highway connects King Road to St. Clair Highway.



Clinton Avenue Corridor

Location: This area centers on Clinton Avenue and the rail line. Current development includes local businesses, fraternal lodge, industry, single-family homes, and large acreages of vacant undeveloped land.

Existing Development Pattern: The development pattern has a concentration of commercial and industrial uses at the rail line. These uses are modest in scale with buildings that do not exceed two stories in height. Large parcels of vacant property are located north of Clinton Avenue, near the rail line.

Land Use Intent: The land use intent is to create a vibrant low-scale mixed-use environment of detached single-family, attached single-family or low-density multiple-family homes. Local business types, as exist, support the surrounding customer base. Industry is phased out.

As an urban concept, Clinton Avenue has the ability to be a “spine” of activity. It directly links the Downtown, the Carney Drive path system, St. Clair High School, and the Fred Moore/Little League park property. It is a key transportation piece for each of these places. The Pine River and Clinton Avenue mixed-use development focus areas are separated by three blocks and linked by several local streets such as Henry, Whiting, and S. Twelfth streets.

Planning Considerations:

- Incorporate design and performance standards as code.
- Encourage eco-friendly site design practice.
- Adhere to screening and performance criteria for sites in near proximity to residences.
- Consider alternative types of small scale business uses, including community gardens, for the industrial property when the redevelopment opportunity presents itself. Any use should serve the surrounding neighborhoods and not compete with the Downtown or Fred Moore Highway/Carney Drive business area. The extent of soil contamination is a consideration.
- The vacant property should develop as a residential community of mixed-housing types. Design should encourage residents with an active lifestyle with pedestrian connection to the bike/walkway system. Alternative types of housing including cottage style homes or pocket neighborhoods should be considered.
- Adopt a complete streets ordinance and attempt to secure enhancement grants for establishing trees and walks.
- Create a Planned Unit Development or overlay zoning amendment.
- Consider the extent of soil contamination.
- Consider alternative types of housing including cottage style homes or pocket neighborhoods. Design should encourage residents with an active lifestyle with pedestrian connection to the bike/walkway system.

Design Standards:

Residential Plan

1. Residential uses are permitted.
2. Higher-density housing is permitted but encouraged to follow the planned development option. Maximum height of three stories.
3. Location of parking, utilities and waste storage for higher-density housing are opaquely screened and located away from adjacent single-family neighborhoods.

Non-Residential Plan

1. Commercial uses serve the surrounding neighborhood with convenience goods and services as intended in the C-1 Local Business or OS Office Service zoning districts.
2. Buildings front Clinton Avenue and development sites do not extend greater than 200 feet deep from the right-of-way line, inclusive of parking. Maximum height of two stories.
3. Industry is phased out and relocated to an industrially zoned area. Reuse of an industrial site is permitted conditioned on adhering to the strictest screening, buffering and performance ordinances.
4. The Planned Development option in the Zoning Ordinance should be exercised for reuse when a zoning change is necessary.

Infrastructure Plan

1. Development should allow for pedestrian and vehicle cross connection between property.



Hugo Street Area

Location: The developable portion of this isolated area is behind properties fronting Carney Drive, Sinclair Street, and Jackson Street.

Existing Development Pattern: The area consists of several small vacant parcels and an unimproved public right-of-way that is an extension of Hugo Street. Detached single-family homes abut to the north (Jackson Street) and to the west. Small businesses and offices front Carney Drive and Sinclair Street.

Planning considerations:

- Allow lower-density housing as either detached single-family or an attached single-family community. An attached single-family development should adhere to setback requirements for the R-1 Single-Family zoning district along property lines abutting existing residential neighborhoods.
- Permit businesses with Sinclair Street addresses to expand off-street parking to Hugo Street right-of-way (unimproved segment). All zoning regulations should be strictly adhered to in this situation.
- Retain the unimproved state through City acquisition as an option.
- Include performance standards for new development including parking lots because of near proximity to residential neighborhoods.

Design standards:

Residential Plan

1. Maximum building density is confined to requirements for an R-2 Two-Family Residential District. Maximum height is 2.5 stories.
2. Rear setback requirements for like residential types within the Zoning Ordinance are followed.

Non-Residential Plan

1. Commercial and office uses front Carney Drive and Sinclair Street as exist. All zoning restrictions as currently in place are followed.
2. Property located between the Sinclair Street businesses and south right-of-way line of Hugo Street may be used as off-street parking. Strict adherence to screening, buffering, lighting, performance criteria is necessary for this situation.

Infrastructure Plan

1. Hugo Street right-of-way may be privatized or vacated provided a design can provide more effective screening and buffering to the abutting residential neighborhood.
2. Hugo Street right-of-way may be considered for a passive City park.

City Design Goals

Urban design generates the visual and often the experiential image of a City. Applying sound design principles will mold and enhance public and natural spaces. St. Clair is sensitive to its built community and has taken steps through its Downtown Redevelopment District regulations to set forth a sense of place. Goals and actions reflect these recent steps and set in writing design attributes that are readily discussed in public forums.

Goal 1: Residential neighborhoods retain the friendly pedestrian appeal.

- Prepare neighborhood design policies and guides for building and site design.
- Maintain and enhance street trees.

Goal 2: Enhance the Downtown as a local and regional focal point.

- Maintain the Downtown Redevelopment District zoning regulations.
- Encourage and support public art in the Downtown area.
- Link the north and south sides of the Pine River.
- Encourage Cargill business to visually improve their property frontage along Riverside Avenue (M-29).
- Implement the M-29 design plan components that connect Palmer Park to the businesses on the west side of Riverside Avenue.

Goal 3: Design public thoroughfares to create a visually inviting image.

- Enhance entryways on Riverside Avenue, Range Road, Fred Moore Highway, St. Clair Highway, and Clinton Avenue/Rattle Run Road to announce entry into the City.
- Partner with Cargill business for streetscape improvements for Riverside Avenue south of the Pine River.
- Prepare a public art master plan to locate sculpture, way finding signage, interpretive signage, bicycle racks, and similar artistically designed public amenities along public thoroughfares.

Goal 4: Blight, visual clutter, and incompatible land use is enforced.

- Annually prioritize area or types of blight to seek out and mitigate.
- Respond to all complaints in an expeditious manner as balanced against manpower.

Zoning Plan

The comprehensive land use master plan, especially the future land use descriptions and map, is sometimes confused with the zoning district descriptions and map. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008), as amended, recognizes this disconnect and stresses preparation of a zoning plan to clarify differences. The role of the Zoning Plan chapter in the comprehensive land use plan, comprehensive land use plan and zoning ordinance are described as follows. Direct comparison of the zoning districts with the Comprehensive Plan's land use categories are provided after. This chapter fulfills the MPEA requirement.

Role of the Zoning Plan

The zoning plan describes the relationship between the future land use categories in the master plan and the comparable zoning ordinance districts. Not to be confused with the zoning ordinance, the zoning plan provides generalized recommendations for aligning the zoning ordinance with the future land use vision. The zoning plan compares the location of zoning districts and future land use designations. These development features are regulated by specific standards in the zoning ordinance. This chapter intends to guide the implementation of and future changes to the zoning ordinance.

Role of the Land Use Master Plan

The Land Use Master Plan (Community Comprehensive Plan) sets forth the vision, goals, objectives and policies for growth and development in the City for the ensuing twenty years. The plan includes strategies for managing change in land use and infrastructure during this period. The plan emphasizes an integrated land use vision whereby minor mixing of mutually beneficial uses can occur in the City. The Land Use Master Plan is required to be reviewed at least once every five years.

Role of the Zoning Ordinance

The zoning ordinance regulates the use and development of land. Through Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended, the ordinance is based on a plan to promote public safety and general welfare as described in section 203(1) of the legislation.

Districts Standards

The Community Comprehensive Plan has 11 land use designations. The Downtown and Development Focus designations are intended for mixed-use development and supported by a design framework. The balance of designations defines a primary land use.

The zoning ordinance has 14 districts and a planned unit development option. All districts, except for the DRD Downtown Redevelopment District, MD-1 and MD-2 Mixed-Use Development, regulate a more segregated land use pattern; although a minor mixing of compatible uses is permitted. The DRD and MD-1 districts are concentrated in an area bounded by Riverside Drive (M-29), Clinton Avenue, Fourth Street and Vine Street. The MD-2 district is not designated on the zoning map.

The format of the zoning plan compares primary locations of zoning districts, summary of zoning intent and comparative future land use designations. One future land use category may be listed in multiple zoning districts due to the transition from the segregated to integrated development pattern. Since more than one designation of land use is cited, refer to the Future Land Use Plan Chapter of this plan for specific intents.

The plan recognizes that the current height, bulk, location and use of buildings are acceptable in the short-term. The plan establishes specific actions in the implementation chapter to evaluate and prioritize changes to current design standards.

Residential Zoning Districts

R-1 (low density) and R1-A (medium density) Single-Family Residential:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** Single-family residential districts are located throughout the City but primarily concentrated along the St. Clair Riverfront; north of Brown Street; west of Ninth Street; and, south of Palme Avenue. R1 districts have a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet and are generally located north of Brown Street and west of Jordan Creek, although east of Jordan Creek and south of Vine Street. R1-A single-family districts have a minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet and are generally found on the outer periphery of the R-2 Two-Family Residential Districts.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide districts in which the main use is single-family residential, plus its normal accessory and compatible supportive uses. A reasonable range of lot sizes is envisioned which will provide a choice of desirable and economically feasible development opportunities for all members of the general public. Certain other private and public uses are permitted but subject to conditions which will insure their compatibility with the main use and character of these districts.
- **Future Land Use Designations:** Low Density Residential and Traditional Neighborhood.

R-2 Two-Family Residential:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** This district is directly north and west of the downtown; south of the Cargill Facility to Palmer Street; and between the Pine River and St. Clair Highway.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide a district in which the main uses include both single-family and two-family residential development, plus normal accessory and compatible supportive uses.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Moderate Density Residential.

R-3 Multiple-Family Residential:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** R-3 districts are localized in six areas that include Riverside Drive and Brown Street north of downtown; north and south of Brown Street at Jordan Creek; Vine Street east of Carney Drive; Carney Drive south of Clinton Avenue; north of Clinton Avenue at Tenth Street; and east of Riverside Drive south of Palmer Street.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The R-3 Multiple-Family Residential district is designated to provide sites for multiple-family dwelling structures and related uses which will generally serve as zones of transition between non-residential districts and lower density single-family districts. Also, the R-3 district is further provided to serve the limited needs for the apartment type of unit in an otherwise low density single-family community. Due to its buffering characteristic between residential and non-residential uses, the R-3 district is intended to provide a residential area which is low rise in character, yet providing greater density by allowing increased building coverage in the most intense single-family residential district.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Multiple-Family Residential.

MHP Mobile Home Park:

- **Zoning Map Location:** The MHP district is based on design and property criteria for locating and is not mapped.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide districts of such size and location as will encourage good mobile home residential development, adjacent to essential community services, and otherwise protecting the health, safety and welfare of mobile home residents. In addition to the requirements of this Ordinance, all mobile home parks shall comply with the Mobile Home Commission Act (PA 419 of 1976) and the current Mobile Home Code adopted by the Michigan Mobile Home Commission.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** No designation – location based on Zoning Ordinance criteria.

Mixed-Use Zoning Districts

DRD Downtown Redevelopment District:

- **Zoning Map Location:** The Downtown Redevelopment District is primarily located between Vine Street, St. Clair River, Pine River and the Third Street frontage. It also includes the St. Clair Inn Planned Unit Development property north of the downtown; the Clinton Street frontage between Third and Sixth Streets; and the south side of Witherell Street between Third and Sixth Streets.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent of this ordinance is to facilitate the implementation of the DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN through visually and functionally strengthening the public right-of-way space; creating an orderly and cohesive visual image; fostering a business friendly redevelopment climate; and encouraging public use and social harmony. Regulations established within this ordinance set clear provisions and controls on building form and site design and the submission review process. Broader limits on land usage allow flexibility in determining the proper mix of residence and business types.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Downtown.

MD-1 Mixed-Use (residential/office):

- **Zoning Map Locations:** The MD-1 district is located on the properties fronting the east side of Fourth Street and on one property on Fred Moore Highway near the south end of Tenth Street.
- **Zoning District Intent:** It is the intent of the MD district to preserve residential uses, while at the same time, allowing a mixture of business uses which will improve property values and the local economy. The MD district is designed to permit certain business and residential uses as a matter of right, while allowing certain public service uses that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods to be considered as special approval uses.
- **Future Land Use Designations:** Downtown and Development Focus Areas.

MD-2 Mixed-Use (residential/local commercial):

- **Zoning Map Locations:** The MD-2 district is based on design and property criteria for locating and is not mapped.
- **Zoning District Intent:** It is the intent of the MD district to preserve residential uses, while at the same time, allowing a mixture of business uses which will improve property values and the local economy. The MD district is designed to permit certain business and residential uses as a matter of right, while allowing certain public service uses that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods to be considered as special approval uses.
- **Future Land Use Designations:** Development Focus Areas and Commerce/Office.

Planned Unit Development:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** The St. Clair Inn property (north of the downtown); and the northeast corner of Vine and Fourth Streets are zoned Planned Unit Development. The PUD district is based on design and property criteria for locating and is not mapped prior to approval.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The provisions of this article provide enabling authority and standards for the submission, review, and approval of applications for planned unit developments. It is the intent of this article to authorize the use of planned unit development regulations for the purposes of: encouraging the use of land in accordance with its character and adaptability; conserving natural resources and energy; encouraging innovation in land use planning; providing enhanced housing, employment, shopping, traffic circulation and recreational opportunities for the people of the City; and bringing about a greater compatibility of design and use.
- **Future Land Use Designations:** Downtown and Moderate Density Residential for the mapped locations.

Non-Residential Zoning Districts

OS Office Service:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** The OS district is not mapped.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide for research, service, and office uses in a planned development. When located in this district, such uses are to be developed in a manner which will complement neighboring land uses and the community, while at the same time providing for the necessary non-manufacturing uses such as corporate office, service, and research facilities.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Development Focus Area, Commerce/Office

C-1 Local Commercial

- **Zoning Map Locations:** Scattered properties on Clinton Avenue from Ninth to Henry Streets and on Riverside Avenue south of the Pine River.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide a district for commercial, office, and business uses which are located in the central part of the City and neighborhood areas. When located in this district, such uses are prevented from encroaching into other districts where they would be deemed incompatible. Development in this district is permitted under special approval and subject to conditions which are designed to promote homogenous and desirable patterns of usage.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Development Focus Area and Commerce/Office.

C-2 General Commercial:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** A large concentration of C-2 zoning happens on Fred Moore Highway and Carney Drive centered on the intersection. The marina and abutting property south of the Pine River are included as are scattered properties on St. Clair Highway, Riverside Avenue and Range Road.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide a district in which the community's overall commercial and business facilities can be centralized to most efficiently and effectively serve the general community and adjacent areas. Other uses are permitted which are generally compatible with the character and requirements of these commercial and business uses. These regulations are designed to reduce possible conflicts with adjacent land uses and to provide conditions which encourage proper development within the district.
- **Future Land Use Designations:** Pine River Development Focus Area, Commerce/Office, and Industry.

M-1 Light Industrial:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** This district is generally located along Range Road, Fred Moore Highway, south Carney Drive and north side of Clinton Avenue at the rail line.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide the resources and services available and essential to good industrial development, while also guarding against the encroachment of these uses into districts where they would be considered incompatible.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Industry.

M-2 Heavy Industrial:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** Heavy industry occurs in four places. Three of the areas are associated with single company property: Cargill Salt Operations on the St. Clair River; Biewer lumber processing on Oak Street near St. Clair Highway; and, Dome/BP Petroleum propane storage facility at the south end of Carney Drive. The fourth area is property along the north shore of the Pine River.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The intent here is to provide a district whose location will permit heavy manufacturing types of use to best utilize essential public and private facilities and utilities.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Industry.

PR & PF Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities:

- **Zoning Map Locations:** This district is scattered throughout the City and civic, parks, recreation and utility facilities.
- **Zoning District Intent:** The district is designed to reserve needed and desirable lands for governmental and other public uses.
- **Future Land Use Designation:** Public/Quasi-Public and Park/Open Space.

Recommended Zoning Text Actions

- Review and evaluate the Zoning Ordinance. Modify sections as needed to meet the vision of the Comprehensive Plan or to meet requirements of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006).
- Evaluate the intent of each zoning district in relation to the vision of the comparable land use area.
- Prepare design standards for neighborhood infill development and single-family conversion to apartment units.
- Prepare design standards for development focus areas based on the framework adopted in the Community Comprehensive Plan.
- Modify the Planned Unit Development option to include mixed-use, greater residential densities, and urban features with the objective of using in the Development Focus Areas.
- Prepare reuse criteria for reuse of school and church facilities.
- Review off-street parking regulations for non-residential zoning districts.
- Prepare complete streets and access management standards.

Recommended Zoning Map Actions

- Compare the Future Land Use and zoning maps to determine the properties that should be immediately rezoned.
- Maintain a current zoning map.
- For those areas not requiring immediate amending, revise the zoning map to reflect the corresponding future land designation when development proposals meeting the Comprehensive Plan's goals are met.

Implementation

The City of St. Clair Community Comprehensive Plan is a policy statement constructed of goals and actions intended to guide reasonable and realistic development decisions. The recommended actions are comprehensive in that a spectrum of zoning, physical planning, economic development and leadership actions is set forth in a manageable framework spread over a five year period.

The overriding action is to regularly review the master plan for currency. Although annual review is optimal, the plan recommends not exceeding the five year review cycle as required by P.A. 33 of 2008.

Corrective measures and special initiatives are recommended to realize the City's land use vision. All are important. Major efforts include:

- Revise the zoning ordinance.
- Prepare and annually update a five-year capital improvement program.
- Conduct more detailed planning and design studies of sub-areas.
- Strengthen planning, zoning and development knowledge of elected and appointed officials.
- Explore the use of partnerships to improve efficiency and service.

Actions fall into many timeframes. Some are best completed in a single year such as zoning text and map changes. Others are multiple year or continual actions such as nurturing leadership and providing knowledge for the public. Depending on the action, efforts may need to be enacted sequentially or simultaneously. An example of a sequential action may be the preparation of a sub-area plan prior to creating zoning regulations. A simultaneous action may be adopting changes to the Zoning Ordinance text and map.

Implementation Measures by Topic

Zoning Ordinance

Evaluating the Zoning Ordinance is the priority action that the Planning Commission should undertake. Standards and regulations supporting a compact and walkable community (placemaking) will maintain the value often attributed for living in St. Clair. The schedule of actions describes separate ordinances but, optimally, the entire zoning ordinance should be comprehensively redrafted as a single action.

Recommendations for more thorough planning for Clinton Street, Pine River, and Hugo Street Development Target Areas should be completed prior to enacting zoning text and map amendments.

Physical Planning

Physical planning recommendations cover a range of activities from conceptual design to construction activities. The most critical recommendation is the preparation and maintenance of a Capital Improvement Plan meeting a requirement of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. It provides the City with an opportunity to structure public improvements with Comprehensive Plan recommendations. Preparing sub-area plans for the Development Target Areas is an important first step to making zoning changes.

Economic Development

In general, building partnerships and distributing information through the internet are important activities to follow-through on. A strategy should be developed in conjunction to coordinate rather than duplicate efforts.

Leadership

Leadership actions encourage elected and appointed officials to play a proactive role in redevelopment. Leadership in building regional partnerships is important in maintaining services without impacting the budget. Joint meetings between the City Council, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and development authorities are recommended to assure all boards and commissions follow a similar vision.

Other recommended tasks include:

- Maintain strict code enforcement practice;
- City officials and staff regularly communicate with residents and businesses through newsletters, website and town hall meetings;
- City Council convenes annual planning and development meeting with Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals and development authorities; and
- Strengthen knowledge of development, planning and zoning through training for elected and appointed officials.

Implementation Measures by Year

The sequential relationships between activities can be best described by summarizing actions by year.

2012 Actions: The priority of 2012 is starting the process of evaluating and modifying the Zoning Ordinance and preparing a five-year Capital Improvement Plan. Both of these actions are vital in maintaining the physical health of the City as endeared by residents. These actions will continue through 2013.

2013 Actions: The Planning Commission becomes more active in 2013 by conducting sub-area planning and forming design standards. Economic development activities are initiated. Funding for wayfinding and non-motorized pathways is pursued.

2014 Actions: More intensive zoning amendments are adopted based on recommendations of the sub-area plans. Economic development activities intensify.

2015 Actions: The Planning Commission reserves 2015 to complete sub-area plans and zoning recommendations. Leadership and economic development actions continue.

2016 Actions: The required five-year review of the community Comprehensive Plan is started.

Implementation Schedule

A five year implementation schedule on Table 7 on the following page serves as a means of progressing toward the goals adopted in this master plan. The schedule lists individual tasks, future land use plan location and anticipated years of completion.

This schedule is a fluid and dynamic tool that should be annually monitored and revised accordingly as opportunities arise. The schedule can also be used as an historic accounting of the completed tasks.

Table 7. Implementation Schedule

	Task	Master Plan Designations	Year				
			2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	Zoning Ordinance						
Z01	Review and evaluate the Zoning Ordinance for conflicts with the Comprehensive Plan and modify where applicable	General					
Z02	Assemble community committee charged with the creation of housing design criteria	Low Density Residential, Traditional Neighborhood, & Moderate Density Residential					
Z03	Modify Planned Development ordinance to react to denser infill opportunities	General					
Z04	Amend multi-use zoning district to incorporate design standards for the Clinton Street, Pine River and Hugo Street Development Focus areas	Development Focus Areas					
Z05	Modify design standards to reflect LEED and Smart Growth principles	General					
Z06	Amend zoning map to reflect the future land use plan	General					
Z07	Rezone Clinton Street and Pine River Development Focus Areas to a mixed-use or other new category	Development Focus Areas					
Z08	Amend zoning map to reflect sub-area or specialty plans	General					
Z09	Prepare access management standards	General					
	Physical Planning						
PP1	Prepare five-year Capital Improvement Plan	General					
PP2	Annually update the five-year Capital Improvement Plan	General					
PP3	Prepare sub-area concepts for Clinton Street, Pine River, and Hugo Street development focus areas	Development Focus Areas					
PP4	Connect a bikeway/pathway/ sidewalk system throughout St. Clair and to the region	General					
PP5	Utilize “complete streets” principles for street construction	General					
PP6	Participate in MDOT and County Road Commission street construction planning	General					
PP7	Implement a wayfinding system connecting the downtown to the City entryways and the non-motorized path system	General					
PP8	Review the Community Comprehensive Plan in fulfillment of PA 33 of 2008 requirements	General					
	Economic Development						
ED1	Partner with St. Clair County economic development staff to pursue grants. Create committee to stimulate cultural and entrepreneurial opportunities	General					
ED2	Prepare an economic development opportunities strategy	General					
ED3	Prepare community profile/brochure to share with local and national businesses	General					
ED4	Network with local realtors to prepare inventory of available commercial/industrial buildings and property	Non Residential Land Use Areas					

Appendix

City of St. Clair Comprehensive Plan

Open House Comments

Neighborhoods

Land Use

- Build single-family homes on vacant land near Shelldrake and Carney
- Encourage more handicapped housing and co-habitation. “Home of your own” new trend in handicapped housing. Works for seniors too. People can have different amounts of support and have a choice about who they live with, who provides their care, how much support they need.
- Condos within City limits
- The conversion of single family homes should not be allowed unless zoning permits.
- New residential development should have spacious yards, no cookie cutter homes, common park area, and sidewalks.

Capital Improvements

- Have sidewalks on one side of each street
- More street lights (LED – energy efficient) – 3rd Street
- Sidewalks on Cox Road
- Interior streets should be lighted for walking safety and neighborhoods connected through complete sidewalks
- Unpaved interior streets are a problem
-

Administration

- Need some control over rental units
- Economy has impacted maintenance and condition of some homes. However, blight issues, cars parked in front yards existed prior to economic downturn. The consistent lack of ordinance enforcement is a problem. No rental ordinance is also a problem.
- Consider creating an historical district with guidelines for restoration
- Burning leaves are an enforcement problem.

Vision Statement

- In 25 years from now, I would like to see more pride in our community. With pride come well-maintained yards, homes, and streets. I would like to see more neighborhood parks, more trees planted for future beautification, paved interior streets, economic strength, vibrant and busy Downtown, many visitors, flower baskets on the street, lots of public art, music and theatre, community swimming pool, and jobs.

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

Capital Improvements

- Develop a children's Discovery Garden on Carney Dr. between the skate park and Greig Park near Jordan Creek with the following elements/themes: water, plants, wildlife, height, enclosure, movement, and make believe. Combine public art and school involvement with this project.
- Create pier off of boardwalk for beach and shelter for small w/c
- Encourage and continue successful partnerships
- Develop outdoor ice skating at the skate park
- Develop soccer fields in the new Little League Park property.
- Add a splash park
- Develop an indoor/outdoor swimming pool
- Add a pond for RC boats
- Redesign Pine Shore Golf Course for year-round use: cross-country skiing, lodge with fireplace, fitness facility
- Establish a community recreation facility with pool, track, gym, fitness
- Add a sledding hill
- Current parks are great! Bike pathways are wonderful! Vacant City land exists in the interior that appears unused – convert to more parks and walkways.
- Site statues in garden areas – not planted on slabs of cement

Pathways

- Connect the bicycle path to the golf course and to Downtown through Brown Street
- Connect Bridge to Bay path to the Little League Park
- Develop on-street bike lanes for bicyclists who use the mode for transportation as opposed to recreation. Bike lanes could be dedicated on Fred Moore Highway, Carney Drive, Clinton, Vine, Brown streets, and Riverside Avenue.

Administration

- Develop design guidelines with themes for each park to bring cohesion – there could be a committee appointed for each park
- Initiate cooperation with adjacent townships on parks and recreation.
- Continue with great parks, people like to walk, exercise, children need a positive place to go for recreation
- Lighting on statue should complement statue, not hide it (the kids reading a book at the Library look like they are watching TV)

Economic Development

Land use

- Encourage a Downtown grocery store
- Encourage neighborhood grocery stores
- Promote restaurant seating in the central plaza add color with tables and umbrellas
- Upcoming business-daily living support for aged, disabilities and others needing help
- Smaller cottage industries encouraged to provide service for aging who want to stay in their own homes and handicapped people who want to move into their own homes
- Shops in walking distance of all homes

Capital Improvements

- Add poles for colorful banners around the edges of the central plaza
- M-29 needs to change. It is a barrier between Riverview Plaza and Palmer Park.

Administration

- Develop design guidelines/common themes for each City district to guide the choice of furnishings, streetscape, and more and bring cohesion
- No tax abatements

City Services

Land Use

- Make use of unused City streets and properties
- Restore and reopen theatre Downtown for benefit of all community.

Capital Improvements

- Add street, sidewalk and path connections
- Add pathway connection along unused street right-of-ways from Vine to Clinton streets west of the railroad line
- Add sidewalks
- Sidewalk repair is needed – some are of dangerous with dips, drops in levels of sidewalks that cause tripping /falling by people, and large cracks catch regular heels on shoes.
- Paving top coat on Mallard Drive. Open and maintain Shelldrake.
- Continue to maintain bike/running paths. Add port-a-john on new path between Brown and Yankee.

Administration

- Focus on history, arts and culture
- Allow electric golf carts on City streets
- Establish a blight enforcement program with a part-time staff
- Dedicate funding/millage to street maintenance
- Re-establish snow removal on primary pedestrian routes (school, business district, etc.)
- The schools are a main attraction for families to live here – we need to keep the school system’s quality – families go where they can raise their children with excellent schools. We need to keep the quality of our education, in spite of state difficulties.
- Allow people to rent public parks (such as Palmer Park). For example, for weddings – allow them to place chairs in the park and allow them to pay to have a police officer present.
- Would rather pay more for services than see them get cut (like leaf and brush pick up, etc.)

General

- Need opinions of young people from high school and college