

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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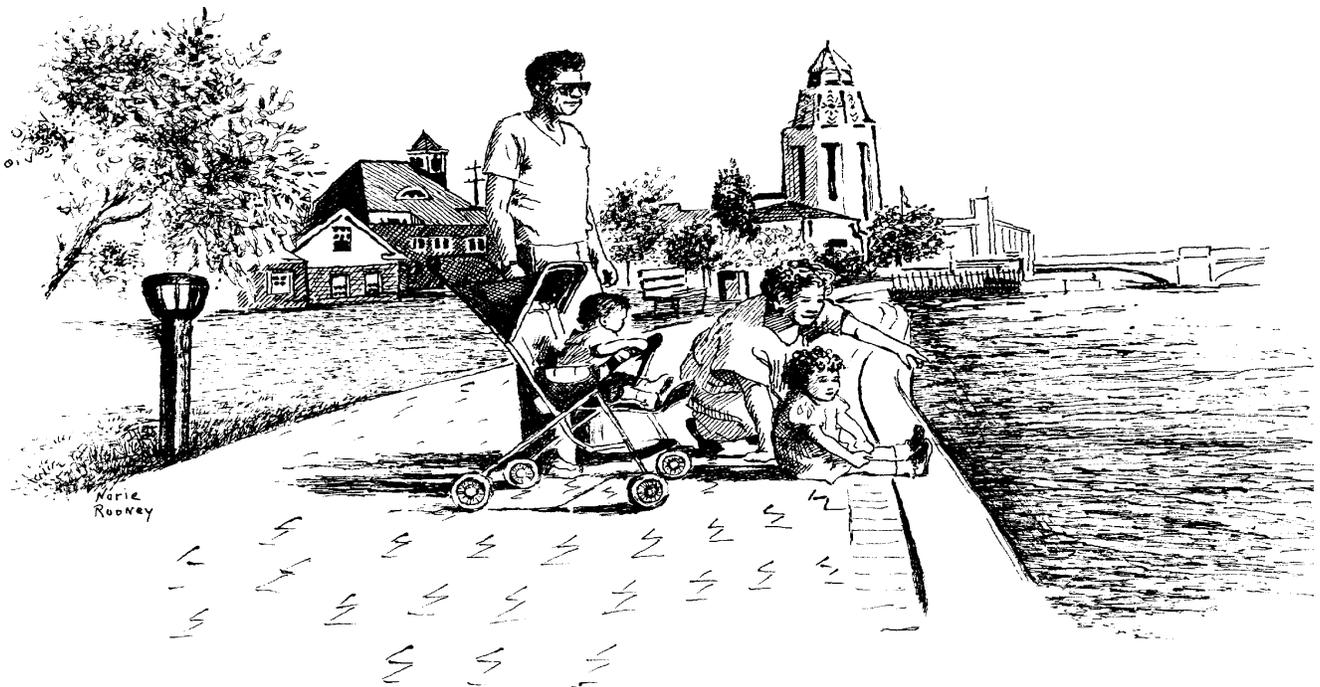
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I. CHAPTER FOCUS

St. Charles is part of a larger region, which it shares with other communities. In the last 20 years, the predominant regional growth trend has been outward migration toward communities like St. Charles. Although the region's population has grown only 4% since 1970, St. Charles and other outer communities have grown significantly. As the population of these outer communities increases, their boundaries grow closer together. As the space between them shrinks, the potential for conflict between communities increases. As the space between them shrinks, the potential for conflict between communities increases. A community can lose its identity if there is no transition between it and its neighbors. On the practical side, failure to define future boundaries can lead to inefficient municipal services. Therefore, this Chapter defines St. Charles' anticipated future limits as a municipality and as a community.

Within the community, the City interacts with several independent governmental units such as the Park District and School District. Each district has its own boundaries, and some encompass a much larger area than the City. The maps in this Chapter show the boundaries of these other districts to clarify the geographic relationships.



II. FINDINGS

A. Jurisdictions

St. Charles is located in Kane and DuPage Counties, 34 miles directly west of the City of Chicago. The City is centrally placed within a north-south linear band of urban development referred to as the Fox River Valley. St. Charles, with its neighbors Geneva and Batavia, is known as one of the “Tri-Cities” located between the two largest cities along the Fox River within Kane County: Elgin to the north and Aurora to the south. Urbanization of the Fox River Valley can be attributed to its natural resources and its proximity to Chicago.

As the region grows, St. Charles shares more of its boundaries with neighboring communities. Currently, St. Charles shares its southern boundary with Geneva. To the east its boundaries meet those of West Chicago and the DuPage Airport. To the northeast, the common boundary between Wayne and St. Charles will increase through annexation of land to both towns.

The City interacts with a number of overlapping jurisdictions and districts. These include Kane County, St. Charles Township, the St. Charles Park District and School Districts 303 (St. Charles) and U-46 (Elgin). (See Map 2).

B. Planning Areas

St. Charles is a maturing community that is beginning to reach the limits of its growth. As St. Charles matures, future land use planning should focus on the critical areas between communities. Three distinct Planning Areas were established to help focus the future land use planning process (See Map 3). The Planning Areas differ in the degree of control and jurisdiction the City has and will have. This Plan strives to preserve the integrity and function of each Planning Area while ensuring a gradual transition from one to another.

1. The Immediate Planning Area is the current incorporated area of the City. This is where the City exercises all of its authority and provides all of its services. In any planning effort, the quality of life in the Immediate Planning Area should be preserved.
2. The Compatible Planning Area is the area that could be annexed to the City by the year 2010, based on the assumptions presented in this Plan. The Compatible Planning Area generally coincides with the future water and sewer service area for the City. Annexations beyond this area should be carefully scrutinized.

3. The Influence Planning Area is the City's expected future mile and a half jurisdictional area. If the City extends its boundaries to fill out the Compatible Planning Area, all of the Influence Planning Area will be within a mile and a half of St. Charles' boundaries. This region is important as a transition from city to county development. Although it is not part of the City, it affects and is affected by the City.

The plan strives to preserve the integrity and function of these three Planning Areas while insuring a gradual transition from one to another.

III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- A. Foster good relationships between St. Charles and neighboring jurisdictions.**
 - 1. Participate in and promote joint planning efforts between St. Charles and adjoining municipalities.
 - 2. Negotiate and enter into boundary agreements with adjoining municipalities. Where such agreements cannot be successfully negotiated, it would then be appropriate to adopt a more aggressive annexation policy for the affected area.

- B. Encourage land use, density and design in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan, regardless of jurisdiction.**
 - 1. Work with Kane County and other municipalities to implement joint planning agreements under the Local Land Resource Management Planning Act or similar enabling legislation.
 - 2. Continue enforcement of the City's subdivision regulations within the mile and one-half jurisdiction area.

- C. Seek to annex areas within the Compatible Planning Area so that they are developed in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.**
 - 1. Where the City surrounds property less than 60 acres in area, annex it in cooperation with the property owner with an annexation agreement wherever possible. Forcibly annex property only when a reasonable agreement cannot be reached and there are significant risks in not doing so.
 - 2. Where property is contiguous to the City and cannot be annexed to or developed within another jurisdiction, annex it in conjunction with proposed development of the property, with an annexation agreement.
 - 3. Where property could be annexed to or developed within another jurisdiction, consider negotiating an annexation agreement with the property owner prior to proposed development, where necessary to preserve the City's position with respect to controlling development.
 - 4. Where developed property requests annexation, carefully evaluate the potential costs and liabilities to the City.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

The Planning Areas Chapter outlines the parameters of growth for St. Charles. These parameters focus our planning efforts by identifying where the priorities should be. Each of the three Planning Areas has a different level of City influence or control and so should be addressed differently. This will help create a community confident of its future and secure with its neighbors.

Planning will be most effective if St. Charles channels its efforts toward those areas over which it has the most control. Therefore, the Planning Areas imply a primary focus on the incorporated City, exercising appropriate authority within the Compatible Planning Area, and participating in joint planning efforts and agreements wherever possible within the Influence Planning Area.