

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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I. CHAPTER FOCUS

“Community Facilities” are the public and semipublic institutions which form what could be described as the community’s life-support system. Without effective fire and police protection, people would not feel safe and secure in the community; without a range of health care facilities, they would be forced to leave the local area when in need. The Community College and Public Library systems facilitate learning to enhance quality of life and economic competitiveness. Quality community facilities are not provided by governmental action alone. Individual citizens involved in service clubs, nonprofit organizations, and other community groups sponsor individual projects and provide ongoing leadership within the community.



II. FINDINGS

A. Police Protection

The St. Charles Police Department protects the lives and property of people living and working within the community. The Operations Division provides law enforcement and criminal investigation services, while the Support Services Division provides crime prevention, records services, DARE presentations, and school liaison services.

People are the greatest asset of the Police Department. Collective and individual professional training and self-development are top priorities for today and the future. Every attempt is made to recruit highly-qualified entry-level officers and to then develop their skills, knowledge, and abilities to serve the community and to develop future leaders for the Department. The Department's manpower must also grow as the community grows. In determining future manpower needs, commercial, industrial and residential growth should all be considered. The community's calls for service are evaluated each year to identify trends in citizen needs. The analysis of calls for service are then projected for upcoming years to be used in the planning and allocation of manpower.

The Police Department physical plant is located near the center of St. Charles in the municipal complex on north First Avenue. This site is somewhat restricted for significant modification to the present facility. Future planning should incorporate possible consideration of an alternative site that would allow construction of a 25,000 to 30,000 square foot facility. The Police facility is currently being studied by an architectural firm that specializes in public safety buildings. This space study is designed to match the potential growth of the City with the need for police services.

Several elements should be considered as part of a building expansion plan: 1) space for additional personnel and their equipment; 2) additional records storage; 3) adequate meeting and training rooms for police staff and related community meetings.

Support equipment is critical to the effective functioning of the Department. Mobile data terminals are currently on order for installation in all patrol vehicles. These units will speed up the ability of officers to communicate with dispatchers, car to car, and to conduct records checks, both locally and within the National Crime Information Center. To maintain and enhance service, equipment must be replaced periodically for optimum dependability. Replacing equipment also can take advantage of technological advances in the new equipment, which helps the Department to fulfill its mission efficiently and effectively.

One of the best ways to assure community safety is through community participation and education. Neighborhood Watch, Crimestoppers, and Helping Hand are some of the cooperative programs offered by the Department. The Department believes that its most effective crime prevention activities involve youths. Providing information about crime and drugs to those who are forming their values in life can help assure a safe, secure City of the future. The “National Night Out Against Crime” and Safety Town are two additional programs that are successful in this area.

The Police Department has implemented a philosophy of “Problem Oriented Policing”. P.O.P. combines the empowerment of the patrol officer to solve crimes and service problems at the point where the greatest impact occurs with an involvement of all City resources and citizens. Pro-active problem solving is used to identify high incident locations and types of police calls. Officers then work toward finding a permanent solution and not just a temporary one.

B. Fire Prevention and Protection

The St. Charles Fire Department provides fire suppression, fire prevention, public safety education, emergency services, and fire safety education services. Its mission is the protection of life and property.

The St. Charles Fire Department operates three full-service fire/emergency medical dispatch stations: One on First Avenue, one on Production Drive, and one on Campton Hills Road. The Department serves the unincorporated areas outside the City within the St. Charles Fire Protection District, a separate taxing district, on a contractual basis. The current level of service is excellent, as indicated by an Insurance Services Office rating of 2.

To maintain a high level of service as additional development occurs, one or two additional fire stations will be needed. If a bridge across the Fox River is constructed in the vicinity of Red Gate Road, four stations will be enough; the fourth station should be located near Red Gate Road and Route 31. If no bridge is built near Red Gate Road, a fifth station will be needed on the east side of the river.

Equipment needs will include two additional pieces of major firefighting apparatus, as well as the routine replacement of some existing equipment. Emergency services will require two fully operational paramedic ambulances.

The Department's educational programs encourage safer practices which help prevent fires, increasing the department's effectiveness. The review, adoption, and enforcement of up-to-date building and fire prevention codes is also a key to more effective service.

C. Health Services

The City of St. Charles provides for emergency medical services in a rather unique way. The City is one of six participants in an inter-governmental agreement to provide ambulance services in the Tri-City area of St. Charles, Geneva and Batavia and their respective surrounding fire protection areas. This agreement provides for a real estate tax for ambulance services. The funds realized are directed to the City of St. Charles, as lead agency for Tri-City Ambulance, which provides for services within the area protected.

The ambulance system provides four advanced life support ambulance units and two basic life support units 24 hours per day, each day of the year. All units are operated out of the respective three fire departments with an automatic move up system through the combined 9-1-1 communications center. Personnel operating the units are cross-certified as both emergency medical personnel and fire fighters by the State of Illinois. The system annually received excellent ratings from the Mobile Intensive Care Unit System and has been continuously certified since 1982 for advance life support services.

St. Charles has excellent health services available to its residents, in the immediate vicinity as well as in the metropolitan area. Delnor-Community Hospital, located on the west side of Geneva just south of St. Charles, provides a wide range of diagnostic services, medical and surgical care, and preventive programs. This 118-bed facility has a Level II trauma center and a Level II high-risk nursery. The medical staff has more than 250 professionals practicing in more than 30 specialties.

The future status of the former Delnor Hospital campus on Fifth Avenue has not been determined; if its use for medical care purposes is discontinued, any alternate use should be closely scrutinized for its effects on the neighborhood.

The Valley Ambulatory Surgery Center at Randallwood on Dean Street west of Randall Road provides out-patient surgery services as an alternative to hospitalization for routine procedures. There are several medical office facilities in St. Charles including the Central DuPage Health Systems facility at Foxfield Drive and Kirk Road, the Delnor campus on north Fifth Avenue, and the Randallwood/Timber Ridge complex.

Tri-City Family Services is a private, not-for-profit, community-based counseling agency. Delnor-Community Hospital works in conjunction with Tri-City in identifying needs of the community which require further intervention.

The role of the Kane County Health Department is to coordinate, standardize, and increase the accessibility of public health services. Services provided by the Health Department include countywide health inspections, well child services and preventative health screening.

Through the above agencies and services the health needs of the community are being met.

D. Public Library

The St. Charles Public Library District serves a population of more than 38,000 people. It is a resource for education and research, as well as for recreation and enjoyment. As such, it is an important element in the social, cultural and economic life of the community. Its holdings include more than 135,000 books, 9,200 tapes and other recorded media items, and 1200 periodicals. In addition to loaning materials, the Library conducts cultural and educational programs for adults and children. It also maintains online services so that patrons can access information via computer at home or at their place of business.

The Library's facilities have been significantly expanded over the years, to keep pace with growing needs. An addition to the original Carnegie Library building was constructed in 1964. In 1991, a second major addition more than doubled the available floor area. 1995 saw the completion of the mezzanine level of the 1991 addition.

E. Other Services

Elgin Community College serves St. Charles residents with a wide variety of adult educational services. Some courses of study are focused toward high school graduates whose goal is an associate degree, and others are for students who expect to transfer to a four year college. Other programs include courses oriented toward building skills for employees as well as custom designed programs for specific business needs. North Central College, whose main campus is in Naperville, offers several courses at an extension campus in St. Charles.

Kane County provides governmental services to St. Charles residents including the judicial system, the County jail and juvenile detention facilities, the County highway system, maintenance of vital records, recording of documents, and tax collection. St.

Charles Township provides social programs including general assistance and services to senior citizens; it also conducts tax assessments.

Service Clubs such as Rotary, Kiwanis, Exchange Club and Jaycees have always been provided a forum for stewardship of the community's resources. Nonprofit organizations such as the Neighborhood Improvement Association of St. Charles Township, Inc., St. Charles Heritage Society, the Salvation Army, United Way, the Red Cross and Community Contacts provide cultural and social services to residents of the community.

III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Protect the lives and property of the population living and working within the City against crime, in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

1. Expand the Police Department's manpower as the City grows, based on accepted standards in proportion to resident population and nonresidential development.
2. Expand the Police Department's facilities as needed, to accommodate the necessary increases in manpower and programs.
3. Continue to improve the Police Department's effectiveness by acquiring and using up-to-date communications and support equipment.
4. Continue and expand community participation and education programs, especially those oriented toward children.
5. Design land uses and transportation systems to enhance access for police emergency and patrol activity, and management of disaster situations.

B. Protect the lives and property of the population living and working within the City against fire and related hazards, in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

1. Develop an additional fire station or stations to provide optimum response time throughout the Fire Department's service area.
2. Widen the scope of and participation in the Fire Department's educational programs, to help prevent fires and save lives and property.
3. Adopt codes and standards for building construction and fire safety to anticipate changing technologies as they evolve.
4. Deliver all services at a cost substantially below national or state averages, while maintaining quality.
5. Continue employee education and training to assure the delivery of services in a professional manner.
6. Design land uses and transportation systems to enhance access for emergency medical services, fire fighting, and management of disaster situations.

- C. Maintain a high quality health care system which is responsive to St. Charles' needs.**
1. Encourage health care services to be provided locally.
 2. Identify alternative uses for the Delnor-Community Hospital site which will be compatible with the neighborhood.
- D. Maintain a public library system which supports the educational, cultural, and economic needs of the community.**
1. Support the St. Charles Public Library District in its goal of providing services to a growing community.
 2. Recognize the Library facility as an asset to the downtown area of St. Charles.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION STATEMENT

During the past five years, the Fire Department's ISO rating was increased from Class 3 to Class 2. The Police Department implemented Problem Oriented Policing and has consistently been awarded fully accredited status by the Commission of Accreditation for law enforcement operations, making it among 380 agencies out of 25,000 departments in the nation that have been accredited. These achievements demonstrate professionalism and dedication to quality community service by St. Charles' public safety services.

During the next five years, community facilities will be challenged by changes in society relating to crime, health care, and lifestyles. The public and private institutions that support community facilities will face the challenge of continuing to maintain the community's quality of life in the face of these changes.