

4 Land Use Plan

This chapter provides polices for the future development and use of land within the City of St. Charles. The Land Use Plan is based on several factors and influences, including extensive community input; the Vision, Goals and Objectives identified for the St. Charles community; market and demographic analysis; and an assessment of existing conditions, including the established developed areas and infrastructure of the City and its planning jurisdiction. The plan provides a general assessment of land potential and recommendations for what types of land uses will best meet the needs of the community in the long-term.

The Land Use Plan builds upon the existing land use pattern in the City. In general, the plan emphasizes the protection of residential neighborhoods, the provision of community facilities, diversification of the City's tax base, access to goods and services, capitalization on regional traffic, and the preservation and enhancement of desirable environmental features.

A goal of the Land Use Plan is to assist City staff, residents, businesses, and elected and appointed officials in making future land use and development related policy decisions. While the Land Use Plan is specific enough to provide guidance on land use decisions, it is also flexible enough to allow for individual negotiations and the consideration of creative approaches to land development that are consistent with the overall policies and guidelines included in the Comprehensive Plan.

This section also includes a Residential Areas Framework Plan and Commercial Areas Framework Plan that supplement the overall Land Use Plan with more detail for these areas. In addition, four key areas of the City and its future growth areas are further explored in the Subarea Plans. Subsequent chapters of the Plan will address land uses related to community facilities, parks and open space, and specific sub-areas of the community.

In total, ten (10) distinct land use classifications have been established for the City of St. Charles, including 4 residential and 2 commercial uses. The following land use categories are outlined in this chapter:

- » Rural Single Family Residential
- » Single Family Detached Residential
- » Single Family Attached Residential
- » Multi-Family Residential
- » Public/Semi-Public
- » Parks/Open Space
- » Neighborhood Commercial
- » Corridor/Regional Commercial
- » Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)
- » Industrial/Business Park



The First Street development's plaza fountain

You, my firstborn, are to be the guardian of the civic, the business, the industrial life of this community.

- Legend of the Four Sons of Charlemagne

Residential

Four types of residential land uses are classified on the Land Use Plan: Rural Single Family, Single-Family Detached, Single-Family Attached, and Multi-Family. Each use is described in more detail below, and the Residential Areas Framework Plan on page 41 provides additional policies and recommendations pertaining to the City's residential lands uses.

Rural Single Family

The rural single family designation is intended to accommodate large-lot single family development on the outer limits of the City. Rural Residential areas are characterized by large lots that may have developed as part of a formal subdivision or independently in unincorporated Kane County prior to annexation. These areas are typically located on the periphery of the City, removed from the City's busier commercial areas, providing a unique opportunity to live in a rural setting near a vibrant city. They are characteristic of estate properties, including the absence of sidewalks and street trees and open swale drainage systems as opposed to curb and gutter.

Single Family Detached

Single family detached residential areas should consist primarily of single family detached homes on lots subdivided and platted in an organized and planned manner. Downtown, single family residential areas consist primarily of older buildings, many rehabilitated, with small yards and minimal garage space. Single family residential detached homes are the most prevalent building type in the community, and should continue to be so.

Single Family Attached

Single family attached structures are connected horizontally, typically two stories high, but individual units do not stack vertically. Single family attached homes can serve as transitional areas between single family homes and commercial or multi-family development, and also act as an intermediate step for residents between apartment/condo living and home ownership. These types of units are also popular for empty nesters and others looking to downsize to a smaller home.

Multi-Family

Multi-family residential structures contain multiple housing units, are usually stacked vertically and attached horizontally, and typically have common hallways and other amenities. Examples of multi-family residential developments include apartments, condominiums, and senior housing. Most multi-family developments are located in or near areas of intense commercial development with access to goods, services, and the transportation network. Because of market pressures, many single family residences Downtown have been converted to multi-family. In addition to areas designated Multi-Family Residential, the land use plan also provides for multi-family units within the Mixed Use land use designation.

Recommendations

Detached single family homes are the most common type of residential use within St. Charles. While this is often the most desirable use for a given area, the City should ensure that housing options continue serve the diverse population of the St. Charles community. In particular, development that meets the specific needs of elderly residents, ranging from multi-family units to independent living, should be encouraged to allow residents to age in place. Where multi-family developments are suggested, the City should work to make sure they occur in a more coordinated and organized fashion.

The City should investigate new methods to improve the conditions of all residential neighborhoods, including maintenance programs and incentives for developing vacant properties, while continuing to enforce building and design codes, regulations, and standards.

Public/Semi-Public

This land use designation includes a variety of uses that are typically classified as public or semi-public and include municipal facilities, other government facilities, schools, religious institutions, and more. These uses provide essential facilities and services to the community and are scattered throughout the City. Many public and semi-public uses are compatible with residential areas, but some are more intense (like public works yards) and may require location within or adjacent to commercial or industrial areas.

Recommendations

The City should ensure that high-quality facilities and services are available and desirable to the public throughout St. Charles. The City should support existing facilities and services while encouraging new desirable facilities to locate in the City. Detailed recommendations for this land use category can be found in **Chapter 5 – Community Facilities Plan**.

Parks/Open Space

The Parks/Open Space category includes parks, golf courses, wooded areas, and other public and private natural areas and open spaces. These areas, combined with environmental features including watersheds, wetlands, streams, and water features, make up the City's green infrastructure network. These land use areas and features will require coordinated planning and cooperation with the St. Charles Park District.

Recommendations

The City should provide adequate open space and recreation to the community while improving public access to these areas. Natural and environmental assets should be protected and enhanced. Detailed recommendations for this land use category can be found in **Chapter 6 – Parks and Open Space Plan**.

Commercial

Successful commercial and retail areas are important to the City. In addition to diversifying the City's tax base, they generate property tax and sales tax revenue, and provide shopping, dining, services, recreation and employment opportunities for residents. The Land Use Plan designates two types of commercial land uses: Neighborhood Commercial and Corridor/Regional Commercial. Each of these commercial uses is described in more detail below, and the Commercial Areas Framework Plan on page 46 provides additional policies and recommendations pertaining to the City's commercial lands uses.

Neighborhood Commercial

Areas designated as neighborhood commercial are intended toward smaller-scale retail and service commercial areas geared toward providing for the daily shopping, service, and convenience needs of surrounding neighborhoods. Uses in the neighborhood commercial areas should be of a scale and intensity to be considered generally compatible with adjacent and nearby residential uses.

Corridor/Regional Commercial

Areas designated as corridor/regional commercial are intended to accommodate larger shopping centers and developments that serve a more regional function, drawing on a customer base that extends beyond the City limits. These areas often have a mix of "big box" stores, national retailers, and a "critical mass" of multiple stores and large shared parking areas. Areas designated for corridor/regional commercial are located primarily in larger consolidated areas along the City's heavily traveled corridors and intersections. Commercial service uses can also have an appropriate place in corridor/regional commercial areas, but must be compatible with adjacent and nearby retail and commercial shopping areas and be located as to not occupy prime retail locations.

Recommendations

Most of the commercial uses in St. Charles are clustered within the Plan's four subareas: West Gateway, East Gateway, Downtown, and Main Street. Specific recommendations for each of these subareas are presented in **Chapter 9**.

In general, the City should promote a mix of commercial uses that are compatible and consistent with the vision for each commercial district. This can be done through multiple methods including zoning revisions, relocation incentives, development incentives, and others. Potential catalyst projects that could stimulate further redevelopment should be given priority. The City should ensure adequate parking is conveniently available to businesses, possibly by facilitating shared parking scenarios. Site access should be improved not only for vehicles by managing traffic using signal coordination, signal timing, and physical roadway alterations, but also for pedestrians by connecting commercial and residential areas with a complete sidewalk network. The City should enforce standards for design, site configuration, landscaping, buffering and screening, and signage for all commercial development.

Mixed Use

Mixed use areas should be characterized by uses and development patterns that provide a vibrant, safe, attractive, and "walkable" pedestrian environment. Mixed use areas should have strong pedestrian orientation and seek to create a more interesting and engaging pedestrian experience, accommodating pedestrian generating uses on the ground floor, and other uses above. Mixed use areas should provide a balance of uses unique to each site based on its location. Retail, entertainment, and dining uses are ideally suited for the ground floor with residential, educational, medical and/or office uses located on the upper floors. The primary objective is to provide an appropriate and compact mix of uses to foster an active and interesting district. Parking in the mixed use areas should be provided on-street, or in subtly located parking garages or parking lots. Although the Land Use Plan designates only Downtown St. Charles as a Mixed Use area, the Commercial Area Framework Plan identifies other locations where Mixed Use development could occur.

Industrial/Business Park

Areas designated for industrial/business park are intended to accommodate a variety of uses ranging from light assembly, storage and distribution, low intensity fabrication operations, research and "tech" industry applications, intense commercial service uses, and more. These areas are also intended to provide for business park/office park uses, which could include "stand alone" office buildings and complexes or several buildings incorporated into a "campus like" setting.

Light industrial uses in St. Charles are concentrated in industrial parks, but they can also be found in commercial and office areas. As a distinct land use, these areas can provide significant employment opportunities, tax revenue generation, and, if developed correctly, can help establish a positive community image.

While these uses create significant jobs and tax revenue, care must be taken to ensure they don't become a source of blight for surrounding uses. At times, their externalities are unpopular with community members, but heavy industrial uses are generally treated as assets as long as care is taken to eliminate their negative effects.

Recommendations

Although they typically require larger land areas, convenient transportation system access, and separation from residential areas, industrial/business park are important to the City of St. Charles. Where they exist or are planned, careful consideration should be given to their impact on nearby residential areas and they should be well buffered from adjacent neighborhoods. Business parks should be provided with sufficient amenities, such as transportation options, parking, nearby retail and dining options, communal park space, etc., to make them attractive for employers and employees alike. The City should promote and encourage the improvement and rehabilitation of vacant or obsolete industrial buildings. This might involve reclassifying and rezoning obsolete manufacturing. Because many former industrial sites may be contaminated, best management practices and other green technology should be studied for potentially mitigating existing brownfield environmental impacts.

Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan builds upon the existing land use pattern in the City. In general, the plan emphasizes the protection of residential neighborhoods, the provision of community facilities, diversification of the City's tax base, access to goods and services, capitalization on regional traffic, and the preservation and enhancement of desirable environmental features.

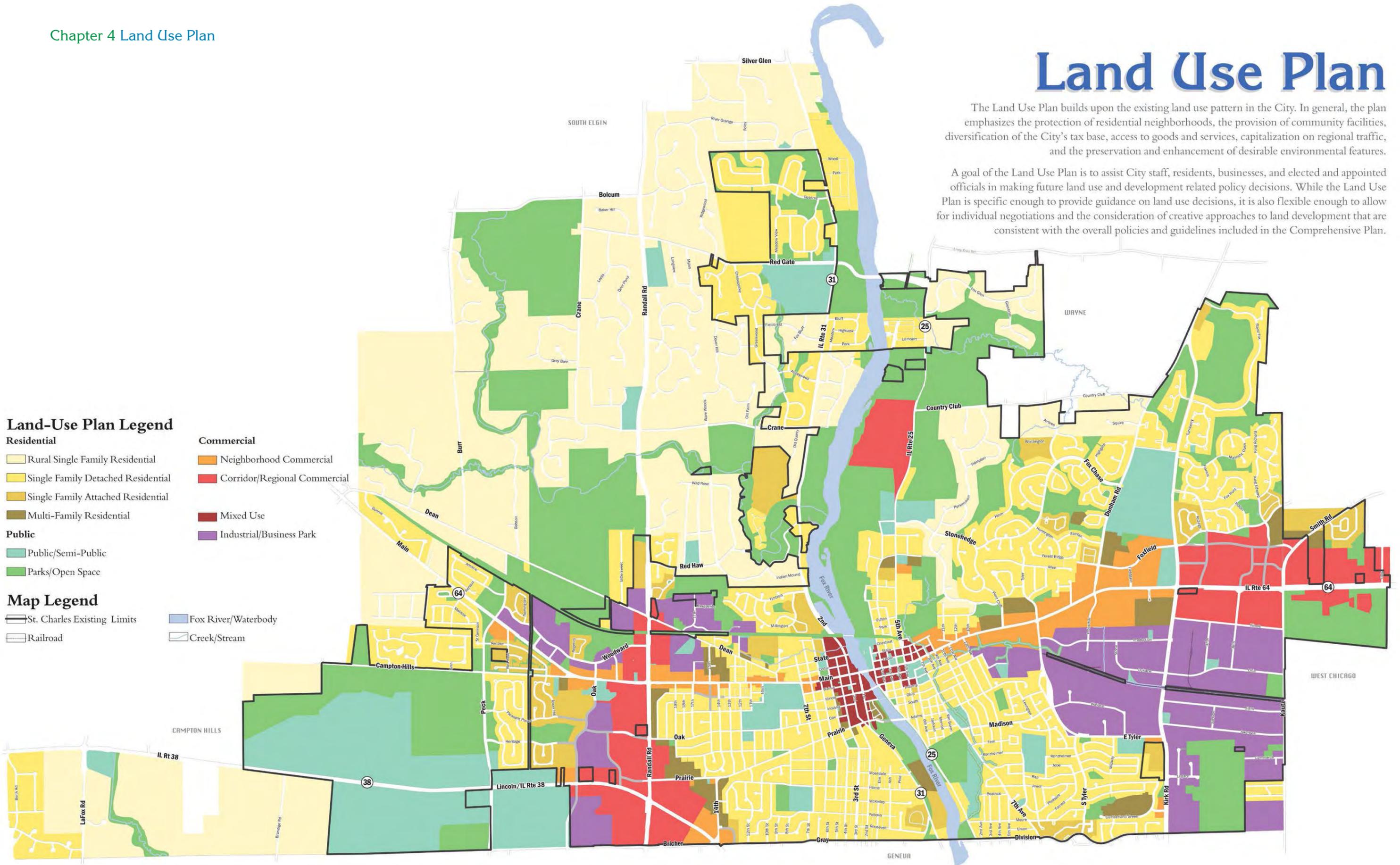
A goal of the Land Use Plan is to assist City staff, residents, businesses, and elected and appointed officials in making future land use and development related policy decisions. While the Land Use Plan is specific enough to provide guidance on land use decisions, it is also flexible enough to allow for individual negotiations and the consideration of creative approaches to land development that are consistent with the overall policies and guidelines included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Land-Use Plan Legend

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Residential | Commercial |
| Rural Single Family Residential | Neighborhood Commercial |
| Single Family Detached Residential | Corridor/Regional Commercial |
| Single Family Attached Residential | Mixed Use |
| Multi-Family Residential | Industrial/Business Park |
| Public | |
| Public/Semi-Public | |
| Parks/Open Space | |

Map Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| St. Charles Existing Limits | Fox River/Waterbody |
| Railroad | Creek/Stream |





St. Charles Residential Areas Framework Plan

The City's housing stock is diverse in age, architecture, and design and the community's residential neighborhoods are one of the most significant contributors to St. Charles's unique character and identity. Throughout the public outreach associated with this Comprehensive Plan process, residents expressed their vision and concerns for the City's residential areas. Building on this input and the Land Use Plan, the Residential Areas Plan provides policies and recommendations for the City's residential areas and further defines the type and locations of each type of residential land use. The location of each residential land use is illustrated in the Residential Areas Plan on page 41.

The Policies identified in the Residential Areas Plan are intended to:

- » Maintain St. Charles's character and identity
- » Ensure quality housing stock remains a staple of the community
- » Maintain the optimal balance of housing types within the community
- » Ensure compatibility between the City's commercial areas and its residential neighborhoods
- » Ensure compatibility between new and existing residential development
- » Encourage a diversity of housing types, sizes and prices

Rural Residential

The Rural Residential land use designation is intended to accommodate large-lot single-family development on the outer limits of the City. Rural Residential areas are characterized by large lots that may have developed as part of a formal subdivision or independently in unincorporated Kane County prior to annexation. These areas are typically located on the periphery of the City, removed from the busier commercial areas, providing a unique opportunity to live in a rural setting near a vibrant city. Rural Residential areas are characteristic of estate properties, including the absence of sidewalks and street trees, and open swale drainage systems as opposed to curb and gutter. Lot sizes in areas designated as Rural Residential are generally one-half acre or larger.

Although the regional goals articulated in both CMAP's Goto 2040 Plan and the Kane County 2040 Plan promote more compact livable centers that make public transit and commercial areas more viable, there is a need in St. Charles to balance the desired character of the City and provide a range of residential areas that are respectful of both rural and urbanized areas. The designated Rural Residential areas identified in the Land Use Plan reflect primarily existing areas within the City's future growth areas, with abundant natural resources and an existing rural character.

Single-Family Detached Residential

Single-family detached residential neighborhoods are one of the City's most cherished assets and considered one of its most defining characteristics. Single-family detached residential areas make up the single largest land use in the City of St. Charles and should continue to predominate. Much of the City's character is derived from these neighborhoods and these distinguishing features should be preserved and enhanced.

Lot sizes within single-family detached residential areas generally range between 5,000 and 18,000 square feet. These lot sizes are not exact and exceptions can occur with particular lots or neighborhoods, however this range provides a sound characterization for the residential densities anticipated throughout the City. Single-family residential lot sizes are generally consistent within developed areas and are generally reflective of the City's zoning ordinance, which will regulate development and assist with the Plan's implementation.

An important objective of the Plan is to continue to protect and enhance the City's single-family residential neighborhoods. Future development should be respectful and sensitive to the existing homes while allowing reinvestment in the form of rehabilitation, additions, and new construction in existing neighborhoods. Wherever possible, single-family neighborhoods should be buffered and protected from adjacent incompatible uses.

Historically, as residential development occurred near downtown, the traditional street grid was continued. Within these areas, single-family residential areas consist primarily of detached homes, some of which have been converted to apartments, many rehabilitated, and most with small yards and minimal garage space. Newer residential subdivisions on the other hand, have introduced more contemporary and suburban development patterns including larger lots on curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs.

Single-family residential areas should consist primarily of detached homes on lots subdivided and platted in an organized and planned manner. There are however, existing townhomes and/or duplexes scattered among the areas which are designated in the Plan as single-family detached residential. Within the single-family areas, it is the overall single-family character that serves as the rationale for the Plan's designation. Single-family residential areas must remain flexible and consider context. There may be situations where single-family attached and multi-family uses are considered appropriate within predominantly single-family detached areas. For example, street frontage, lot depth, and the presence of neighboring non-residential uses should be considered on a case-by-case basis for other types of compatible residential development.

Single-Family Attached Residential

Single-family attached structures are connected horizontally, typically two stories in height. Single-family attached homes can serve as transitional areas between Single-family neighborhoods and commercial or multi-family development, and also act as an intermediate step for residents between apartment/condo living and home ownership. These types of units are also popular for empty nesters and others looking to downsize to a smaller home.

Multi-Family

Multi-family residential structures contain multiple housing units, are usually stacked vertically and attached horizontally, and typically have common hallways and other amenities. Examples of multi-family residential developments include apartments, condominiums, and senior housing. Most multi-family developments within the City are located in, or near, areas of intense commercial development with access to goods, services and the transportation network. In addition to areas designated Multi-Family Residential, the land use plan also provides for multi-family units within the Mixed Use land use designation.

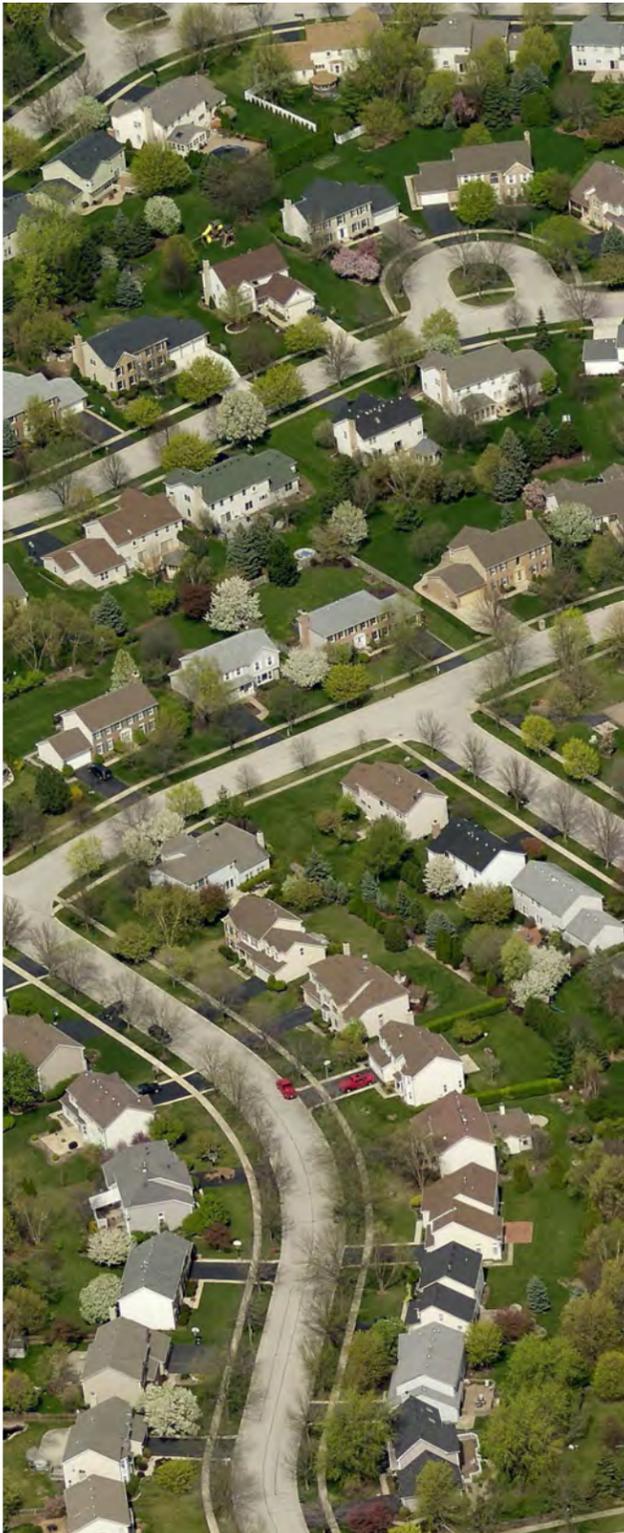
Mixed Use

The Land Use Plan for St. Charles includes a designation for Mixed Use within the Downtown. Mixed Use areas should be characterized by uses and development patterns that provide a vibrant, safe, attractive, and "walkable" pedestrian environment. This includes active commercial uses on the ground floor, and opportunities for multi-family residential units on upper floors. Although the Land Use Plan designates only Downtown St. Charles as a Mixed Use area, the Residential Areas Framework Plan identifies other locations where Mixed Use development could occur, including the former St. Charles Mall Site along IL Route 38 and the current Charlestowne Mall site on the City's east side.

Senior Housing

Senior Housing is an essential component of the City's residential offerings and should be appropriately accommodated in select locations. The notion of "aging in place" is important, as it allows residents to remain in the City as they progress through the different stages of life. Although the Residential Areas Plan does not call out specific locations for senior housing, the Plan does recognize the importance of developing additional senior housing within the community to accommodate the City's existing and future senior population.

In general, senior housing can be in the form of single-family detached, attached, or multi-family dwellings. As locations are considered for accommodating senior housing development, preference should be given to proximity of transit, goods, and services. The ability to walk to restaurants, shops, transit, recreation, entertainment, and services is often important to seniors as it reduces their dependence on the automobile for daily needs. Given issues of proximity, areas within or near the Downtown, Randall Road, or near the intersection of Kirk Road and Main Street should be considered ideal for senior housing.



Residential Land Use Policies

The Residential Land Use Policies focus on enhancing the City's overall residential character by improving existing residential areas and promoting new high-quality residential development in appropriate locations. The following policies will assist the City in future decision making regarding residential land use throughout the City.

Preserve the character of the City's existing single family residential neighborhoods.

The City's residential areas are composed of a number of unique and distinct neighborhoods. While they may differ in configuration, unit type, and lot size, these neighborhoods are well established and have their own character. Development and reinvestment within these neighborhoods should be context sensitive, and compatible with the established neighborhood character and fabric. Regardless of the location or housing type, residential development or redevelopment should be carefully regulated to ensure compatibility with the scale and character of surrounding and adjacent residential neighborhoods. New infill development, teardown redevelopment, and alterations to existing development should maintain a setback, height, bulk, and orientation similar to its surroundings.

Maintain a diverse and affordable mix of housing types to allow St. Charles to continue to attract and retain families and residents.

The City defines affordable housing as "housing in which mortgage, amortization, taxes, insurance, and condominium or association fees, if any, constitute no more than 30% of the gross annual household income for a household of the size that may occupy the unit." Making affordable housing available also provides workforce housing – housing that is affordable to "critical service" employees that contribute to the quality of life in the City, as well as providing a range of housing options for first time home buyers, young families and to facilitate "aging in place". Title 17.18 Inclusionary Housing of the City Code seeks to provide Affordable Dwelling Units within new residential developments by requiring developers to provide a proportionate share of affordable housing, or fees in lieu thereof, to ensure that an adequate stock of affordable housing is, and remains, available in the City of St. Charles.

Locate new multi-family residential developments in appropriate locations within the City and consider the implications of concentrating units in one location or area of the City.

Throughout the outreach exercises associated with the Comprehensive Plan, residents expressed concerns over the concentration of apartments on the City's west side. Citing issues such as traffic, lack of pride in ownership, transient school children, and straining municipal infrastructure, residents are opposed to more "rentals" in the community. Apartments, however, are an important component of a healthy housing stock, expanding housing options for those wishing to live in St. Charles but cannot afford, or have chosen not to, own their home. Apartments are also only a subset of the dwelling types that comprise multi-family housing, which can be owner occupied (i.e. condominiums). In addition to assisting with the community's goals to provide affordable housing in the community, multi-family housing contributes to residential density which can improve the viability of shopping areas in the community. Recognizing that this Plan is dynamic and not "set in stone", the City should promote multi-family housing in areas identified in the Land Use and Residential Areas Plans, but consider proposals in other areas provided any significant impact on schools, traffic, and other infrastructure can be mitigated.

Seek opportunities to provide senior housing within the City considering locations that are within close proximity to recreation, public transit, healthcare, and daily goods and services.

The City seeks to provide opportunities for residents to "age in place", meaning that housing within the community accommodates all stages of life. As members of the community become older, and their lifestyles change, the City's diverse housing stock should provide opportunities to remain in the City of St. Charles. Although the Residential Areas Plan does not call out specific locations for senior housing, the Plan does recognize the importance of developing additional senior housing within the community to accommodate the City's existing and future senior population. From active living through assisted living, the City will continue to provide a wide range of housing types to accommodate its seniors.

Consider the potential impact of new residential development on schools, municipal services and traffic.

As a mature community, the City's infrastructure is well

established, particularly in the older areas of the community. Unlike emerging suburbs that are continuously growing, widening roads and building schools as necessary, the community infrastructure in St. Charles is well established and not as easily adaptable. Although road and intersections can be widened, and schools expanded, a less costly approach would be to work within the framework of the City's well established infrastructure, evaluating proposed development's impact on City systems and working with developers to mitigate and minimize strains on local systems.

Continue to work with the St. Charles Park District to ensure the residential areas of the City are well served by neighborhood parks and recreation.

Parks are a contributing factor to the high quality of life in St. Charles. To ensure the community continues to be well served by parks and recreation, the City should continue to administer its parkland dedication as specified in Title 16.10 Dedications of the City Code. Although the existing parkland dedication requirements may satisfy the provision of open space for larger subdivisions, a provision in the Code allows for cash-in-lieu of a park dedication if the park size is not "practical." As the City matures, it is expected that most of the future growth will consist of smaller infill development with smaller dedication requirements, and accepting cash donations may leave these developments under served by "close to home" park space. The City should work with the Park District to better define "practical" and better align this policy to reflect the changing character of residential development within the City and consider accepting smaller park dedications to provide adequate open space for infill subdivisions.

Discourage and/or prohibit "cut-through" traffic in residential neighborhoods as necessary.

The City's residential neighborhoods are one of its most cherished assets and the residents value their homes and neighborhoods for comfort and safety they provide. Non-local, or "cut through", traffic is a threat to neighborhoods, as motorists use quiet neighborhood streets as a means of bypassing traffic on more heavily-traveled routes. With commercial corridors throughout much of the City, almost all neighborhoods are susceptible to cut-through traffic. A combination of signage, improved traffic enforcement, and traffic management measures should be used to discourage cut-through traffic in all residential areas when it is identified as a problem by residents and threat to a neighborhood's safety and residential quality of life. Through traffic should be routed



around residential neighborhoods on arterial roadways and collector streets designed to carry higher volumes of traffic with minimal impact on residential areas.

Continue to expand sidewalk network to provide better connections between residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, and employment areas, while being cognizant of the character of individual neighborhoods.

Title 12.30 of the City Code requires sidewalks on both sides of streets within the City. However, some of the City's neighborhoods were constructed before this policy and as a result there are gaps in the City's sidewalk network, particularly in older areas of the City. The City's sidewalk network should continue to be expanded to provide better connectivity between the community's residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, and employment centers. Within residential areas, sidewalks should be installed and maintained as determined by the City through a public engagement process, understanding that construction of traditional sidewalks may negatively impact the more rural character of some neighborhoods. Sidewalk installation should consider the desires of residents and the existing character of neighborhoods; however, preservation of character should not supersede pedestrian safety and connectivity. The City should be cognizant of the differences in the character of individual neighborhoods when determining locations and types of sidewalk installation.

Enforce property maintenance codes for residential properties.

Maintaining residential properties is important to protect property values and preserve the character and desirability of residential neighborhoods. City Code Title 15.40 adopts and modifies the 2012 edition of the International Property Maintenance Code that established minimum standards for upkeep and appearance. The recent economic downturn and associated foreclosures has drawn attention to the impact a neglected home can have on adjacent properties. As a component of, or in addition to this program, the City should also explore the creation of a vacant building registration and inspection program to help prevent foreclosed and/or neglected properties from falling into disrepair. The City should also explore the creation of a property maintenance program to assist residents, particularly seniors, with affordable lawn cutting, snow removal, and other appropriate services.

Ensure residential areas are adequately screened/buffered from adjacent non-residential uses and activity.

The composition of the City's commercial districts along corridors that transect the City means that there are many areas where commercial uses abut residential properties and neighborhoods. The use of horizontal and vertical buffering and screening, including berms, fencing, and landscaping, should be promoted to protect neighborhoods from abutting commercial or industrial land uses. The City should identify areas where land use conflicts are problematic and explore

solutions to mitigate the conflicts, including buffering and screening. Additionally, the City's landscape ordinance could be revised to require enhanced screening and an amortization schedule to ensure compliance for non-conforming properties within a set time frame.

Prioritize infill development over annexation and development

While the era of substantial residential growth is over in St. Charles, there remain some isolated opportunities for residential development on the City's west side. While most of these opportunities are within unincorporated Kane County, they fall within the City's 1.5-mile extraterritorial planning jurisdiction defined by State statute. It is recommended that the City carefully consider annexation and growth into these areas while vacant and/or underutilized residential properties exist within the City's boundaries. When residential development does occur within the City's growth areas, it should occur in areas immediately adjacent to existing developed areas so as to prevent "leap frog" development and the resulting costs and burdens of unnecessarily extending infrastructure systems in an unwise manner.

Transition densities to maximize compatibility

As St. Charles approaches its full build-out, its new growth and investment will shift from new development in outlying areas to redevelopment of infill sites, and many of the available infill parcels are situated between established residential areas and the City's busy commercial districts. This shift will create new challenges and obstacles for development not associated with easier "green-field" development, including: adaptive reuse, fixed/smaller parcel sizes, greater neighborhood sensitivity, and increased density/intensity. A recommended strategy for improved compatibility is place similar density and lot sizes adjacent to existing residential areas and then to transition to high residential densities moving closer to commercial areas and busy streets. This approach assists with compatibility of adjacent use areas and provides additional density to serve as a transitional land use.

Residential Areas Framework Plan

The City's housing stock is diverse in age, architecture, and design and the community's residential neighborhoods are one of the most significant contributors to St. Charles's unique character and identity. Throughout the public outreach associated with this Comprehensive Plan process, residents expressed their vision and concerns for the City's residential areas. Building on this input and the Land Use Plan, the Residential Areas Plan provides policies and recommendations for the City's residential areas and further defines the type and locations of each type of residential land use.

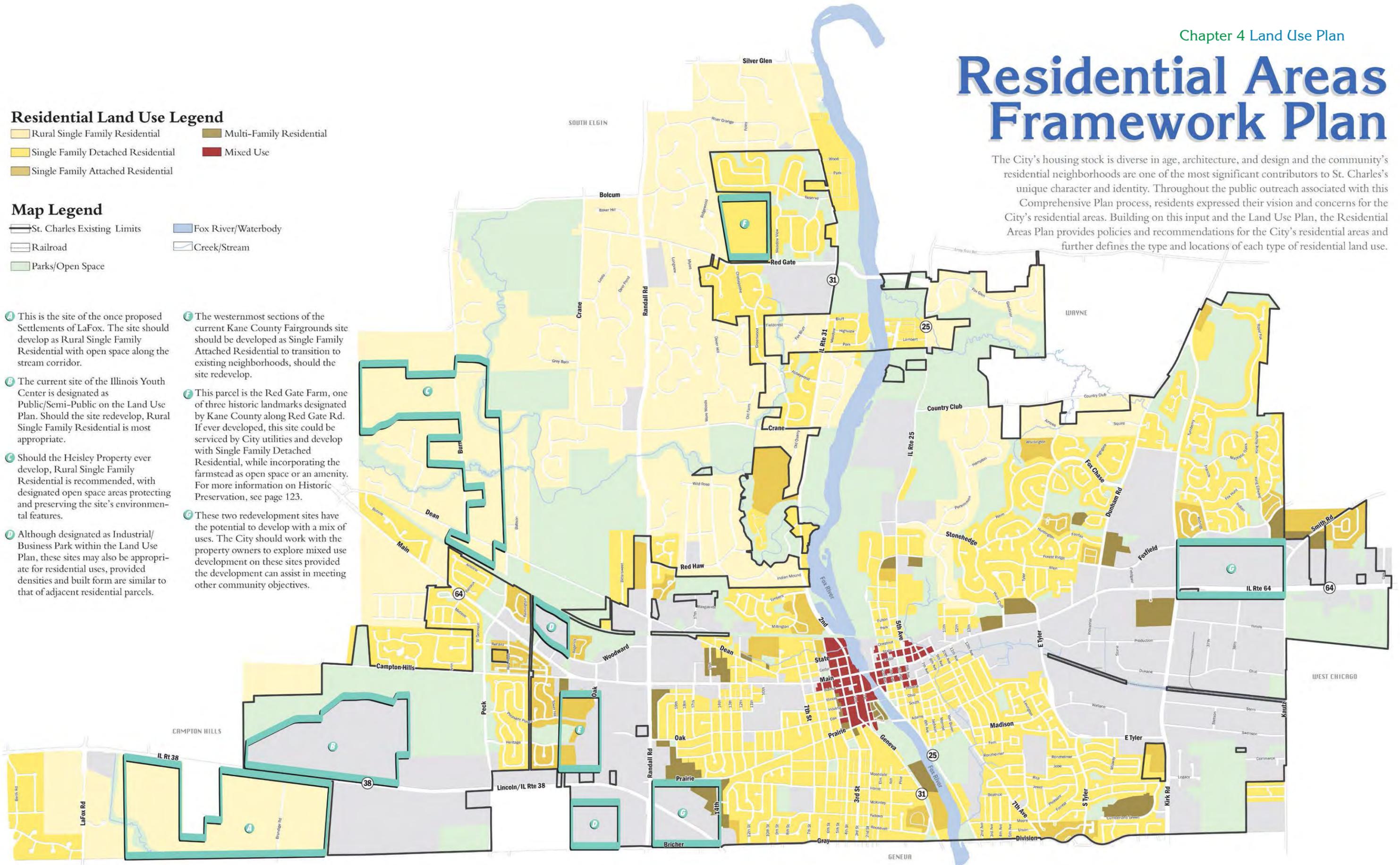
Residential Land Use Legend

- Rural Single Family Residential
- Single Family Detached Residential
- Single Family Attached Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Mixed Use

Map Legend

- St. Charles Existing Limits
- Fox River/Waterbody
- Railroad
- Parks/Open Space
- Creek/Stream

- A** This is the site of the once proposed Settlements of LaFox. The site should develop as Rural Single Family Residential with open space along the stream corridor.
- B** The current site of the Illinois Youth Center is designated as Public/Semi-Public on the Land Use Plan. Should the site redevelop, Rural Single Family Residential is most appropriate.
- C** Should the Heisley Property ever develop, Rural Single Family Residential is recommended, with designated open space areas protecting and preserving the site's environmental features.
- D** Although designated as Industrial/Business Park within the Land Use Plan, these sites may also be appropriate for residential uses, provided densities and built form are similar to that of adjacent residential parcels.
- E** The westernmost sections of the current Kane County Fairgrounds site should be developed as Single Family Attached Residential to transition to existing neighborhoods, should the site redevelop.
- F** This parcel is the Red Gate Farm, one of three historic landmarks designated by Kane County along Red Gate Rd. If ever developed, this site could be serviced by City utilities and develop with Single Family Detached Residential, while incorporating the farmstead as open space or an amenity. For more information on Historic Preservation, see page 123.
- G** These two redevelopment sites have the potential to develop with a mix of uses. The City should work with the property owners to explore mixed use development on these sites provided the development can assist in meeting other community objectives.





St. Charles Commercial Areas Framework Plan

The Commercial Areas Framework Plan provides guidance for the different commercial areas throughout the City. The Plan designates appropriate business and commercial types and activity levels along key corridors within the City and at other select locations.

Successful commercial and retail areas are important to the City. In addition to diversifying the City's tax base, they generate property tax and sales tax revenue, and provide shopping, dining, service, recreation and employment opportunities for residents.

The Policies identified in the Commercial Areas Framework Plan are intended to:

- » Provide residents with access to necessary goods and services
- » Provide opportunities for employment
- » Maintain a diverse tax base that lessens the tax burden on residents
- » Ensure compatibility between residential and commercial areas
- » Encourage a diverse mix of commercial uses to provide a variety of goods and services

Neighborhood Commercial

Areas designated as neighborhood commercial are intended for smaller-scale retail and service commercial areas geared toward providing for the daily shopping, service, and convenience needs of surrounding neighborhoods. Uses in the neighborhood commercial areas should be of a scale and intensity to be considered generally compatible with adjacent and nearby residential uses. Grocery stores, gasoline service stations, pharmacies, personal and financial services, smaller office uses, convenience and specialty retailers, and more are appropriate.

Neighborhood commercial uses should be located along major corridors and at key intersections, along the edges of residential neighborhoods as identified in the Land Use Plan. Many neighborhood commercial properties, especially those along Main Street are relatively shallow and present challenges for redevelopment. Because many of the properties along this corridor are adjacent to residential areas, buffering, screening, and setbacks should be used to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods. Hours of operation and intensity of use may also become an important issue in some neighborhood commercial areas.

Commercial service uses can also have an appropriate place in this land use designation by providing necessary services for nearby residents. Commercial services uses within the Neighborhood Commercial areas must be compatible with adjacent and nearby residential areas and be located as to not occupy prime retail locations.

Corridor/Regional Commercial

Areas designated as Corridor/Regional Commercial are intended to accommodate larger shopping centers and developments that serve a more regional function, capitalizing on traffic volumes along the City's busy streets and drawing on a customer base that extends beyond the City limits. These areas are appropriate for "big box" stores, national retailers, and regional malls or a "critical mass" of multiple stores and large shared parking areas. Commercial service uses can also have an appropriate place in corridor/regional commercial areas, but must be compatible with adjacent and nearby retail and commercial shopping areas and be located as to not occupy prime retail locations.

The Land Use Plan identifies Corridor/Regional Commercial in the City's east and west gateways, clustered around Kirk Road and Randall Road, two busy north south streets that bisect the City. Both of these areas are ideally suited for a large scale commercial/retail development capable of drawing from a larger region. At both locations, access and visibility is ideal for a more regional commercial draw, and heavy traffic volumes provide visibility desired by retailers. As development and redevelopment is considered in these areas, consideration should be given to maximizing revenue generating opportunities. It is also important to recognize the importance of promoting high-quality development in these locations as they serve as gateways into the City and are pivotal in shaping perceptions of St. Charles as visitors enter the City.

Both the Kirk Road and Randall Road corridors are critical to the economic livelihood of the City and both have challenges and issues that must be addressed in order to maintain their vitality. In addition to the recommendations and policies provided in this section of the Plan, Chapter 8 – Subarea Plans provides additional actions and considerations to maintain these areas as vital commercial centers.

Mixed Use

The Land Use Plan designates Downtown St. Charles as Mixed Use, characterized by land uses and development patterns that provide a vibrant, safe, attractive, and “walkable” pedestrian environment. Although the Land Use Plan designates only Downtown St. Charles as a Mixed Use area, the former St. Charles Mall Site along IL Route 38 and the current Charlestowne Mall site on the City’s east side have potential for mixed use development.

Mixed Use areas should have strong pedestrian orientation and seek to create a more interesting and engaging pedestrian experience, accommodating pedestrian generating uses on the ground floor, and other uses above. Retail, entertainment and dining uses are ideally suited for the ground floor with residential and/or office uses located on the upper floors. The primary objective is to provide an appropriate and compact mix of uses to foster an active and interesting district. Parking in the mixed use areas should be provided on-street, or in subtly located parking garages or parking lots.

Built form is a critical consideration within Mixed Use areas. Within mixed use areas, buildings should be located at, or near, the front property lines fronting the street to create a “street wall” – a continuous row of buildings and storefronts that encourages walkability and helps to establish a safe and attractive pedestrian environment. However on the edges of Downtown, where businesses are located in converted homes, this built form may not be practical or consistent with the character, such as the area known as Century Corners. Although mixed use is preferred in these areas, individuals uses located in converted residential structures is also appropriate.

Downtown Office

Offices in Downtown should be encouraged to locate above the ground floor whenever possible in order to preserve these areas for retail businesses. If located on the ground floor, offices should maintain attractive window displays that are not covered by blinds or other materials in order to maintain visual interest for pedestrians. Offices in converted houses provide an important transition area between the commercial activities of Downtown and nearby residential areas and should remain. Parking, loading, signage, lighting and business operations should be of a nature and scale that is compatible with surrounding residential uses.

Mixed Use Outside of Downtown

The Land Use Plan identifies both the Charlestowne Mall site in the City’s East Gateway and the Old St. Charles Mall site in the West Gateway as Corridor/Regional Commercial areas. However, both of these sites have potential for Mixed Use development, and similar to Downtown, each could foster a pedestrian-oriented mixed use node, with a mix of retail, restaurant, entertainment, recreation, and residential uses. This dynamic mix of uses in close proximity to major arterial streets has the potential not only to create a vibrant and inviting destination but also serve as a catalyst for needed investment in these important areas of the City. Building orientation in the area should have a strong orientation to major streets and careful consideration should be given to its impact on adjacent residential areas. Additionally, residential uses/development within these mixed use areas should refer to the Residential Areas Framework Plan for additional considerations and recommendations. In these areas, it is important to maintain a healthy balance of users.

Industrial/Business Park

Providing for employment uses is an important goal of the community and the Land Use Plan includes several areas within the City designated as industrial/business park. These areas are intended to foster employment and diversify the City’s tax-base, accommodating a variety of uses ranging from light assembly, storage and distribution, low intensity fabrication operations, research and “tech” industry applications, intense commercial service uses, and more.

In addition to light-industrial uses, these areas are also intended to provide for business park/office park uses, including “stand alone” office buildings and complexes or several buildings incorporated into a “campus like” setting.

Light industrial uses in St. Charles are concentrated in industrial parks, but they can also be found in commercial zones and office areas. As a distinct land use, these areas can provide significant employment opportunities, tax revenue generation, and if developed correctly, can help establish a positive community image.

While these uses create significant jobs and tax revenues, care must be taken to ensure these areas remain competitive and care is taken to eliminate the negative externalities associated with industrial uses. Without careful planning, active code enforcement, and actively marketing these areas of the City, industrial uses can become a source of blight for surrounding areas. Poorly screened or buffered industrial sites or neglected industrial buildings can detract and negatively affect adjacent properties and property values.

As indicated on the Land Use Plan and the Commercial Areas Framework Plan, Industrial/Business Park uses are designated in areas where they can capitalize on close proximity to regional transportation networks while minimizing negative impacts on residential neighborhoods. These areas are located primarily in the: 1) Eastern Gateway, along Kirk Road south of Main Street; 2) Western Gateway, east of Randall Road north of Dean Street; and, 3) north of Main Street, west of Randall Road in an area referred to as Corporate Reserve. In addition to the policies and recommendations contained in this section of the Plan, Chapter 8 - Subarea Plans also provides recommendations specific to some of the Industrial/Business Park sites in the community.



Commercial Area Policies

Continue to promote mixed use development within Downtown while respecting the historic fabric of the community.

The First Street Redevelopment has emerged as a positive and potentially catalytic example of how desirable and marketable new development can occur while respecting the established scale and character of the community's historic core. In addition to serving as a guide for new development, the new Downtown Subarea Plan identifies development/redevelopment opportunities, strategies for preserving buildings and areas that contribute to the unique character of the district, and ways to improve the appearance and function of Downtown.

Actively market redevelopment opportunities in the City's East Gateway and Kirk Road corridor.

The intersection of Kirk Road and Main Street is both a gateway into St. Charles and part of a larger commercial district. With the recent departure of Sears from the Charlestowne Mall and Borders from a nearby strip center, the commercial vitality of this area should be a primary focus of the City's economic development efforts. The Subarea Plan for this area presents strategic improvements and development/redevelopment scenarios that could reposition the Charlestowne Mall and this important gateway area. These concepts and the new Comprehensive Plan should be used to articulate the City's vision for this area and help market the sites.

Actively market redevelopment opportunities in the City's West Gateway and Randall Road corridor.

Randall Road is an important regional corridor that serves as a western entrance to the community. There are several underutilized properties throughout the corridor which disrupt continuity, commercial synergy, and have disjointed the corridor's appearance and function. The Randall Road Corridor subarea plan establishes and articulates unified goals and objectives for this key area of the City, and the City should use these plans to assist its economic development efforts as it seeks to maintain the corridor as a thriving commercial district.

Promote a mix of attractive commercial uses along the Main Street Corridor that provide a range of goods and services to the St. Charles community.

A wide range of commercial uses exist along the Main Street corridor, providing a variety of goods and services to residents. As a primary east-west route through the City, Main Street contributes to the overall character, image, and appearance of St. Charles. In general, some commercial areas are newer, well maintained, well occupied, provide a desirable mix of uses, and are generally considered attractive. Others however, are older/dated, suffer from deferred maintenance and obsolescence, and suffer from a less desirable mix of uses and higher vacancy rates. The City should continue to promote reinvestment along this key commercial corridor and maintain Main Street as a unique commercial corridor that can accommodate a wide array of business types to cater to the diverse needs of the St. Charles community.

Continue to work with property owners and community members to finalize an acceptable development for the former St. Charles Mall Site.

This 30-acre site may represent the most significant redevelopment opportunity within the Randall Road corridor. Despite great potential, the opposition voiced by some members of the St. Charles community to past development proposals has highlighted the need for a clear vision for this site. Throughout the outreach exercises conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan, the citizenry remained split on appropriate uses for the site. **Chapter 8 – Subarea Plans** provides three development alternatives for the site, however the ultimate solution may be an even different concept altogether. Currently the vacant site is impacting the commercial vitality of the area and negatively impacting nearby sites. What is desired by many residents may not be economically feasible, which is likely the primary reason the site remains vacant.

Work with the Kane County Fairgrounds to explore utilizing their Randall Road frontage as commercial uses that can generate tax revenue and complement other shopping areas along the corridor.

The Kane County Fairgrounds is located on the west side of Randall Road, north of Lincoln Highway/IL Rte 38. In addition to the annual "County Fair", the Fairgrounds hosts events year-round, including flea markets, dog shows, and private parties. When the Kane County Fairgrounds established itself at this location, Randall Road was not the commercialized corridor it is today. Although the Fairgrounds generates tourism for the City, as well as admission tax for special events, it is a single-purpose, destination type facility that may not necessarily have to be located along Randall Road. The City should work with the Kane County Fairgrounds to develop the Randall Road frontage, including exploration of alternative improvements that could help better connect the commercial areas located to the north and south of the fairgrounds.

Consider regulatory tools to prevent big box vacancies and blight.

There are several big box vacancies throughout the community that are negatively affecting the City's commercial areas. Although the Comprehensive Plan has provided a direction for future land uses for these areas, there is no protection when big boxes become vacant in the future. Communities across the country are using several techniques to combat "big box" blight when a large stand-alone or anchor retailer closes and leaves a vacant store. Even before a new big box is approved, some communities are preparing for their eventual demise. While a developer or property owner has a financial incentive to fill a vacant space, other considerations (such as keeping out competition or the size and mass of the building) may inhibit them from filling a vacancy in a timely manner. A municipality may draw from a large toolkit to avoid a situation which may encourage blight. Collectively, these regulatory tools are known as "white elephant ordinances."

Evaluate commercial landscaping requirements to ensure landscaping is appropriately used to enhance the appearance of a site and screen unsightly uses.

Requiring commercial development to install trees, shrubs and other landscaping at the time of their development serves to improve its appearance and the appearance of the community. Along corridors, parkway landscaping helps beautify the area, complementing site architecture, screening utilities, and softening views to large fields of parking. The City of St. Charles is currently facing two issues with its commercial landscaping: (1) in the older commercial areas that developed prior to landscaping requirements, the landscaping is too sparse and the areas are unattractive; and, (2) in the newer commercial areas some landscaping is screening commercial businesses and restricts their visibility and exposure. The City should evaluate their current landscaping requirements to make sure requirements are not too excessive and detrimental to commercial visibility. Additionally, the City should consider an amortization schedule requiring non-conforming sites to become compliant with the City's landscaping requirements within a specified time period to improve the appearance of the City's older commercial areas.

Continue to expand sidewalk network to provide better connections between the City's commercial and employment districts and its residential neighborhoods.

The City's key commercial corridors did not prioritize or give due consideration to pedestrian circulation as they were developed over the decades. This has resulted in an incomplete and fragmented sidewalk network. While this reflects a past development practice in suburban communities that emerged catering to the automobile, today's best practices promote healthy communities and walkability. The City's sidewalk network should continue to be expanded to provide better connections between the community's residential neighborhoods and its commercial districts.

Relocate existing industrial uses from other areas of the City into designated industrial areas elsewhere in the community when opportunities arise.

Industrial uses, when organized into parks, provide a level of protection for the uses themselves and for surrounding uses. When isolated, these uses need to be compatible with surrounding and adjacent uses. Like many older communities, St. Charles developed its business areas along its waterways and railroads, the key transportation methods of that time. Since then the Fox River has transitioned from an industrial waterway to a valuable recreation amenity and source of community pride and the Union Pacific Railroad has been decommissioned throughout most of the City. Today isolated industrial properties seem out of context, and many have become surrounded by residential uses. The City should work with these uses to relocate industrial uses to areas designated for Industrial/Business Park in the Land Use Plan, removing land use conflicts from neighborhoods.

To the extent possible, mitigate the negative effects of commercial and industrial uses on adjacent and nearby residential properties through use of setbacks, screening, buffers, orientation of activity, and more.

The composition of the City's commercial districts along corridors that transect the City means that there are many areas where commercial uses abut residential properties and neighborhoods. The use of horizontal and vertical buffering and screening, including berms, fencing, and landscaping, should be promoted to protect neighborhoods from abutting commercial or industrial land uses. The City should identify areas where land use conflicts are problematic and explore solutions to mitigate the conflicts, including buffering and screening. Additionally, the City's landscape ordinance could be revised to require enhanced screening and an amortization schedule to ensure compliance for non-conforming properties within a set time frame.

Utilize partnerships to assist in implementation of Plan recommendations and the City's vision.

The City should continue to work with local economic development partners to attract, retain and expand businesses in St. Charles. It is important that the City support the efforts of the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce, the St. Charles Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Downtown St. Charles Partnership to market and promote local businesses and available development opportunities. The City should utilize the expertise and network of these partners to develop and implement a strategic marketing and recruitment plan for targeted businesses and store types.

Limit the infiltration of recreation and non-industrial uses into the City's industrial and business parks.

The City's larger industrial areas should be preserved and specifically targeted to industrial/business park improvements rather than athletic, institutional, or other uses. Over time, the intrusion of non-industrial/business park uses can reduce the desirability of an area from being sought out for new industrial investment and businesses.

Appropriately transition from more intensive uses within Downtown to the residential areas that surround it.

Downtown St. Charles is surrounded on all sides by established residential neighborhoods. The City should continue to utilize a transitional zoning district to transition from intense uses in the Downtown core to more compatible uses on the periphery.

Improve the appearance of the City's commercial areas by promoting high quality development, rejecting national "templates", and maintaining a Façade Improvement Program.

A goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to improve the appearance and function of the existing commercial areas and attract new commercial development to both available and under-performing sites. The City's commercial districts are high-profile areas and corridors that attract visitors, have traffic passing through, and therefore play a significant role in defining the image of the community. Each new commercial development should be considered an opportunity to incrementally improve the appearance and character of the community. Consideration should be given to discouraging national "templates" of chain stores and ensuring that new development uses quality-building materials and provides attractive architecture as viewed from all sides. In addition the City should maintain a Façade Improvement Program to assist businesses and property owners with improvements to signage, façade improvements, landscaping, parking areas, and the modernization of aging structures and facilities.

Consider other activity generators within the City's commercial districts, provided they contribute to the vitality of and economic livelihood of the area.

A number of Kane County facilities exist within or adjacent to St. Charles. The County Circuit Court and Branch Court facility are in the City on Randall Road. The Judicial Center, including court facilities, the Sheriff's office, and the Juvenile Justice facility, is located on Illinois Route 38 in unincorporated St. Charles Township (on the Geneva side of the jurisdictional boundary line). To complement nodes of corridor commercial uses, non-commercial uses that generate significant activity should be considered appropriate within the City's commercial districts. For example, institutional uses such as higher education facilities and medical service providers can function as catalysts for new development within a commercial area and/or provide a steady customer base.

Improve the appearance of the public right-of-way through streetscape improvements.

The City should continue its installation of the streetscape program consisting of elements that strengthen the unified theme of commercial areas such as benches, bus shelters, trash cans, streetlights, way finding signage and other amenities. In coordination with IDOT and KDOT where appropriate, the City should facilitate desired right-of-way improvements including improved landscaping, lighting, and gateway signage consistent with the Sub Area Plans.

Maintain signage regulations that provide a balance between business identification and minimizing visual clutter along the City's corridors.

Some of the City's commercial areas suffer from excessive or oversized signage and visual clutter which detract from the character of these areas. Just as with commercial structures, commercial signage should also be designed to respect the scale and character of surrounding development. Amortization should be considered to eliminate over time the signage that is non-conforming.

Provide attractive gateways into the City and the City's commercial areas.

Many of the entry points to the City occur in commercial areas, including Randall Road on the City's west side and the Kirk Road on the City's east side. In these areas, gateway signage and other enhancements such as lighting, monument walls, landscaping and public art should be installed at highly visible locations to signify entry into St. Charles and to distinguish the City from Geneva, West Chicago, Campton Hills, South Elgin, Wayne, and other nearby communities.

Promote reinvestment and/or redevelopment of outdated shopping centers.

As one of the first communities to develop along Randall Road, the City's older commercial centers stand in contrast to newer shopping areas constructed in neighboring communities. Some development along the Main Street corridor has also not aged well, and dealing these properties can be troublesome for many reasons. Frequently, they are owned by trusts, pension funds, or pools of multiple owners who are more likely to be absentee owners living outside of the community. Additionally, the mortgage may long be paid off which means that existing tenants, however marginal, are often sufficient for the owners. Based on these and other factors, the need to remain competitive may not be as compelling. The large land area and high visibility of shopping centers makes their maintenance and potential deterioration an important issue for the City to address. The City should require that commercial properties be maintained to an adopted standard to prevent their neglect and deterioration. Neglect and deterioration have environmental, fiscal, economic, and aesthetic impacts on the City as a whole. Aging shopping centers can be modernized through several mechanisms, including signage, landscaping, improved access and circulation, modern tenant spaces/layouts, building orientation and visibility, outlots, and parking lot maintenance.

Continue to evaluate funding sources and mechanisms to assist implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

Financial incentives are an effective tool that the City can use to encourage businesses to make improvements to their properties. The City should continue to consider additional incentives such as sales tax rebates, TIF, and SSA funds to provide assistance to businesses. Additional City resources should also be dedicated to the pursuit of grants, low-interest loans, and other state and federal funds to assist in realizing Plan and community objectives.

Improve access management along the City’s commercial corridors.

As a community approaching full build out, the commercial areas of St. Charles are well defined – located along the City’s arterial corridors. In some areas, incremental commercial development has resulted in poor access management. Along Main Street and Randall Road, many individual businesses have established one or more driveways located within close proximity to one another. This can be problematic with regards to traffic and pedestrian safety and traffic flow. The City should work with IDOT and KDOT, as well as property owners, to improve access management within corridor commercial areas in order to improve traffic flow and safety. Along these commercial corridors, the City should work to minimize curb cuts, consolidate the access points, and facilitate cross-access easements and shared parking agreements between adjacent properties. These improvements would serve to increase safety for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists by minimizing points of conflict and creating predictability for the location and frequency of ingress and egress.

Establish policies, guidelines, and standards to improve surface parking lots in the City.

Parking areas throughout the City should be safe and well-maintained. To achieve this, parking areas should consider both the automobile and the pedestrian to minimize light pollution and glare to neighboring properties. A combination of perimeter landscaping, berms, masonry walls, and/or decorative wrought iron fencing can be used to effectively screen surface parking lots, but care should be taken not to restrict views to business. In order to reduce the percent of land area devoted to surface parking, the City should encourage shared parking agreements. Neighboring businesses with differing peak demand times for parking or businesses with a low volume of customers are best suited to enter into a shared parking agreement. This reduces the number of access points along a corridor and creates opportunities for additional green space or development.

Focus retail development at key nodes/intersections along the City’s commercial corridors.

Busy streets do not alone equate to demand for unlimited expanses of retail development. The market can only support so much commercial development, and within the City’s competitive market position, having expectations for all corridors to be retail may not be realistic. Instead, retail development should be clustered near key intersections and activity generators, like Main Street & Kirk Road and Lincoln Highway & Randall Road. Although retail may be preferred, office, service, and possibly even multi-family uses can be complementary and supportive of retail nodes and considered appropriate in areas designated for commercial uses.

Support and incentivize the relocation of uses to maximize the potential of the City’s commercial areas.

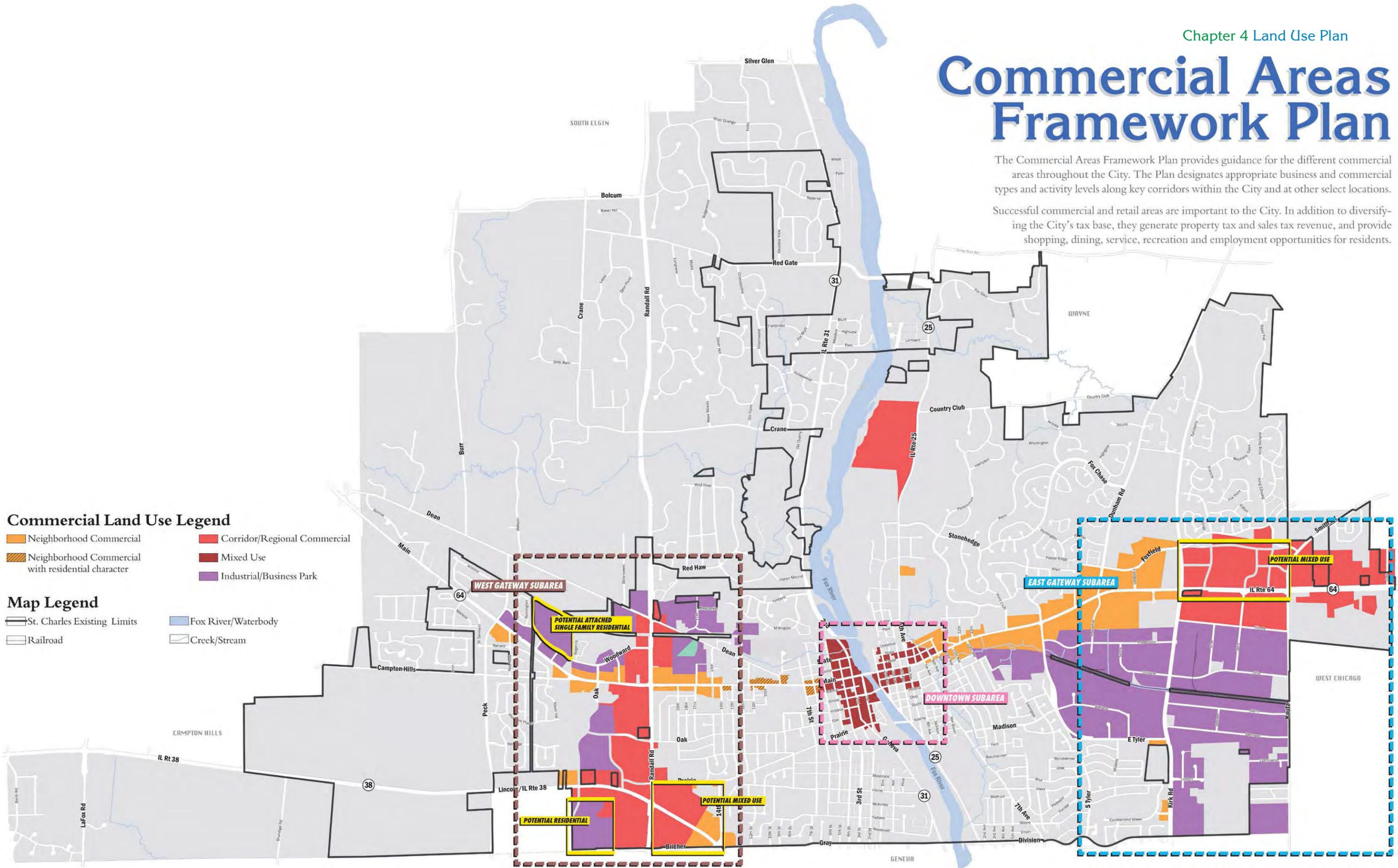
In order to maximize redevelopment potential of its limited commercial areas, the City should continue to identify uses that are better suited for alternate sites or locations. Those businesses and sites should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis based on land use, regulatory issues and the respective needs of the particular business. For example, the Regional Repositioning Concept of the Old St. Charles Mall site, proposes relocating the Jewel-Osco (a neighborhood level commercial use) from Randall Road to Lincoln Highway to allow the development of a regional commercial use along Randall Road. Alternate sites should be identified and relocation assistance provided, where applicable, in order to ensure that viable businesses remain in the City. Assistance can range from reimbursement of expenses to grants or loans for building and/or site improvements at an alternate location.



Commercial Areas Framework Plan

The Commercial Areas Framework Plan provides guidance for the different commercial areas throughout the City. The Plan designates appropriate business and commercial types and activity levels along key corridors within the City and at other select locations.

Successful commercial and retail areas are important to the City. In addition to diversifying the City's tax base, they generate property tax and sales tax revenue, and provide shopping, dining, service, recreation and employment opportunities for residents.



Commercial Land Use Legend

- Neighborhood Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial with residential character
- Corridor/Regional Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Industrial/Business Park

Map Legend

- St. Charles Existing Limits
- Fox River/Waterbody
- Railroad
- Creek/Stream