



# City of St. Charles Strategic Plan

St. Charles 2014:  
*The Return of Charlemagne*

# *Mission*

Mission Statement

*St. Charles, Illinois*  
*Preserving our heritage,*  
*fostering opportunity,*  
*building community,*  
*and enhancing*  
*quality of life for all.*



ST. CHARLES  
SINCE 1834

# Guiding Principles of Our Community

*respect*

## **Respect**

We demonstrate integrity in our relationships and treat all people with dignity.

*engagement*

## **Engagement**

We create a community where all have opportunities to participate and where contributions are honored.

*sense of community*

## **Sense of Community**

We ensure a safe and vibrant environment by valuing cultural, economic, and social diversity and providing a sustainable setting for people to live, work, play, visit, shop, and do business.

*accountability*

## **Accountability**

We accept responsibility for enhancing quality of life in the community.

*excellence*

## **Excellence**

We seek to be the best in everything that we do.

# Our Vision for 2014

*quality*

## **Quality of Relationships**

Our City fulfills its commitment to building quality relationships throughout the community.



## **Sense of Place**

Our Community generates an appealing sense of place and fosters a welcoming, sustainable environment.

*service*

## **Service Delivery, Resources and Needs**

Our City organization maintains an optimal service delivery framework that balances resources with needs.



## **Economic Vitality**

Our Community prospers in a diverse, self-renewing climate of business, industry and housing.

*vitality*

## **Vibrant Downtown**

Captivating downtown St. Charles, rich with social, cultural and economic vibrancy, is a distinctive element of our community.

## **Mobility and Connectivity**

A quality transportation system assures community access, mobility and connectivity.

*connectivity*



# Working Together

## Towards the Future



# Action Plan

## relationships

### **Quality of Relationships: Our City fulfills its commitment to building quality relationships throughout the community.**

#### **Elevate relationships with stakeholders through mutual understanding and collaboration.**

- Collaborate with community stakeholders to identify ways to serve each other's needs.
- Cultivate positive relationships with other governments, and deepen awareness of their initiatives and activities.
- Work with community-based organizations to identify joint ventures or partnerships in furtherance of the community's vision.

#### **Use open, clear communication methods for sharing information with all stakeholders to foster understanding and trust.**

- Articulate the City of St. Charles' mission and vision.
- Enhance communication initiatives to adapt to changing demographic, societal, and technological trends.
- Invite a cross-section of citizens to assist with the exchange of information with the community.
- Value diversity by offering opportunities across cultures, generations, and economic segments.

#### **Honor engagement of impacted groups and individuals as vital to effective decision-making.**

- Identify and implement processes for seeking and listening to innovative contributions.
- Enhance understanding of the multiple and varied roles, responsibilities and processes to encourage an open environment.
- Allow decision-making responsibility and associated accountability at the most effective organizational level.
- Acknowledge the significance of the contributions made at all levels, providing opportunities to recognize those who perform admirably.

#### **Enhance the quality of interactions between the City and the constituents that we serve.**

- Recognize that the City is both a constant presence and a perpetual service-delivery network.
- Generate feelings of pride and fulfillment in our interactions and relationships with constituents.
- Affirm the vision of the City and apply ideals in everyday situations.

# Action Plan

## community

**Sense of Place: Our Community generates an appealing sense of place and fosters a welcoming, sustainable environment.**



**Protect natural assets and practice environmental sensitivity.**

- Foster development to conserve and reclaim open space.
- Guide a cooperative effort to educate the community toward a “green ethic.”
- Factor sustainability and consideration of future generations into decision-making processes.

**Market and promote St. Charles as a friendly, appealing destination, characterized by activities, events, arts, and culture.**

- Capitalize on artistic and cultural resources by supporting local talent and lively venues and activities.
- Encourage collective civic endeavors to broaden the variety of attractions and events.

**Preserve the charm and character of St. Charles as a captivating community.**

- Honor history by preserving architectural identity and the unique character of our downtown and neighborhoods.
- Utilize purposeful design to enhance aesthetics of buildings, landscapes, and corridors.



# service

## **Service Delivery, Resources and Needs: Our City organization maintains an optimal service delivery framework that balances resources with needs.**

### **Engage in responsible fiscal planning and create budgets consistent with the City's vision.**

- Offer information and education to staff and stakeholders for a better understanding of fiscal policies, financial condition, and the budgeting process.
- Consult the City's long-range vision and short-term goals to set context, direction and priorities in the budget process.
- Involve departmental representatives to internally collaborate on the identification and prioritization of budget needs.
- Make value-guided decisions that embrace both tangible and intangible benefits.

### **Create a work environment that supports a high-performance organization.**

- Select the best employees, compensate them competitively, and reward evaluation-measured exceptional performance.
- Consult employees and provide access to training that is meaningful and appropriate.
- Provide appropriate work space, equipment, tools, and specialized technology needed to support a high-performance organization.
- Create an environment of trust and empowerment through a partnership of management and staff.
- Celebrate success and honor employee contributions.

### **Deliver City services that meet the needs of the community.**

- Provide City services that are efficient and reliable.
- Foster innovation and ingenuity.
- Invest in modern infrastructure and technology.
- Assure peace of mind by continuing to provide reliable services and a safe, welcoming environment.



# Action Plan

## prosperity

### **Economic Vitality: Our community prospers in a diverse, self-sustaining climate of business, industry and housing.**

#### **Cultivate an environment characterized by a balance of economic opportunities in goods, services, and employment.**

- Create a dynamic, collaborative atmosphere that welcomes new and diverse business types, attracts business investment and public/private partnerships.
- Support meaningful development and business activity through proper planning and resource commitment.
- Enact, enforce and evaluate the laws, codes and standards to ensure an appropriate level of safety, security, appearance, and design.
- Promote policies to spur investment and reinvestment by the business and development community in order to maintain our status as a regional center of economic activity.

#### **Promote St. Charles and its diverse activities.**

- Market St. Charles locally, regionally, and nationally as a remarkable place to live, work, play, visit and do business.
- Actively pursue new enterprises in a variety of businesses and classifications.

#### **Promote responsible business development and redevelopment.**

- Increase efforts to revitalize underperforming or underutilized properties through judicious use of governmental tools.
- Utilize prudent regulation and supportive regulatory processes in dealing with unique or atypical sites or properties.
- Evaluate, establish, and enforce property maintenance standards.

#### **Retain a balance of housing types to attend to the full spectrum of needs.**

- Encourage a mixture of housing options that serve a variety of lifestyles, incomes and generations.
- Utilize prudent regulation and supportive regulatory processes for continued build-out and redevelopment of residential housing stock while maintaining neighborhood identity.
- Evaluate, establish, and enforce property maintenance standards.

# downtown

**Vibrant Downtown: Our captivating downtown, rich with social, cultural and economic vibrancy, is a distinctive element of our community.**

**Create a pleasing and welcoming downtown experience.**

- Capitalize on both natural and man-made assets and resources as outlined in the River Corridor Master Plan.
- Implement and maintain high architectural standards that preserve our historic identity.
- Require a high level of maintenance for public infrastructure and private property.
- Employ streetscapes, landscaping, and art to contribute to a visually pleasing downtown environment.
- Provide an easily accessible and pedestrian friendly downtown.



**Encourage and promote an array of arts, cultures, and businesses to contribute an eclectic and lively feel to the downtown.**

- Unify the focus and utilize the strengths of public, private, and non-profit organizations.
- Implement the St. Charles 2000 Downtown Strategy Plan.
- Create an environment that supports opportunities for diverse types of businesses and activities.

**Plan proactively and progressively with community and business partners for a continuing dynamic downtown.**

- Revisit and renew the plans and strategies for the downtown on a regular basis.
- Urge consultation and consideration of established plans and strategies by impacted stakeholders.
- Reference and learn from the experience of other thriving communities.

# Action Plan

## mobility

### **Mobility and Connectivity: Our quality transportation system assures community access, mobility and connectivity.**

#### **Build and maintain infrastructure that enhances local circulation.**

- Implement alternative travel corridors to Main Street, including the Red Gate Road Bridge.
- Continue to analyze local traffic needs in an ongoing effort to update and improve the transportation system.
- Explore local street extensions to facilitate traffic movement.

#### **Provide a more robust infrastructure to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle traffic.**

- Enhance and develop interconnected, pedestrian friendly walking and bicycle paths.
- Elevate the importance of local and regional Bikeway Plan implementation.
- Install traffic softening and safety mechanisms.

#### **Support and encourage public transportation improvements to increase efficiency and broaden options for local and regional needs.**

- Consider and evaluate a local circulator service for in-town transit.
- Encourage transit service providers to analyze and increase the level of service within St. Charles.

#### **Foster cooperation and communication to address local transportation needs.**

- Establish effective communication with federal, state, regional and local transportation agencies.
- Maintain dialogue at the State level for funding of street and bridge improvements.
- Support the efforts of other governments and agencies to improve the transportation network, including the Stearns Road Bridge.
- Provide information to the community on transportation issues and options to heighten understanding and participation in the policy dialogue.

# Acknowledgements

The City of St. Charles would like to thank the following *visionaries* who voluntarily assisted with the planning process:

*thank you!*

## Design Team

15 members of the community that play a pivotal role in setting the course, guiding the planning process, and assisting at whole-system stakeholder event(s), a microcosm of the community:

Paul Anthoney	Bob Carne	Dan Kelly
Anne Becker	Steve Carroll	John Rabchuk
Sara Belanger	Kevin Christensen	Donald P. DeWitte
Ed Bessner	Diane Gibson	Beth Mund
Kathy Brens	Tory Haines	Brian Townsend

## Key Person Interviews

10 persons of influence who are respected for their role in the community interviewed for the purpose of obtaining knowledge and insight on important policy, quality of life, and administrative matters:

Mark Armstrong	Cindy Holler Larson	Greg Pacelli
John Collins	John Hoscheit	Betsy Penny
Donald P. DeWitte	Jane and Lee Norris	Ray Rogina

## The City of St. Charles Employees

A special thanks to the 42 employees who participated in two half-day workshops to connect, find clarity in their shared purpose, create a picture of current conditions, develop guiding principles, create a vision for the year 2014 and offer action steps toward vision attainment.

## Community Members

Thanks to the 45 community stakeholders who attended the first community workshop on April 5, 2008, who helped sharpen our sense of purpose and helped to make visible a picture of the “current reality” in the City of St. Charles and to the 50 community members who attended the second workshop on April 19, 2008 to refine our expression of purpose, consider guiding principles for our conduct and behavior, envision the future of St. Charles in 2014, and helped to recommend actions toward vision achievement.

# Acknowledgements

## Task Team

11 City Employees who, as a team, discussed vision statements and helped to define goals and objectives related to the strategic plan:

Mark Koenen	Don Henry	Rita Tungare
Beth Mund	Joe Schelstreet	Russell Colby
Kimberley Schult	Patrick Mullen	Brian Townsend
Lynn D'Avico	Peggy Forster	

## Mayor and City Council

The Mayor, City Council, City department directors, and several executive staff members from the City of St. Charles who met on June 30 to review strategic plan drafts and provided valuable comments and feedback:

Mayor Donald P. DeWitte	Clifford X. Carrignan	Jo Krieger
Daniel P. Stellato	John McGuirk	Ed Bessner
Ron Silkaitis	William Turner	David Richards
Betsy Penny	James E. Martin	

## Department Directors

Rita Tungare, Community Development	Kathy Livernois, Human Resources
Christopher Minick, Finance	James Lamkin, Police Chief
Patrick Mullen, Fire Chief	Mark Koenen, Public Works
Peggy Forster, Information Systems	

## Key Staff

Beth Mund	Patrick Mullen	Jared Voto
Dave Jannusch	Joe Schelstreet	Carolyn Shannon
Dave Kintz	Nonda Anderson	Russell Colby

## Lynn Montei Associates

Lynn Montei designed and facilitated the planning process and stimulated awareness and capability to act. Lynn created the conditions that allowed the City of St. Charles to act boldly, creatively, and strategically congruent with the City's expressed purpose, values and aspirations.

# Legend of the Four Sons of Charlemagne

01/31/2007 - Legend of the Four Sons of Charlemagne

By St. Charles, Illinois, Mayor C.V. Amenoff. 1970

It was autumn the year, 1833. The sun in the west was lending its last full rays to add greater resplendence to the autumnal livery of the trees and bushes lining the banks of the meandering river coursing its way through the wilderness. All was peaceful and serene, the silence being broken only by the sound of wildlife making their way through bushes homeward at dusk, or the fish at play in the fast-moving river. Occasionally the sound of a musket could be heard in the distant prairies to the east. Four fox stretched out lazily on the banks of the river at the foot of the trail leading to their den, awaiting the return of the father Charlemagne. He had left early in the morning to listen in at an emergency session of the Indian chiefs whose tribal lands were being threatened by the white men, now coming to settle in this area. As the sun dipped below the horizon, Charlemagne came into view, trotting slowly to join his family. Immediately the four fox fell in line as Charlemagne let them up the trail to their den. It was readily apparent to the four sons that their father was in a troubled mood and sad, sad as he was when their mother died a few years before. Impatiently they awaited his report on the council of the Indian chiefs. After resting a few minutes, Charlemagne started to talk and, with a voice somewhat choked with emotion, addressed his sons. My sons, my report to you is sad. The Black Hawk War has ended. The white men are now coming to settle along the banks of this river, taking these lands of the wilderness which have been the happy hunting grounds of the Sacs, the Fox and the Pottawatomies. I trembled today in my listening spot as I heard Chief Waubonsie of the Pottawatomies relate his experiences with the white men. They cannot be trusted, the old chief pointed out, and it is now apparent that we cannot live side by side. There can be no coexistence. Our only move now is to go further west. The other chiefs who had gathered for the council nodded their approval of the westward move, and soon they left to ride home to tell their tribes of these new plans. Charlemagne continued, When the white man comes to the banks of this river and sees this beautiful spot in the valley where the Fox River flows and remember, my sons, this river is named for our Indian neighbors, the Fox tribe up in Wisconsin where the river has its source here is where the white man will choose to settle. These men upon arrival will first build their homes on the hills overlooking this river. Land will be cleared so that they can plant their crops in the spring. They will bring in livestock to furnish them with food. Then they will build a millwheel on the river to grind their grain, then a bridge. Homes then will be built on the western bank. Stores will open. Industry will come. Schools will be built, and soon church spires will rise up in the community. This is the pattern of settlement of the white man. Now, I am old, and it will be hard for me to adjust to these changes. I have tried to be a good father to you. I have taught you all the tricks and the cunning of our kind. You are now able to take care of yourselves, and you can adjust your lives to these white men. As for myself, I have only a few more years to live. Tonight I shall leave you and go west to be with my Indian friends. This is as it should be. Your needs for me are no more. I have never given you names, preferring that you be known only as the four sons of Charlemagne, so that there shall always be unity among you for the great tasks ahead. This has been our happy home. It is important that the settlement which arises on the banks of this river will develop a character unique among other communities which will be settled by the white man. I would like you, my four sons, to be the guardians of this growing settlement, to see that it does become a great community in which men can live, can work, can be educated, can worship and can play. You, my firstborn, are to be the guardian of the civic, the business, the industrial life of this community. Education will become important in the life of this growing community. And you, my second son, are to be the guardian of this educational and cultural expression. Soon after this community has been settled, men will band together to worship, and you, my third son, are to be entrusted with the guardianship of this religious expression. Amid this beautiful setting, it is only natural that recreation activity will flourish, and you, my last-born son, shall be the guardian of this natural recreation expression of man living in these surroundings. As for me, I shall now leave you to join my Indian friends. Finishing his talk, Charlemagne then bade farewell to his four sons and walked out of the den into the night and westward. These four sons of Charlemagne are now represented on the Main street bridge, monumental guardians of this community. Today St. Charles is a truly great community, the Pride of the Fox, located in the Beauty Spot of the Fox River Valley. It is a community where men can live, can work, can be educated, can worship and can play. The guardianship of his four sons is not testamentary to the will of Charlemagne.

*The foregoing legend was written in 1970 by C.V. Amenoff as an imaginative tribute to the bronze foxes which guard the Main Street bridge. The foxes were a gift to the city from Herbert Crane of Crane Plumbing fame, who loved the Fox Valley and built Wild Rose Farm on Crane Road. They were cast in France and placed originally on a bridge of concrete and marble balustrades designed by Lester J. Norris in 1927. The balustrades, patterned after a Roman bridge admired by Mr. Norris in his travels abroad, were replaced in 1973 by a contemporary railing of Cor-Ten steel, designed by Robert Lathe. The name Charlemagne, used to represent the symbolic fox of St. Charles, was conceived in 1969 by Katherine Bernardi, a student, who had the winning entry in a civic contest sponsored by the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce. The city is known and promoted by the chamber as The Pride of the Fox.*



The City of St. Charles logo appears within one of its most important assets:  
*Our Employees*

For more information on the City's Strategic Plan,  
please visit: [www.stcharlesil.org/planning/](http://www.stcharlesil.org/planning/) or call 630.443.3744



**ST. CHARLES**  
SINCE 1834