
CITY OF ST. CLAIR COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted on April 12, 1995

Planning Commission

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|----|
| I. Introduction | 1 |
| What is Planning..... | 1 |
| How is the Plan to be used | 1 |
| History of Planning Efforts in the City..... | 2 |
| Planning Process..... | 3 |
| II. Background Studies | 5 |
| Growth and Development..... | 5 |
| Location and Regional Setting | 5 |
| Population and Housing | 6 |
| Population and Housing Projections | 10 |
| Residential Home Value..... | 12 |
| Income | 13 |
| State Equalized Value..... | 13 |
| Community Facilities and Services | 16 |
| Schools..... | 16 |
| Police Services..... | 18 |
| Fire Services | 18 |
| City Hall..... | 18 |
| Library | 18 |
| St. Clair Community Center | 19 |
| Hospitals | 19 |
| Senior Housing | 18 |
| Circulation | 20 |
| Land Use..... | 22 |
| History and Development Patterns | 22 |
| Existing Land Use..... | 22 |
| Future Trends..... | 23 |
| III. Goals and Policies | 27 |
| IV. Comprehensive Plan | 33 |
| Land Use Plan..... | 33 |
| Implementation | 42 |
| V. Capital Improvement Plan | 46 |
| Streets and Sidewalks | 46 |
| Water | 50 |
| Wastewater | 53 |
| VI. Resolution of Adoption | 57 |

What is Planning?

Planning is a process which involves the conscious selection of policy choices relating to land use, growth and development in the community. The Comprehensive Plan is the only official City document which sets forth policies for the future of the community.

The City of St. Clair Planning Commission derives its authority to prepare a Comprehensive Plan from the Municipal Planning Act, P.A. 285 of 1931. The Act states:

Section 6. The commission shall make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality. The plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter shall show the commission's recommendations for the development of the territory, including, among other things, the general location, character, and extent of streets, viaducts, subways, bridges, waterways, flood plains, water fronts, boulevards, parkways, playgrounds and open spaces, the general location of public buildings and other public property, and the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned or operated, for water, light, sanitation, transportation, communication, power, and other purposes . . . As the work of making the whole master plan progresses, the commission from time to time may adopt and publish parts thereof, any such part to cover 1 or more major sections or divisions of the municipality or 1 or more of the aforesaid or other functional matters to be included in the plan. The commission from time to time may amend, extend, or add to the plan.

How Is The Plan to be Used?

The Plan serves many functions and is to be used in a variety of ways:

- 1) The Plan is a general statement of the City's goals and policies. It provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desires for the future.

- 2) The Plan serves as an aid in daily decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in the Plan guide the Planning Commission and City Council in their deliberations on zoning, subdivision, capital improvements and other matters relating to land use and development. The Plan provides a stable, long-term basis for decision-making which will provide a balance of high and low density housing, commercial, industrial and agricultural land use and an orderly process for land use planning.
- 3) The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are based. The City or Village Zoning Act (P.A. 207 of 1921, as amended) requires that the zoning ordinance be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety and general welfare. It is important to note that the Comprehensive Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other City Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Map. Zoning is only one of the many legal devices used to implement the Comprehensive Plan.
- 4) The Plan attempts to coordinate public improvements and private developments. For example, public investments such as road or sewer and water improvements should be located in areas identified in the Plan as resulting in the greatest benefit to the City and its residents.
- 5) Finally, the Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers and adjacent communities a clear indication of the City's direction for the future.

In summation, the City of St. Clair Comprehensive Plan is the only officially adopted document which sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies. It is a long range statement of general goals and policies aimed at the unified and coordinated development of the City of St. Clair. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner which permits controlled growth. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

History of Planning Efforts in the City

In 1965, St. Clair's first Comprehensive Development Plan was completed. This plan included an economic development program, parks and recreation plan, central business district plan, six-year capital improvement program, and land use plan. The 1987 Comprehensive Development Plan was in response to the new development which occurred within the City. Issues such as

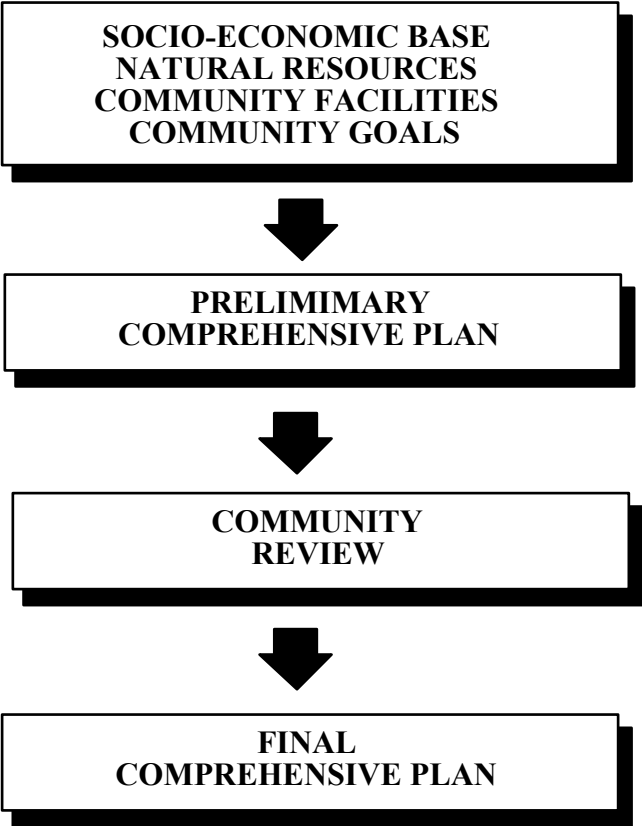
future commercial expansion, industrial growth and anticipated single-family and multi-family residential development were addressed by this Plan. The 1994 planning effort is intended to provide an updated plan which addresses the following:

- Inclusion of 1990 Census Data
- New residential development trends
- Incorporation of Citizen Survey results
- Incorporation of Beyond Impossible Dream Plan
- Waterfront Development Plan
- Industrial Development plans
- Capital Improvement Plan

Planning Process

The planning process taken in development of the Comprehensive Plan, utilizes an analytical approach and measures to insure public review. Public meetings, presentations, and information obtained from a Citizen Survey were used to solicit citizen input. The process also includes review of the socio-economic and community facility background studies. This information together with development policies are combined to develop a preliminary plan. The Plan includes implementation strategies and specific recommendations regarding future development. Figure 1 outlines the process and illustrates the progressive steps in formulating the Comprehensive Plan for the City of St. Clair. It is the intent of this Plan to provide a guide for the orderly development of the City and assist the community's efforts to provide a pleasant environment in which to work and reside.

**FIGURE 1
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS**



Growth and Development

In 1815, the first recorded settlement in the area around St. Clair was established in East China Township. The Village of St. Clair was incorporated in 1850 and in 1858 became the City of St. Clair.

The St. Clair River has played a major role in the settlement, growth, and development of the City. Early settlers used the river as a means of transportation to and from the settlement. St. Clair prospered through waterborne commerce with the construction and repair of vessels to transport people and products. Ship building was a major source of employment during the early years of the City. By the 1920s and 30s, the increased reliance on rail and automobiles and changing economic needs caused a shift away from water transportation. Today, salt products and plastics remain as the City's major employment source and source of tax revenue.

Commercial development and tourism are also a vital segment of the local economy. The St. Clair Inn is an important establishment within the commercial economy of the City because it attracts revenue from outside. In addition to the St. Clair Inn, the City has annual art fairs, a Historic Home Tour, and a City Museum which have attracted numerous visitors. The St. Clair Harbor and boat marinas are also a major attraction and are an important source of outside revenue. Although the St. Clair River is no longer a major source of local transportation and industry, it remains an important asset for its water-based recreation and tourism potential.

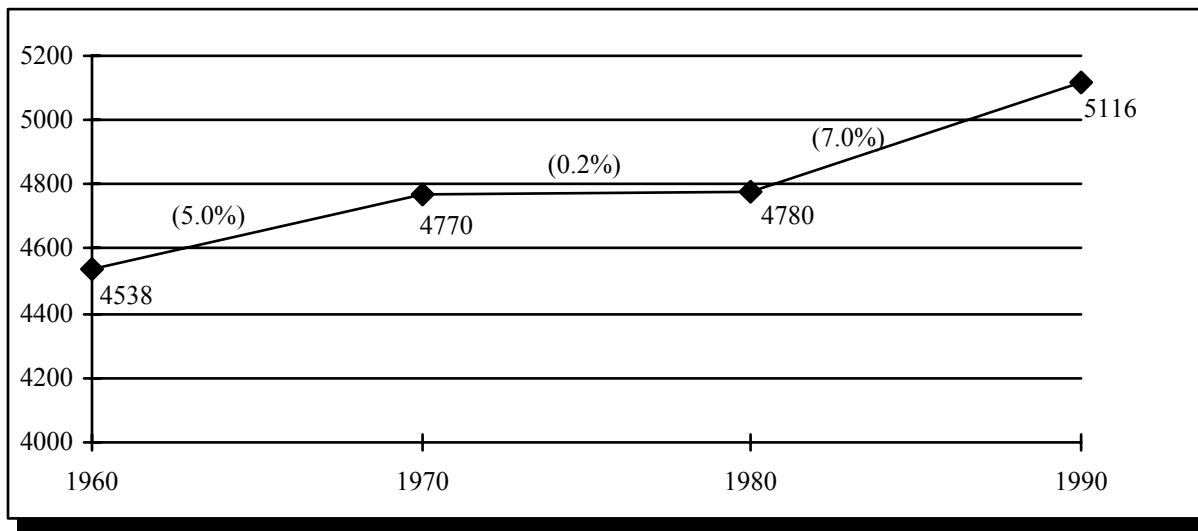
Location and Regional Setting

St. Clair is located on the St. Clair River which is the southeast boundary of St. Clair County and directly across from Canada. Port Huron, the largest city in the County, is seven miles to the north and Detroit is approximately 41 miles to the southeast. M-29 is the major street in St. Clair and the City has access to I-94.

Population and Housing

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 1990 population of the City of St. Clair was 5,116. Population has increased in the City between 1960 and 1990 at a rate of 4.1% per year. The period between 1970 and 1980 saw very limited growth with only a 0.2% increase. The City experienced its greatest growth spurt between 1980 and 1990 when a 7.0% population increase was experienced (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1
COMPARATIVE POPULATION & GROWTH CURVE FOR
CITY OF ST. CLAIR
1960-1990**



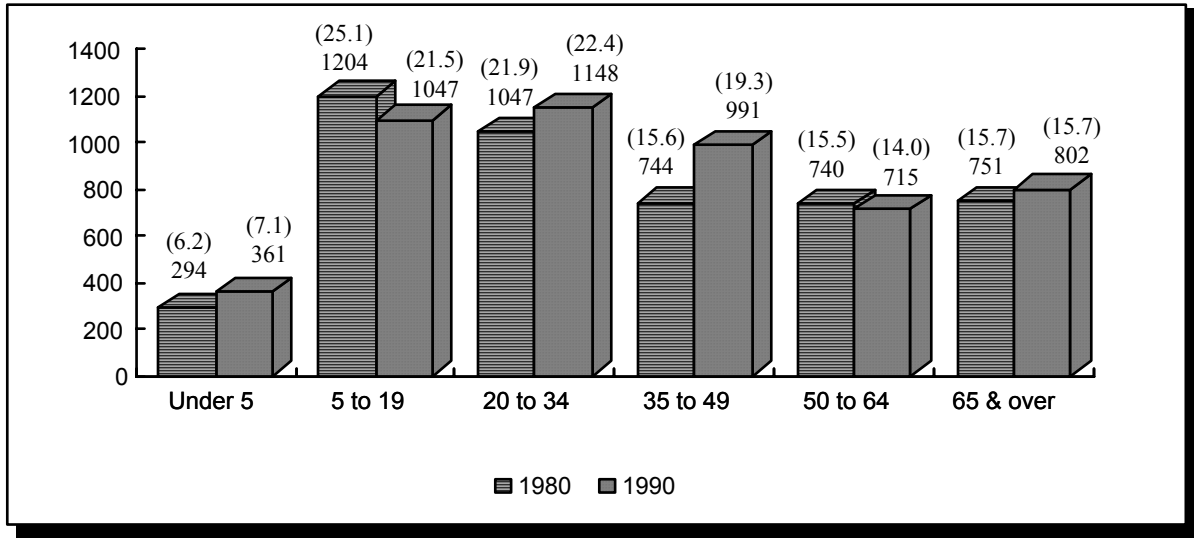
(Source - U.S. Census)

(Percent increases are noted in parenthesis)

The age composition for the City of St. Clair between 1980 and 1990 has remained relatively constant. The 1990 census indicates that the largest changes were found in the 35-49 year category with a 3.7% increase and the 5-19 year category with a 3.6% decrease. The under 5 population increased slightly while the percentage of population 65 and over has remained the same (see Table 2).

General population characteristics are described in Table 3 and Table 4, while trends within the St. Clair regional setting are described in Table 5. An analysis of the City's residential building activity and housing unit projections are denoted in Tables 6 and 7.

**TABLE 2
CITY OF ST. CLAIR AGE DISTRIBUTION COMPARISON
1980-1990**



(Source - 1990 Census, U.S. Dept. of Commerce)

(Percent increases are noted in parenthesis)

The percentage of females to males has remained relatively constant over the last ten years. Women accounted for 54.4% of the total population in 1980. While women still outnumber men in 1990 the percentage of women as a part of the total population has decreased to 53.7%.

**TABLE 3
GENERAL POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS
1980-1990**

| | 1980 | 1990 |
|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Population | 4780 | 5116 |
| Female | 2602 | 2746 |
| Percent of total | 54.4% | 53.7% |
| Male | 2178 | 2370 |
| Percent of total | 45.6% | 46.3% |
| Median age | 32.4 | 34.4 |
| Under 20 | 1498 | 1459 |
| Percent of total | 31.3% | 28.5% |
| 65 and over | 751 | 802 |
| Percent of total | 15.7% | 15.7% |

**TABLE 4
POPULATION BY AGE CATEGORY
1980-1990**

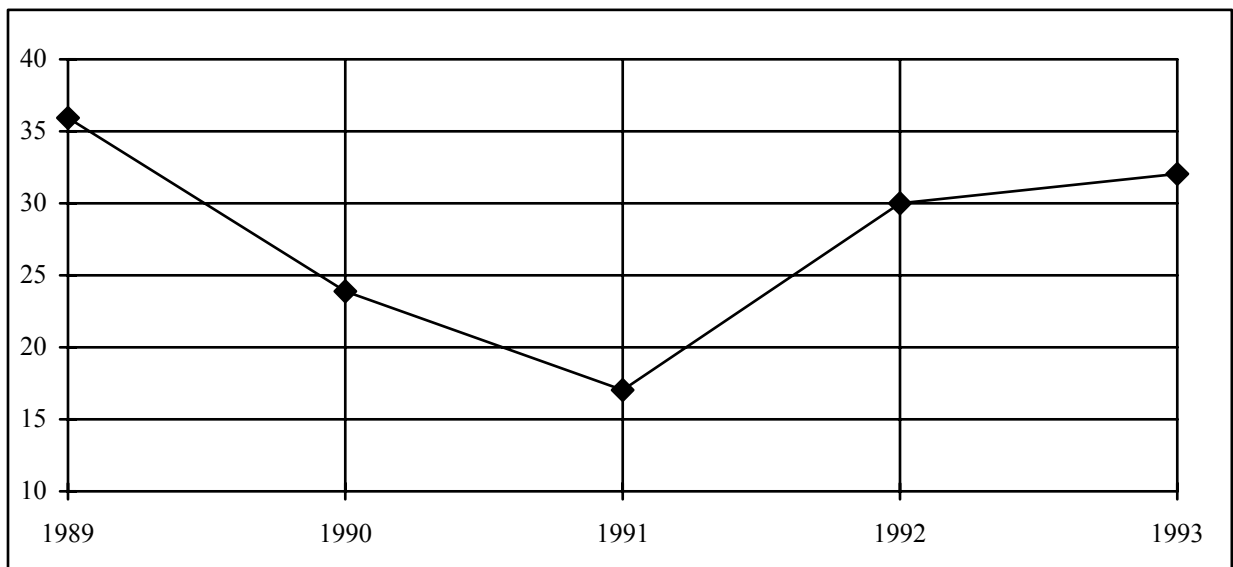
| | 1980 | 1980 % of Total Population | 1990 | 1990 % of Total Population |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Total Population | 4,780 | | 5,116 | |
| Under 5 | 294 | 6.2% | 361 | 7.1% |
| 5-9 | 326 | 6.8 | 402 | 7.9 |
| 10-14 | 394 | 8.2 | 336 | 6.6 |
| 15-19 | 484 | 10.1 | 360 | 7.0 |
| 20-24 | 405 | 8.5 | 341 | 6.7 |
| 25-29 | 334 | 7.0 | 380 | 7.4 |
| 30-34 | 308 | 6.4 | 427 | 8.3 |
| 35-39 | 259 | 5.4 | 405 | 7.9 |
| 40-44 | 237 | 5.0 | 335 | 6.5 |
| 45-49 | 248 | 5.2 | 251 | 4.9 |
| 50-54 | 276 | 5.8 | 213 | 4.2 |
| 55-59 | 264 | 5.5 | 253 | 4.9 |
| 60-64 | 200 | 4.2 | 250 | 4.9 |
| 65 and older | 751 | 15.7 | 802 | 15.7 |

**TABLE 5
POPULATION TRENDS FOR
ST. CLAIR AND SURROUNDING CITIES
AND TOWNSHIPS
1960-1990**

| | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | % Change 1960-1990 |
|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| St. Clair County | 107,201 | 120,175 | 138,802 | 145,607 | 35.8% |
| City of St. Clair | 4,538 | 4,770 | 4,780 | 5,116 | 12.7% |
| Marine City | 4,404 | 4,567 | 4,414 | 4,556 | 3.5% |
| Marysville | 4,065 | 5,610 | 7,345 | 8,515 | 109.5% |
| East China Township | 1,374 | 2,139 | 3,122 | 3,216 | 134.0% |
| St. Clair Township | 2,416 | 3,091 | 3,965 | 4,614 | 91.0% |

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1960, 1970, 1980 and 1990.

**TABLE 6
1989-1993 ST. CLAIR
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS**



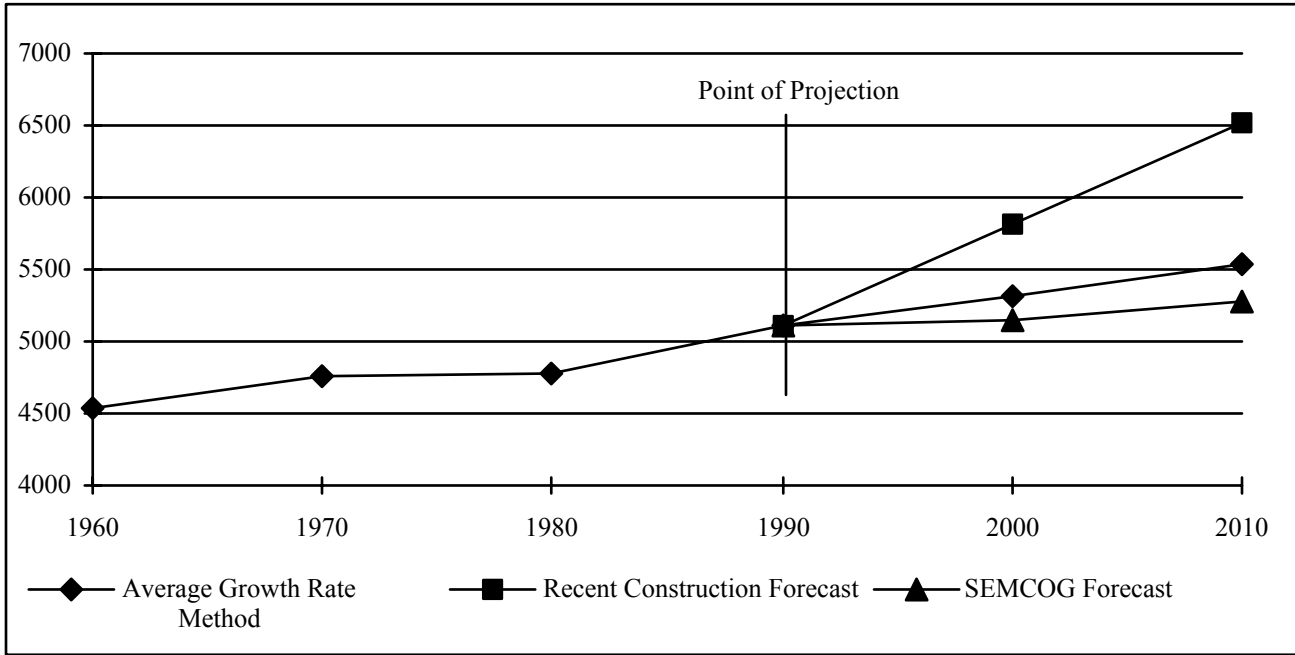
Source: City of St. Clair/Carlisle Associates, Inc.

Population And Housing Projections

The forecasts of population, in spite of the limitations surrounding the forecasting process, form key elements in the process of preparing a general development plan for the City of St. Clair. The forecasts establish the range of needs, in terms of people, land areas, and facilities which must be planned for. The forecasts indicate the magnitude of change which a community can reasonably expect to face as well as those elements in the community's structure likely to undergo pressures on capacities and for which expansion or replacement can be expected.

Population and housing projections are reflected in the following tables. Three methods were used to project future population. This includes average growth rate, recent construction, and SEMCOG Small Area Forecasts. Each projection method is indicated in Table 7 below while the SEMCOG projections are shown in Table 8. Housing unit projections are presented in Table 9. Using the more optimistic population forecasts for the City, it is conceivable that upwards of 500 new residential units will be constructed within the City by the year 2010. This would require approximately 200-300 acres of raw land to meet this projected need.

**TABLE 7
COMPARISON OF POPULATION PROJECTION METHODS
CITY OF ST. CLAIR**



**Alternative Population Projections
City of St. Clair, St. Clair County**

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Average Growth Rate</u> | <u>Recent Construction</u> | <u>SEMCOG Forecast</u> |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| | <u>Method</u> | <u>Forecast</u> | |
| 2000 | 5326 | 5822 | 5160 |
| 2010 | 5544 | 6528 | 5275 |

1. Average Growth Rate is based on average population growth in ten year intervals from 1960 to 1990.
2. Recent Construction is based on the average rate of building permits granted between 1989 and 1993. The annual average rate of residential building permits (27.8) is then multiplied by the average number of persons per dwelling unit (2.54). The product is the number of new persons that can be expected each year by way of new construction (70.6).
3. SEMCOG Forecast - Based on SEMCOG Regional Development Forecast -- Version '89 1980-2010.

**TABLE 8
SEMCOG POPULATION PROJECTIONS
1990-2010**

| | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| St. Clair County | 146,322 | 156,838 | 162,950 | 168,717 | 174,249 |
| City of St. Clair | 5,116 | 5,133 | 5,160 | 5,208 | 5,275 |
| Marine City | 4,287 | 4,345 | 4,212 | 4,204 | 4,202 |
| Marysville | 9,006 | 10,455 | 11,342 | 12,104 | 12,746 |
| Port Huron | 33,298 | 34,129 | 33,479 | 33,250 | 32,780 |

Source: Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG),
Regional Development Forecast 6-9-90

**TABLE 9
HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS
2000-2010**

| Year | Population Projection Method | Population Projection | Total Projected^a Housing Units |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 2000 | Average Growth Rate Method | 5326 | 2097 |
| | Recent Construction ^b | 5822 | 2292 |
| | SEMCOG Forecast | 5160 | 2031 |
| 2010 | Average Growth Rate Method | 5544 | 2183 |
| | Recent Construction ^b | 6528 | 2570 |
| | SEMCOG Forecast | 5275 | 2077 |

^a Assumes no change in average household size from 1990 figure of 2.54 persons.

^b Based on growth at average rate of residential building permits granted between 1989 and 1993.

Residential Home Values

Table 10 provides a break down of current home values for all homes (single-family and two-family units) constructed since 1990. From this table, it can be seen that the highest percentage of new homes (40.0%) fall within the \$150,001 to \$200,000 value range. The \$100,001 to \$150,000 range contains the second highest percentage with 24.8%. Only eight (8) homes or 7.6% of all new homes constructed since 1990 are valued at \$100,000 or less. The current average value of all new homes constructed during this time period is \$176,740.00

**TABLE 10
VALUE OF NEW RESIDENTIAL HOME CONSTRUCTION
1990 to 1994
(Per 1994 Assessed Values)**

| Classification | Number of Units | Percent of Total |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Less than \$100,000 | 8 | 7.6% |
| 100,001 to 150,000 | 26 | 24.8% |
| 150,001 to 200,000 | 42 | 40.8% |
| 200,001 to 250,000 | 24 | 22.9% |
| 250,001 to 300,000 | 3 | 2.9% |
| 300,001 and over | 2 | 1.8% |
| Total new home construction between 1990 & 1994 | 105 | 100.0% |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Average Value of New Units constructed between 1990 and 1994 | \$176,740 | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--|

The median value of all homes in the City is substantially less than that of the newly constructed homes. According to 1990 Census figures, the median home value in the City of St. Clair was \$69,600. This is up 70.6% from the 1980 median value of \$40,800. Inflation accounts for some of the increase in value. The inflation rate for the decade was 51%, however, housing values are still increasing more than inflation.

Income

Median family income in 1989 for the City was \$40,228. This represents a 68% increase in income from the 1979 figure of \$23,890. As with the median value of housing discussed above, the increase in income does not factor in inflation. When comparing the increase in median housing value with the increase in family income, it can be seen that housing costs have increased at a slightly faster rate than income; 70.6% for housing and 68.0% for income.

State Equalized Valuation

As displayed in Table 11, the total State Equalized Valuation (SEV) for all classifications (i.e., commercial, industrial, residential, personal) has steadily increased. During the last four years (1990-1994), the greatest increase was experienced between 1992 and 1993. The average increase during the four year period was 9.1%.

**TABLE 11
STATE EQUALIZED VALUES FOR
THE CITY OF ST. CLAIR
1990 - 1994**

| Year | Total State Equalized Valuation (SEV)* | Numerical Change | Percent Change |
|------|----------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1990 | 96,762,640 | | |
| 1991 | 107,252,711 | \$10,490,071 | +10.8% |
| 1992 | 112,897,469 | \$5,644,758 | +5.3% |
| 1993 | 125,865,260 | \$12,967,791 | +11.5% |
| 1994 | 136,820,897 | \$10,955,637 | +8.7% |

* SEV includes all properties contained in the Industrial Facilities Tax (IFT) roll.

Table 12 makes a detailed comparison of land classifications from 1990 to 1994. The percentages in each classification have remained relatively constant during the time period studied. Residential land accounts for over 60% of land values for each year. Residential is followed by industrial land, commercial land, then personal property.

Table 12

Community Facilities And Services

Community facilities and services are those buildings, land, equipment, and activities owned and operated by the public or private sector for the benefit of the community as a whole. As St. Clair grows and the characteristics of the population change, the demand for improved facilities and services increases. By assessing current and future needs of City residents and evaluating land use patterns, the necessary facilities can be planned. Planning for the proper location of community facilities ensures that the delivery of services will be efficient and economical.

Schools

A school system capable of meeting the needs and aspirations of a community is an important factor in the future development of a community. A system which provides excellent educational opportunities and facilities for community activities can attract residents to St. Clair. Although the responsibility for schools lies with the local school board, the Comprehensive plan can provide guidance by illustrating the relationship between future land use patterns, population distribution, and the location and size of school facilities.

As a result of the 1961 school consolidation which united most of the southeastern portion of St. Clair County, the cities of St. Clair, and Marine City are both serviced by the East China School District. The East China School District contains a total of ten schools. The City of St. Clair is serviced by two elementary schools, one middle high school, and one high school. The City is also served by a private school, St. Mary's Catholic School and the Montessori School for early elementary.

In order to assess the facilities and adequacy of the present school system, enrollment figures are related to building capacity. Table 13 lists the schools which presently service St. Clair and their capacities. The table indicates that enrollment for all schools is below capacity due to recent additions. School age attendance since 1986 has increased significantly due to Township and City growth. School planners will need to continually monitor enrollment and plan appropriately for additional school facilities.

Table 13

Police Services

St. Clair is served by a police force of nine officers. There is also a force of volunteer police who assist with emergencies and special public events. The department has four police cruisers. New police cars are replaced on a rotating basis every four years. The Police Department calls are dispatched 24 hours per day through St. Clair County. A 911 service is now available to all City and County residents. For the near future, police services are capable of handling existing and anticipated service needs. Police staff expansions may be necessary if the City's growth rate increases dramatically.

Fire Services

St. Clair is protected by a modern fire station. The current staff is composed of a fire chief, 29 active volunteers, and 3 active reserve. Major pieces of fire fighting equipment now include:

- one 3000 gallon tanker with 1000 gpm pump
- two 1000 gpm pumpers
- one grass truck
- one Special Service vehicle
- one rescue truck
- one utility van

All existing vehicles are in good condition and adequate to protect the City.

City Hall

St. Clair's City Hall was erected in 1857 and once functioned as the local hospital. It provides offices for the City Clerk, Treasurer, City Superintendent, Assessor, and Police Department. The City Hall recently underwent a renovation to upgrade offices and to make the building handicap accessible. A new City Council chamber is available in the City's Community Center. These renovations have allowed for a more efficient use of office space and greater public access to meetings and offices.

Library

St. Clair's City Library was built in 1967. A local seven-member Library Commission assists in the operation of the Library while staffing is conducted by County employees. Currently, the Library's book collection is approximately 20,000 volumes. The present Library is adequate to accommodate the space requirements for books, periodicals, and reading areas. Adequate public parking is also available. Recently, construction has taken place to improve handicap access.

St. Clair Community Center

The St. Clair Community Center was formerly owned by the First Baptist Church of St. Clair. After the church constructed a new facility, the building was purchased by the City with funds donated by the community. The church has been converted to a multi-use facility which is utilized for many functions including recreation programs, City Council meetings, other board and commission meetings, and for private rentals. The community center also houses the historical museum and St. Clair Cable Channel 6. Recent renovations have improved handicapped access to the facility.

Hospitals

There are three nearby hospitals serving the people of St. Clair. River District Hospital is located approximately three miles south on M-29; Mercy Hospital approximately nine miles north in Port Huron; and Port Huron General located approximately fifteen miles north in Port Huron.

River District Hospital, a satellite of St. John's Health Care System, offers 24-hour emergency services and is staffed by a physician. Cardiac care, intensive care, medical-surgical care, obstetrics, respiratory therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, radiology, laboratory, pharmacy, alcoholism and chemical dependency programs, and out-patient psychiatric services are provided.

River District Hospital has 70 physicians and consulting physicians on its medical staff. The hospital has 68 beds, 4 of which are located in the coronary care/intensive care unit, 8 in the obstetrics area, and 2 that are designated for pediatric care. A heliport is located on the hospital parking lot to accommodate emergency transportation of patients by helicopter to burn centers or other specialized facilities. River District Hospital is very much involved with the community it serves, offering a multitude of community programs.

Future plans for the hospital include establishing a Family Practice Residency Program co-sponsored by Saint John Hospital in Detroit, increasing the medical staff to include more pediatric and obstetrical specialists, as well as general practitioners.

Senior Housing

The major senior housing complex serving the people of St. Clair is the Palmer Park Manor. This 62-unit complex is located one block north of the intersection of Riverside (M-29) and

Clinton in the City of St. Clair. The Manor, which is filled to capacity, is located within 2 to 3 miles from the River District Hospital and 2 blocks from the downtown area. The housing complex management has recently included a renovation project to upgrade many of the individual apartment units.

The Palmer Park Manor was built in 1968 with the assistance of Federal monies, through the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Urban Renewal Program. The Manor provides independent housing for the self-sufficient elderly. It does not house services such as dining, health care, banking, retail shops, beauty and barber shops. The residents do have access to a transportation service which shuttles to the above mentioned services. Senior citizen activities and programs are offered at the Community Center next to City Hall. No future plans to expand the housing units or services at the Manor are currently being considered.

Circulation

The City currently maintains four major transportation corridors. These are M-29 (Riverside), Fred Moore Highway, Carney Drive, and Clinton. Corresponding traffic counts have been tabulated by St. Clair County and the amount of average vehicle traffic is listed in the corresponding Map 1.

Riverside averages anywhere from 6,000 vehicle counts per day to nearly 18,000 counts per day. Carney and Fred Moore average from 3,000 to 6,000. The most heavily used roads within the City are Riverside, Clinton and Fred Moore.

Table 14 provides comparative traffic data for Riverside. Sequential yearly data is unavailable from the Road Commission and MDOT. However, periodic figures indicate a gradual rise in traffic volumes for Riverside. It is safe to assume that traffic for other major thoroughfares such as Clinton, Carney and Fred Moore has also risen.

**TABLE 14
CITY OF ST. CLAIR
RIVERSIDE TRAFFIC VOLUMES**

| STREET/LOCATION | YEAR | 24 HR. TRAFFIC COUNT |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Riverside (100' N. of Clinton) | 1969 | 11,728 |
| | 1970 | 8,012 |
| | 1971 | 12,932 |
| | 1973 | 12,807 |

| | |
|------|--------|
| 1976 | 9,005 |
| 1977 | 17,832 |
| 1979 | 12,892 |
| 1990 | 13,848 |

Traffic Counts Map

LAND USE

History and Development Patterns

Land use patterns in existence today are largely the result of the 1820s platting of St. Clair. The oldest section of St. Clair is adjacent to the St. Clair River on the east and Pine River located on the south. The City generally developed to the north and south of this area. Settlement can be traced back to its desirable location on the St. Clair River, which was the means of transportation in and out of the City.

The City of St. Clair has grown in recent years. Optimistic population projections expect an increase of 1,300 new residents by the year 2010. Using an average 1990 Census figure of 2.54 people per household, the City will need over 500 new housing units to accommodate this increase. These housing units will in turn require approximately 200 acres of land in order to provide for this new growth.

In 1987 the City had approximately 600 acres of vacant or agricultural land. Today, this figure has decreased due to new development and stands at approximately 425 acres. This amount is adequate to accommodate the projected need of 500 new housing units on 200 acres. However, additional land will also be necessary for commercial, industrial, park and other uses. In summary, adequate vacant land is available for short-term development and projected housing expansion. Additional land gained through annexation will be necessary for the long-term growth and prosperity of the City.

The addition of the new industrial park and the new residential subdivisions has added acreage to the City's boundaries and added tax base. The City does have adequate short-term acreage of vacant lots and land for future development. Agricultural or vacant land account for roughly 30 percent of total land acreage, single-family residential accounts for approximately 28 percent, and industrial for 10 percent. While adequate land is available for development in the short-term, recent industrial and residential growth has depleted much of this supply. Future growth and development will be dependent upon developable resources.

Existing Land Use

An inventory of existing land use was conducted for the City of St. Clair. All lands within the City were inventoried, classified into the following categories, and mapped as presented in Map 2.

Single-Family Residential includes all lands where single-family residences are located.

Multi-Family Residential includes all lands where two or more family residences are located.

Professional Office includes all areas for the transaction of services and professional activities.

Recreation includes local recreation lands and open space under municipal ownership.

Commercial includes all lands and buildings where products, goods, or services are sold.

Institutional includes all lands and buildings devoted to government facilities, schools, churches, cemeteries, and quasi-public and private institutions.

Industrial includes all lands devoted to manufacturing, processing, warehousing, storage, and services of an industrial nature.

Roads includes streets, railroads, and parking areas.

Water Areas (rivers, streams) includes all lands which are devoted to rivers and streams.

Agricultural and vacant includes all lands devoted to agriculture or which are vacant.

An inventory of these existing land uses is provided on Map 2.

FUTURE TRENDS

From an examination of land use patterns and input from the residents of St. Clair, trends regarding the future development of the City can be developed. In 1991, the citizens of the City of St. Clair began a process to collectively plan for the future of the City. The process involved over 150 volunteer participants who worked to create a scheme to guide future planning and development. Through this process many trends were identified which will impact the evolution of St. Clair's future. These trends are often forces which cannot be controlled locally. However, once identified these trends can be studied, monitored and evaluated so proactive plans can be developed to ensure positive results once they are implemented.

A major part of creating St. Clair's future lies with development of a comprehensive land use plan. The quality of life for a city is very much dependent on planned and controlled growth, as well as harmonious, compatible land use and development. Recognizing this, the City of St. Clair Planning Commission began its process by first identifying trends which will impact future land use in the City. Many of the trends which follow were developed through the previously mentioned futuring process and have been incorporated into this plan for future land use. The Planning Commission recognized the value of first establishing the “rules of the game” and then planning the strategy to play the game successfully in light of those rules.

The trends which follow will certainly impact the future as it relates to land use in St. Clair. These trends establish a basis for this report and have helped to guide the process which lead to the overall development of this plan.

The following trends will impact the future development and re-development of land within the City. Their impact must be considered if growth is to be planned and controlled and the quality of life we presently enjoy maintained.

Trends

1. Outward migration from the Detroit Metropolitan area will continue. Many individuals and families will choose St. Clair and surrounding townships as their new home. This trend will lead to a higher demand for local services and continued residential development.
2. Residential development will continue to keep the demand for vacant land high and its cost at a premium. The transformation of vacant land into developed residential property will pose many challenges in terms of service delivery and environmental concerns such as watershed management.
3. As land suitable for residential development becomes scarce, the redevelopment and preservation of present and older housing stock will become paramount.
4. The City's tax base is currently divided into 65% residential and 35% commercial and industrial. The City would like to have this split move closer to a 50-50 ratio since industry tends to provide substantial tax revenue while not drawing heavily on City services. Recognizing that vacant industrial land within the City is limited, it is important that priority be placed on its development for viable industrial interests, thus providing a diverse tax base and employment opportunities for area residents.

5. While the development of vacant industrial land is important, of equal importance is retention of current industries and planning for re-use of current industrial sites which may become vacant within the next decade. The ability of the City to convert abandoned industrial sites to a viable re-use is key to a successful future.
6. The final portion of the industrial development equation is the provision of jobs for area residents. Because of the limited amount of land available for industry in St. Clair, expanding the job market will be left in the hands of surrounding communities. St. Clair must recognize that a number of these communities will rely on it for provision of utility services such as water and sewer. With this in mind, future land use and land use planning must take into account that the capacity of water and sewer utilities is directly linked to development or the lack of development.
7. Cooperation between area municipalities at all levels of planning and service will be key to maintaining the quality of life presently enjoyed in this area. Maintaining affordable service will dictate, to a degree, the use of land in St. Clair and surrounding communities as it will directly effect individual and corporate decisions to relocate here or remain in the area.
8. In addition to industrial interests, the opportunity St. Clair and the surrounding area offers for tourism must be recognized. If managed and developed properly, tourism can become a source of community vitality on par with industrial development. Residents from Metropolitan Detroit will continue to choose the Blue Water area as a destination for extended weekends and mini vacations. This trend will impact land use as it is directly related to development of commercial interests and transportation infrastructure.
9. Development of commercial property within the City has occurred at a minimum over the past decade. It is anticipated that this trend will continue in terms of new development. However, competition for the market supporting local commercial establishments will continue to increase as outlying areas experience substantial commercial growth. Land use planning and development as it relates to commercial interests and re-development will be of great importance as the competition for market share increases.

Existing Land Use Map

Goals and policies formulated by the community establish the framework for public and private decision-making. Goals reflect the broadest of human needs and establish the desired end results of the planning process.

While goals tend to be general in nature, policies set forth a particular approach or position to be taken when resolving a planning issue. Clearly defined statements of policy can go far to minimize arbitrary decisions and substantiate intelligent, objective decisions. Policies broaden the scope of the Comprehensive Plan beyond just a series of maps. Goals and policies which are directed to improving the quality, comfort and vitality of our lives and our community should remain valid and provide a consistent standard for the continuing planning process. The following goals and policy statements can provide the basis for wise and consistent public decisions for future development proposals in the City of St. Clair. Many of these goals and policies are derived from The Future of St. Clair - Beyond the Impossible Dream. The following general comprehensive plan goals were established:

GOALS

The following statements reflect the primary goals of the City:

- The City shall strive to maintain the “small town” residential character which contributes to making the City a desirable place to live, work, and play.
- The City shall plan future land uses to be compatible with the City's existing natural characteristics, and the long-term needs of the community. New development shall be well-planned, complement existing development, and conserve limited natural resources.
- The City shall promote the waterfront development opportunities within its boundaries which provide an attractive setting for its residents, and which are compatible with the needs and comforts of the residents of the City.
- The City shall promote economic growth opportunities and job creation, which are complementary to existing conditions within the City.

- The City shall foster cooperation with the surrounding Townships in an effort to promote economic development.
- The City shall seek to improve governmental services including roads, utilities, and recreation facilities.
- The City shall plan for its community in a manner consistent with “The Future of St. Clair - Beyond the Impossible Dream.” Planning efforts shall consider the general goals identified within this plan including:
 - Economic Growth & Financial Vitality
 - Culture & Recreation
 - Environmental Protection & Beautification
 - Human Services
 - Public Facilities, Safety & Services
 - Education

Residential Goal

To guide the development of the City in a manner which will create, preserve and enhance the living environment of the existing and future residential areas of the community.

Policies

- 1) Promote the development of a variety of housing types and residential living environments based on a sound balance within the community.
- 2) Promote quality single-family housing at a low and moderate density which will maintain the “small town” character of the community.
- 3) Provide sufficient open space to serve each dwelling unit either through yard spaces or common open space areas.
- 4) Multi-family residential development should be planned for areas which have direct access to major thoroughfares.

- 5) Use multiple family residential districts as a transitional land use between existing or proposed single family areas and more intense land use, except when planned as part of a planned unit development.
- 6) Encourage a high percentage of home ownership and permanent housing types.
- 7) Separate single-family residential areas from non-residential uses.
- 8) Require that a substantial buffer or landscape planting be provided between residential areas and conflicting land uses such as commercial or industrial facilities.
- 9) Discourage the development of high density residential projects which will have a negative impact upon schools or existing tax base.
- 10) Encourage the use of a cluster housing option or planned unit development for parcels which contain natural features such as woodlands, wetlands, floodplain or riverfront areas along the St. Clair or Pine Rivers.
- 11) Enforce building code ordinances. Regulate blighted housing and exterior maintenance codes.
- 12) Recognize the important historical housing residences within the community and develop plans or strategies for their preservation.

Waterfront Resource Goal

The protection of the City's waterfront is essential to the City's character and is essential to preserve water quality, to stabilize livelihood.

Policies

- 1) Maintain the City's Boardwalk as a primary focal point and, where possible, acquire additional waterfront property to link the City's riverfront parks.
- 2) Promote some form of the St. Clair Circle trails as identified in the "Beyond the Impossible Dream" goals statement.

- 3) Promote residential and commercial development offering public access opportunities along the waterfront which will compliment the City's important water resources and offer access opportunities.
- 4) Consider re-development plans for the industrialized segments of the City's waterfront.
- 5) Improve the design aesthetics of the properties adjoining the City's wastewater treatment plant, as well as parcels along the Pine River and industrial areas near the former DPW yard.

Economic Development Goal

The City of St. Clair shall promote quality, job producing economic development within the City.

Policies

- 1) Improve the industrial and commercial tax base for the City of St. Clair.
- 2) Encourage industries or commercial enterprises to locate within the City.
- 3) Streamline governmental permitting to allow economic expansion.
- 4) Promote expansion of development within the City's Christian B. Haas Industrial Park.
- 5) Provide job opportunities for local residents through economic expansion.
- 6) Explore tax abatement programs, job training, and economic start up grants to maintain the City's industrial attractiveness.
- 7) Investigate improvements to the retail and industrial segments of the city of St. Clair for job creation and improved retail services. Explore possibility of creating a Downtown Development Authority DDA.
- 8) Promote further P.A. 425 land transfer and tax sharing agreements with surrounding townships.

- 9) Discourage the development of strip commercial which may occur in an unplanned fashion. Strip commercial may be managed through the following methods:
 - Minimize the number of curb cuts along Riverside, Carney and Clinton Avenue which may result in conflicting turning movements and traffic accidents.
 - Where development already exists, remove unsightly conditions, large amounts of continuous hard surface parking areas and unsightly signage.
 - Reduce the impairment of land values in commercial areas by controlling excessive traffic, noise, parking, and lighting glare.
- 10) Provide a balance and variety of land uses including commercial, office, and industrial uses which will compliment existing residential areas and not adversely impact the living environment of the City.
- 11) Encourage clustered (“nodes”) commercial development at selected locations. Cluster Commercial would take the form of either a small shopping center or a group of commercial buildings which share a common access, architectural style and design elements.
- 12) Assist developers in revitalizing the Riverside Mall. Efforts should include business recruitment, exterior maintenance, and sign improvements.

Government Services Goal

Provide for timely and efficient governmental services providing quality service to City residents.

Policies

- 1) Coordinate road improvements with the County Road Commission and MDOT for Riverside and M-29.
- 2) Pave all gravel roads within the City.

- 3) Institute a sidewalk policy for sidewalk improvements and consider a bike/pedestrian trail system as mentioned in the City's 1994 survey.
- 4) Improve City-wide code enforcement.
- 5) Encourage the maintenance of residential properties, also consider adoption of general property maintenance standards.
- 6) Explore expanded recycling services.
- 7) Police and control excessive truck traffic and truck weight violations.
- 8) Improve appearance of entry points to the City including:
 - Clinton Avenue
 - Fred Moore Highway
 - Oakland Avenue
- 9) Consider all re-use options, including public use, for the State Police Post and the City's former DPW yard.

The City of St. Clair Comprehensive Plan is a statement of community public policy. It is a description of community aspirations and the “road map” toward the attainment of the idealized City of St. Clair.

The goals and objective statements provide the philosophical basis for the Plan and the background studies become its factual basis. The Plan attempts to present a strategy to allocate scarce public financial resources toward the attainment of stated public policies. Thus, the Plan becomes a series of rational choices among many reasonable alternatives.

The City of St. Clair Comprehensive Plan will outline specific strategies for the future development of the City. The Comprehensive Plan will be comprised of the following components:

- Land Use Plan
- Commercial Development Plan
- Implementation Strategies
- Capital Improvement Plan

Each of these components will be addressed on an individual basis and will provide generalized guidelines for the future growth and development of the community.

LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan for the City of St. Clair proposes future development patterns for the next 15 years or through the year 2010. Specific land use categories are identified and incorporated in graphic form on Map 3.

Residential Land Use is a primary component of this Land Use Plan. In every community plan, it is necessary to provide land area in residential neighborhoods. These areas should afford quiet, attractive settings in which residents enjoy peaceful living. Typically residential areas should be free of high traffic streets and encroachment of non residential uses, and offer a safe means of pedestrian movement. Often, neighborhoods are served by an elementary school centrally located which give the area a neighborhood focus.

Land Use Map

The proposed Land Use Plan identifies four residential neighborhoods within the City of St. Clair (Map 4). These are the north residential area, central residential area, west residential neighborhood and south. The neighborhood concept is reinforced by planning which anticipates the movement of automobiles and the necessity of major traffic thoroughfares. For example, the north neighborhood area is divided by Vine Street whereas the west neighborhood area is divided by Carney. The Plan identifies these neighborhoods and recommends location of major streets to avoid penetrating neighborhood areas. Whenever a major street abuts a residential area, land development standards should require larger building setbacks, berming and screening.

The planning area also includes portions of the Township area surrounding the City. The Plan must consider density ranges from rural, large lot to urban and multiple family density. It must also consider future utility locations and roadway extensions within these fringe Township areas. The following discussion presents a description of more specific land use densities in areas as well as plans for these fringe areas of the community. In addition to residential land uses, the plan anticipates commercial, office and industrial land uses for the long-range development of the community.

A specific discussion of future residential land uses and anticipated densities are listed as follows:

Low Density Residential

Within this area, single-family residences should be developed at a density no greater than 4 dwelling units per acre or a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. Because of these larger lot sizes, greater land areas should be made available and are more appropriate outside of the urban core. Low density residential should occur within portions of the City of St. Clair and perimeter areas lying primarily to the north and to the west of the central city. This classification would occur where public sewer and water lines are anticipated. This area incorporates a number of the City's newer subdivision areas where the lots are characterized by generous setbacks and open space areas.

Development infrastructure will continue to be the responsibility of individual developers for roads, sanitary sewers, water lines, etc. However, the City should anticipate the need for collector or thoroughfare roadways as well as the need for parks and institutional facilities.

Map 4 Neighborhood Areas

Medium Density Residential

These areas include some of the older portions of the City where older homes and smaller lot sizes are predominant. This would include neighborhood areas within the south side and central neighborhood areas. Many areas within this classification are already well developed.

Whenever new residential development is proposed near these established neighborhood areas, it will be most important to ensure compatibility. A number of vacant lots and infill residential areas can occur within these medium density areas. The City may wish to consider planned unit development proposals or cluster type housing developments which are compatible and sympathetic to the existing neighborhood areas. While infill development is encouraged, a mix of multi-family and single-family uses are discouraged. Overall densities should not exceed 6 single-family residential units per acre.

Duplex Residential (Two Family Residential)

The duplex residential areas are proposed for two-family and single-family housing which could include duplex style units. These are proposed along higher traffic collector streets such as Fred Moore Highway and selected areas along Clinton Avenue or other major thoroughfares. These areas are also viewed as a transition between single family and multi-family housing styles or densities. Average lot size for the duplex land use area is approximately 8 units per acre.

Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family residential dwellings will provide a density much larger than typically found within single family usage. This will be in the range of 6-12 units per acre and will occupy much less total land area than other residential use densities. Their use will also create a much higher traffic volume than the lower density uses and therefore, must be situated near and accessible to major streets. Multi-family areas are planned along portions of Carney Drive, Range Road, Oakland Avenue and Brown Street. Other areas of multi-family are also found along Riverside in the northern neighborhood areas.

Significant location criteria for high density residential uses are:

1. Located adjacent to major or arterial roadways.
2. Within one mile or less of major retail service.
3. Away from locations where traffic from high density uses will penetrate low density residential areas.

A summary chart outlining the residential land use densities is provided in Table 15.

**TABLE 15
TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL LAND USES
LOT SIZE AND UNITS PER ACRE**

| Category | Land Use Plan Designation | Lot Size in Square Feet | Dwelling units per acre, net |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Low Density | LDR | 10,000 | 4 |
| Medium Density | MDR | 7,500 | 6 |
| Duplex | MR2 | 9,000 | 8 |
| Multi-Family | MF | varies | 6-12 |

Planned Unit Development

Two areas are designated as Planned Unit Development on the land use plan. These are the areas near the St. Clair Inn and a three and a half block area near Sixth Street and the river. The PUD is intended to be a flexible land use arrangement which would encourage a mix of land uses and functions. This could include residential, office, retail, lodging and restaurant uses. Special controls are intended to be implemented through zoning and site plan review to buffer nearby residential uses and to protect the integrity of existing residential uses. Both PUD areas are intended to optimize the attractiveness of the St. Clair and Pine Rivers with public boardwalks, pedestrian access, and riverfront views.

Park, Recreation and Public Facilities

One of the great assets of the City of St. Clair is its river frontage. This includes areas along both the St. Clair River and the Pine River.

Map 5

The City's Land Use Plan designates park and open spaces as Park, Recreation, Public Facilities (PRPF). The PRPF properties are lands under public or private ownership. PRPF areas include major facilities such as Palmer Park, Greig Park, the Boat Harbor, Sinclair Park, Klecha Park, and Pine Shores Golf Course. It includes the privately owned Alice Moore Woods which is a designated natural area. The former DPW yard is also considered for PRPF and would become part of the proposed riverwalk. This future riverwalk would incorporate a boardwalk or paved pathway which would extend from the intersection of Clinton and Riverside to the Golf Course. The proposed location is illustrated on Map 5.

Map 5 also designates riverfront conservation areas. This is a strip of land along the Pine River where special building setbacks and development controls are enforced. This is in response to designated floodplain areas adjoining portions of the Pine River. The intent is not to restrict development in these areas but rather to regulate development in terms of floodplain, conservation and scenic controls. These regulations are implemented by adoption of special regulations within the Zoning Ordinance or through the Michigan Department of Natural Resource.

The River Conservation areas extend along the Pine River from upriver of the Marina through to the western limits of the City of St. Clair. It is anticipated that a Riverwalk will eventually extend along the north side of the Pine River from Riverside Avenue to the Pine Shores Golf Course as well as along the Marina and wastewater plant. This Riverwalk would utilize a ten to twenty foot easement along the shoreline area and can be developed in conjunction with new residential and commercial development.

Commercial Uses

The City of St. Clair incorporates two major commercial areas. These include the areas along Riverside Avenue and Clinton Avenue referred to as the central core or Downtown area. The second major commercial area is along Carney Drive and Fred Moore Highway. These areas incorporate both local commercial facilities, general commercial uses and office and professional buildings. The downtown is distinguished from other commercial areas as having smaller, pedestrian oriented buildings with centralized parking associated with the Riverside Mall. Whereas, the Carney/Fred Moore area is characterized as being more auto dependent, with single store development which is reliant upon major roadway orientation.

Recommended land uses correspond to this commercial orientation in that the downtown commercial uses will be predominantly office, and commercial retail with a pedestrian orientation. The area will also utilize centralized parking to service many of the businesses in the downtown and will also permit second story residential uses above commercial establishments. More intensive commercial uses which are auto dependent and which require larger lots will be located in perimeter areas. This would include auto repair facilities, franchise stores, drive-through facilities, lumber yards, etc.

The Land Use Plan allows for the future expansion of commercial areas in order to maintain the economic base of the community. The City's goals recommend a commercial mix that is sized to the desires of the community so that it will provide needed retail services. Commercial policies recognize the importance of the downtown area as a focal point of the community and the significance of the historic nature and small town character of the community. It accommodates commercial growth along Riverside as well as the main entryways into the community.

Most of the commercial growth that is anticipated within the Land Use Plan will be along Fred Moore Highway and Carney Drive. While it appears that adequate commercial space is available throughout the community, the central business district is underutilized and could support additional shops and retail establishments.

Likewise, the Clinton Avenue commercial area is underutilized and would benefit from commercial revitalization. Together, the Clinton Avenue area and the Riverside Mall is recommended for redevelopment and is subject to the following redevelopment strategies:

Riverside Mall

- facade improvements
- signage consolidation, re-design and uniformity
- coordinated management and marketing
- business recruitment strategies
- inclusion within a Downtown Development Authority

Clinton Avenue (From Riverside to 6th St.)

- possible rezoning to C-1 for each entire block
- streetscape improvements
- riverwalk construction along Pine Street
- development of revitalization plan

- inclusion within a Downtown Development Authority

In addition to Clinton Avenue and the Riverside area, the commercial establishments between Third and Fourth are in transition. These areas include a mixture of office and local commercial businesses plus institutional facilities such as churches. These areas have a commonality in that they all are located on relatively small lots with limited parking access. This block area also functions as a buffer from the central commercial areas to the primary residential areas located west of Fourth Street. As such, they provide important local commercial services and institutional facilities. These businesses should be allowed to continue as viable commercial entities and are designated as commercial/office/institutional within the Master Plan.

Industrial Uses

The City maintains three strong industrial areas within the City. This includes the south area including the Akzo Nobel Plant. The second industrial area is along Fred Moore Highway and includes a mixture of plastic plants, oil facilities and miscellaneous industrial facilities. The third main area of industrial development is along Range Road and includes the City's new Christian B. Haas Industrial Park. This area was recently transferred to the City and incorporates a number of new industrial manufacturing facilities which have contributed to the City's tax base and employment base.

These three areas provide a significant industrial tax base for the City. Most of these industries within the City are viable and will provide long-range employment and tax base for the community. It should be noted, however, that changes within this industrial framework can occur and that the City must be able and willing to respond to the challenges of attracting additional industries to the community.

Implementation

This Comprehensive Plan is essentially a statement of policies, objectives and goals designed to accommodate future growth. The Plan forms the philosophical basis for the more technical and specific implementation measures. It must be recognized that development and change will occur either with or without planning and that the Plan will have little affect upon future development and change unless adequate implementation programs are established. This section identifies actions and programs which will be useful if the plan is to be followed.

A variety of programs or administrative “tools” are available to help the plan succeed. These include:

Capital Improvement Program

The Capital Improvement Program is simply a community deciding what facilities to provide, where, when and at what cost. As is evident then, the Capital Improvement Plan will have a great affect on the extent and direction of development. For example, improvements to sewers, drainageways, and roads will support and encourage development in desired areas while their absence will discourage it in other locations. Funding of needed capital improvements is always a concern. The City may consider a millage election as an option to help finance needed improvements that are high on a priority list.

Sanitary sewer and storm sewer improvements can be financed through general funds or special millages. The City must continue to assess fees to generate funds for the payment and operation of utility expenditures. Fire service and police service improvements generally are financed from general fund expenditures. A detailed listing of specific Capital Improvements is included as a separate chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning and Subdivision Requirements

Zoning is the development control that has been most closely associated with planning. Originally zoning was intended to inhibit nuisances and protect property values. However, zoning should also serve additional purposes which include:

- 1) To promote orderly growth in a manner consistent with land use policies and the Comprehensive Plan.
- 2) To promote attractiveness and variety in the City's physical environment by providing variation in lot sizes, etc. and allowing increased densities while maintaining more common open space.
- 3) To accommodate special, complex or unique uses through such mechanisms as planned unit developments and special use permits.

- 4) To guide development away from undesirable areas such as wetlands and floodplain.
- 5) To preserve and protect existing land uses until such time as they may change in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

The zoning ordinance and official map, in themselves, should not be considered as the major long range planning policy of the City. Rather, the Comprehensive Plan should be regarded as a statement of planning policy and the zoning should be used to assist in implementing that policy.

Special Purpose Ordinances

Control of land use activities need not be confined to the zoning ordinance. Special purpose rules and regulations often compliment the Zoning Ordinance and make it more effective.

These special purpose ordinances have already been adopted by the City of St. Clair, but will need periodic updates.

- Subdivision Control
- Private Road Standards
- Lot Split Ordinance
- Sanitary Sewer/Water Ordinance

These special purpose ordinances will be important for regulating growth and development in the City.

Comprehensive Plan Education

Citizen involvement and support will be necessary as the Plan is implemented. Local officials should constantly strive to develop procedures which make citizens more aware of the planning process and the day to day decision making which affects implementation of the Plan. A continuous program of discussion, education and participation will be extremely important as the City moves towards realization of the goals and objectives contained within the Comprehensive Plan.

Plan Updates

The Plan should not become a static document. The City Planning Commission should attempt to re-evaluate and update portions of it on an annual basis. The land use portion should be updated at least once every few years and the Planning Commission should set goals for the review of various sections of this Plan on a yearly program. The Comprehensive Plan should also be coordinated with the City's Recreation Plan in order to provide proper long-range planning for recreation improvements.

The City's infrastructure is a key to maintaining a viable community. Without proper infrastructure, the City will have a difficult time providing quality services to residents and maintaining and attracting new industries. Infrastructure and capital improvements are usually costly items. It is often easy to put off necessary repairs because infrastructure can often be considered out of site and out of mind. However, if not regularly maintained and managed, it can lead to community stagnation which can in turn create more costly problems which will effect the overall vitality of the City.

Crisis response and repairs to infrastructure can lead to unanticipated financing needs which in turn lead to higher utility rates, higher taxes and special assessment. Also, the lack of infrastructure can prevent economic growth and will lead to higher cost for citizens and lack of jobs. Infrastructure will play a role in the development of surrounding areas as well as regional influences.

Communities are dynamic systems with various components intricately linked. A breakdown of any one component (such as infrastructure) can cause problems affecting other components such as schools, industry, commercial trades and surrounding areas. It is important, therefore, to properly plan for long-term capital improvement. This plan will concentrate on three areas of capital improvements including the following:

- Streets and sidewalks
- Water (including purification plant and distribution system)
- Wastewater (including treatment plant and collection system)

Streets and Sidewalks

Streets are a costly maintenance item requiring annual maintenance and repairs. The City of St. Clair also currently maintains a number of gravel streets which are an annual expense for dust control, grading and resurfacing. A long-range plan for the continued maintenance of the City of St. Clair streets is listed as follows and illustrated on Map 6:

Map 6

A. *Paving gravel streets*

- Paving of the following gravel through streets:
 - Palmer
 - Oak
 - Eighth
 - Mulberry
 - Whiting
- Street paving should be financed through a mixture of bond issues, street fund reserves, revolving loan funds and special assessment districts. Cash now spent on gravel street maintenance could be used to pay debt service for paved streets.
- A 50/50 assessment policy may need to be adopted for side streets which run a short distance and for corner properties which already front on a hard surface street.

B. *The City should institute a hard surface street crack sealing program*

- Maintenance of existing hard surface streets is key to controlling their longevity and repair costs.
- An annual crack sealing program is one method which can be used to prevent accelerated surface wear and prolong street surface life.
- Each year an annual appropriation should be made to fund a crack sealing program. The program should run continuously on an annual basis with the City being divided into three or four zones and the streets in one zone being sealed each year.
- This program is paramount now that many streets contain seams from the completed portions of the sewer separation program and associated trench cuts. Also, many new concrete streets have been constructed in the City and their seams need to be maintained on an ongoing basis.
- Suggested sectors for street crack sealing could be as follows:
 - Adams Street and the north City limits
 - Clinton Avenue and Adams Street
 - Clinton Avenue to south City limit

or

- Vine Street to north City limit
- Clinton Avenue to Vine Street
- Fred Moore Highway to Clinton Avenue
- Fred Moore Highway to south City limit

C. Sidewalk and bikepaths

- With continued residential growth and development in the City, the need for walking and biking paths continues to grow. The majority of growth is focused along the Carney Drive corridor with six new residential subdivisions being started in the last five years.
- Greig Park has recently been developed and the City's schools are concentrated along the Carney Drive corridor, thus fueling the need for biking and walking trails.
- A pathway to connect the walkways that now extend west along Clinton, Vine and Brown Streets is paramount and should be pursued.
- Following the connecting walkway previously mentioned, connectors along the major north and south streets should be pursued including:
 - Sixth Street
 - Carney Drive
 - Cox Road
- Feeders to the City limits should be extended to encourage a network system with surrounding communities. Areas to extend feeders include:
 - M-29 and the south City limit
 - Fred Moore Highway and the west City limit
 - Yankee Road and Range Road and the north City limit
- Annual walkway maintenance currently performed by the City Department of Public Works should continue. Maintenance of walking paths will help the City to control liability costs and avoid costly lawsuits.

D. Street changes

- The curve on Fred Moore Highway at the Golf Course should be moved to the west in order to maximize future use of the former DPW site.

Water

The City's water filtration plant is critical to the production of clean drinking water for the City of St. Clair and portions of St. Clair Township. The water filtration plant has adequate capacity to serve the City's current and future needs and is capable of producing approximately 3 million gallons per day. The City should consider utilizing the water filtration plant as a resource to aid in future development of surrounding townships, especially where industrial development is concerned. The City's extra capacity in the water filtration plant would provide a vehicle for water revenue enhancement as increased water production is not directly proportionate to increased cost.

The City's water distribution system is in good condition. However, a number of City mains are in need of upgrade. Some areas could also benefit from enlarged service laterals and water main loops to aid in flow capacity and fire protection. A summary of water plant improvements and water distribution improvements are listed as follows and illustrated on Map 7:

A. *Water filtration plant improvements*

- As stated, the plant is in sound operating shape in terms of capacity. However, plant equipment and maintenance needs include:
 - Upgrade of the sludge collector system
 - Rebuilding of the plant water pumps
 - Replacement of the plant roof
 - Installation of an ultraviolet disinfection system to replace the current chlorine system
 - Rebuilding or replacement of the plant's large test meters

B. *Water distribution system*

- New water mains should be added in selected areas to enhance customer service and provide additional hydrants. These areas include:
 - Seventh Street between Clinton Avenue and Thornapple Street
 - Cass Street between Fourth Street and Sixth Street
 - Jay Street between Fourth Street and Sixth Street
 - Jay Street between Seventh Street and Ninth Street

- A number of existing water mains are in need of replacement. These mains include:
 - Orchard Street - Third Street to Ninth Street
 - Mulberry Street - Third Street to Sixth Street
 - Royal Street - Third Street to Sixth Street
 - Waterloo Street - Ninth Street to Tenth Street
 - Thornapple Street - Third Street to Seventh Street
 - Whiting Street - Fred Moore Highway to Clinton Avenue
 - Sixth Street - Vine Street to Brown Street

- Various areas of the City are in need of additional fire hydrants. These areas include:
 - The area bounded by Adams Street, Third Street, Clinton Avenue and Ninth Street

 - The area bounded by Clinton Avenue, Fred Moore Highway, Frances Street and Ninth Street

- Looping of various system mains is essential to maximum flow rates and pressure. Loops in the following areas should be pursued when possible:
 - Carney Drive from Range Road west to dead end
 - Cox Road from Victorian Court south to dead end
 - Carney Drive from S. Delano Street to Clinton Avenue
 - Hugo Street from Oakwood Lane to Carney Drive
 - St. Clair Highway from Palmer Street to Maple Street.

Map 7

Wastewater

The treatment of sanitary sewage is becoming more and more costly as new State and Federal compliance regulations are initiated. Recently, the City has spent over \$4 million addressing sewer separation to comply with the requirements of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the United States EPA. These expenditures will also aid the continued improvement of water quality for the St. Clair and Pine Rivers.

The need and focus of capital improvement for wastewater treatment is clearly laid out in the City's current Wastewater Plant Operating permit which extends through 1998. In accordance with this permit, the City's financial resources are committed and will be funneled to the areas identified in the permit which are summarized as follows and illustrated on Map 8:

A. Sanitary sewer system flow monitoring

- The City is required to certify that its sewer separation program has resulted in the elimination or at least a decrease of storm water entering the sanitary sewer system.
- Through the use of flow meters, the system can be monitored over a period of time to determine if flows increase during rain and snow melt events.
- The schedule contained in the City's permit, details dates and periods for flow monitoring.

B. Distribution system field investigations

- Field investigations will be performed to help determine the true configuration of the underground sanitary sewage collection system.
- Field investigations will help to identify and confirm the connection of catch basins to the City's sewer system and whether or not said catch basins are connected to the storm or sanitary system.
- The field investigations will aid in identifying inflow sources of storm water if the flow monitoring for an area shows excessive flows during rain or snow melt events.

C. Sanitary and storm sewer construction

- Some areas where sewer separation work must still take place have been identified as follows:

- Tenth Street and Eleventh Street south of Cedar Street
 - Second Street at Stratford Avenue
 - Second Street from Vine Street north
 - Goffe Street from Oak Street north
 - Third Street from Royal Street to Brown Street
 - Third Street from Clinton Avenue to Vine Street
 - Adams Street west of Tenth Street
 - Vine Street through Beard Street west of Ninth Street
- Other areas of construction may be identified through the flow monitoring and field investigations previously mentioned in Item B above. These areas will also need to be addressed through construction by December 31, 1997 according to the plant permit requirements.
 - Sewer lines along the river bank east of M-29 and north of Brown Street and between Adams Street and Clinton Avenue west of the railroad tracks are in need of repair and should be lined in order to maintain their integrity.
 - A sanitary sewer must be constructed to serve a portion of the City south of Fred Moore Highway between Ninth and Twelfth Street.

D. Wastewater filtration plant

- The capacity of the wastewater plant is critical to continued growth in the St. Clair area. Total available capacity cannot be positively determined until sewer separation is complete and peak flows during and after rain and snow melt events are determined.
- Industrial and residential growth in surrounding townships is somewhat related to the City's wastewater treatment plant capacity as the City is a potential provider of this service. The development of the remaining industrial land in the City is directly tied to the plant's capacity. Consideration of a plant expansion appears likely by the year 2000 based on current dry weather flows.
- Maintenance of existing plant equipment is vital to the wastewater facility's continued use. The plant is approaching the decade mark and some equipment replacement and upgrades will be necessary. Improvements identified include:

- Rebuilding of the plant's sewage pumps
- Installation of a ferric chloride tank
- Change over from the current chlorine system to a hypochlorite system
- Installation of new flow telemeters on system pump stations
- Digester upgrade and improvement

Map 8