

3 Community Facilities & Services

SUMMARY

Community facilities and services are required to support the daily functions and development. These include such necessities as water and sewer services, public safety, parks and recreation, and general governmental services supplied by county government, municipalities, special districts, and utilities in order to enhance the overall quality of life.

The rapid growth of St. Charles County has been paralleled by increased demand for public facilities and services described below. The timely provision of these is a critical part in making the county an attractive place for new businesses and residents alike.

Of all utilities, sanitary sewers are the most critical for continuing future development in the county. Locations of existing sanitary facilities and where expansions of systems are planned, will guide the direction of physical growth within the county. Currently, St. Charles County's sanitary sewer collection and treatment needs are supplied by eight municipal systems, Duckett Creek Sanitary District, Public Water Supply District No. 2, and East-Central Water and Sewer Authority.

The largest water service providers in St. Charles County include Public Water Supply District No. 2, Missouri American Water Company, and East-Central Missouri Water and Sewer Authority. In addition, seven municipalities own and operate their own water service systems.

Telephone service is provided by AT&T which serves the eastern sections of the county, and by Century Tel which serves the western sections of the county. TDS Telecom serves the northern area of the county encompassing Orchard Farm and the surrounding area. Wireless telephone service is offered in St. Charles County by several companies including Cingular/AT&T Wireless, Sprint/Nextel, T-Mobile, U.S. Cellular, Verizon, Cricket, Clearwire, Cleartalk, and Winn.

Electric service is provided by Ameren UE which serves the northern areas of the county and most of the Golden Triangle, and by Cuivre River Electric Cooperative which primarily serves the western areas of the county south of I-70. There are areas in the northern section of the county, primarily north of the cities of St. Peters, O'Fallon, and Wentzville, and in the southwestern section of the county where no territorial service agreements exist. These areas are served by one or both of the above electric service providers.



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Natural gas service is provided by Laclede Gas Company which serves most of the cities along I-70 and all of the Golden Triangle area, and Ameren UE which serves the City of Wentzville and the northwestern area of the county.

Cable TV service is provided by Charter Communications which serves most of the Golden Triangle area and some unincorporated areas adjacent to municipalities, and by Broadband Cable which serves the northern areas of the county and parts of the southwest areas of the county. In addition, satellite systems are available to various parts of the county. AT&T is also proposing establishing cable service.

In addition to the utilities listed above, St. Charles County jurisdictions offers its citizens safety through ambulance, police, fire, and community health services. The county is served by ten fire protection districts and one municipal fire department which employ a combination of career and volunteer fire fighters to protect their citizens. The St. Charles County Sheriff's Department operates Administrative Services, Criminal Investigations, Patrol Division, Special Operations, Community Education, Civil Process, Forensics, and the Crime Lab. Eight municipalities have their own police departments which offer 24/7 service to their citizens. The St. Charles County Ambulance District is the primary pre-hospital care provider in the county, has won numerous local, state, and national awards, and is seen as an innovative leader of health care. The Department of Community Health and the Environment promotes healthy lifestyles by providing various service programs.

St. Charles County citizens also benefit from over 5,000 acres of parks that are administered by various municipalities and the county government. These jurisdictions are planning on providing a total of 7,900 acres by 2020. In addition to county and municipal park systems, a number of federal and state agencies own and maintain recreational lands within the county. Total park land and conservation area in the county currently equals about 31,250 acres.

St. Charles is well endowed with buildings and sites of historical, architectural, and cultural significance. There are three historical districts within St. Charles County: the Cottleville Historical District located within the central area of the County; the St. Charles Historical District located in the city of St. Charles, downtown; and the Frenchtown Historical District located in the northern section of the city of St. Charles.



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3.1 AMBULANCE, FIRE, POLICE, AND PUBLIC HEALTH

VISION

We have a safe and healthy community.

ISSUES

- Wireless and broadband technology is changing.
- Safety services need to meet expanding demand.
- Fire and ambulance services are redundant.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Provide efficient and effective emergency and public safety services.

STRATEGIES

- Service levels should meet national standards.
- Expand emergency services to provide a quality level of service.
- Plan for facility locations in growth areas.
- Consolidate fire services and ambulance services where appropriate to reduce duplication on inefficient service areas.
- Consolidate fire code inspection and enforcement to eliminate redundancy and to have a consistent application of fire codes.
- Enhance the inter-operability of radio frequencies to ensure compatibility among all agencies within St. Charles County.
- Ensure all public agencies and institutions are in compliance with National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Enhance the outdoor and indoor warning system.



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GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Pursue measures to protect County residents and visitors against acts of bio-terrorism and the effects of such acts.

STRATEGIES

- Increase surveillance and epidemiology capacity of the county.
- Actively participate in regional and state planning activities related to bio-terrorism.
- Create a bio-terrorism planning committee including but not limited to representation from hospital systems, law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency response/emergency management sectors.
- Create and annually review a bio-terrorism preparation and response plan.

3.2 EDUCATION

VISION

We have educational opportunities readily available to all.

ISSUES

- School facility needs are shifting with the shift of demographics.
- Educational opportunities meeting future job demands.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Plan for future educational resources.

STRATEGIES

- Acquire sites and develop school facilities.
- Use and redeploy existing resources.
- Implement wireless and broadband technology in school facilities.



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GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Provide a high quality educational system to satisfy the demands of present and future economic development efforts.

STRATEGIES

- Ensure the curriculums of county high schools and the St. Charles Community College include technologically-advanced course work.
- Enhance educational partnerships with the business community to ensure educational systems are strategically focused to meet the educational needs of the future job market.
- Strengthen the use of high quality continuing adult education programs and work retraining programs available through the County Workforce Development Department.
- Explore opportunities for business, labor, and educational institutions to partner to expand career development for county residents.
- Enhance and increase technical and vocational educational opportunities.
- Provide exceptional educational opportunities that meet the future job demand.

VISION

We have infrastructure that is environmentally sound, technologically up to date, well maintained and coincides with development.

ISSUES

- Septic systems are not well maintained and promote an inefficient land development pattern for the provision of utility and transportation infrastructure and governmental services.
- New facilities have to be built while maintaining the old.
- Utility infrastructure is more expensive to provide in low density areas.



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GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Reduce the number of inoperative septic systems and increase septic system requirements.

STRATEGIES

- Discourage the installation of septic systems in areas not planned for growth.
- Increase the minimum lot size for use of a septic system.
- Establish an inspection program or require maintenance contracts.
- Facilitate the removal of non-functioning systems through Neighborhood Improvement Districts.
- Facilitate elimination of septic tanks causing environmental or health hazards.
- Require latest approved design technology if a Septic Tank System is only feasible option.
- Eliminate County imposed requirements that exceed state law relating to the establishment of Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NID)

GOAL Facilitate the collaboration of the county, municipalities, districts, and utilities to develop, maintain, and expand utility infrastructure to meet the growing potential needs of commercial, industrial, and residential land.

STRATEGIES

- Improve coordination on major road improvement projects between utilities, road sponsors, and designers by including utility facilities in the design and construction project schedules.
- Identify the county's technical infrastructure and facilitate its development and improvement.
- Encourage standardized, reliable, and affordable telecommunications services to all businesses and residents of the county.
- Continue to lobby state legislators to allow municipalities to provide Internet services.



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GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Provide services to growth areas by planning for sewer extensions and expansion of existing facilities to coincide with development.

STRATEGIES

- County, municipalities and districts develop a comprehensive and coordinated plan for sewer extensions and expansion of existing facilities.
- Encourage wastewater providers, where appropriate, to develop a comprehensive approach to wastewater collection and treatment that will maximize efficiency within watersheds.
- Ensure new residential development has access to sewer facilities owned and operated by an appropriate local wastewater regulatory authority.

3.4 CULTURAL, RECREATIONAL, HISTORIC

VISION

We have an ever increasing variety of cultural, historical and recreational opportunities that are available, accessible and affordable.

ISSUES

- The historical assets of the county need to be preserved.
- Opportunities to provide additional recreational areas in growth areas will become limited if not acquired in a timely fashion ahead of or in-conjunction with development.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Enhance and preserve the cultural and historic assets.

STRATEGIES

- Promote the rich history and culture of the county through the identification and preservation of historically significant sites.
- Encourage the utilization of state and federal historical tax credits to restore historically significant housing.
- Endeavors by public or private individuals/landowners to preserve historical structures should be encouraged.
- Rehabilitation approval processes for historically significant structures should be made easier for the property owners.



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GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Establish and preserve open space and recreational opportunities.

STRATEGIES

- Integrate open space and park land into developing and developed areas.
- Seek support and consensus for the creation of a greenway system.
- Develop support and alliances between municipalities, developers, landowners, intra-governmental departments and intergovernmental entities and agencies at the local, regional, state and national levels which can positively impact the development of a linked parks and recreation system.
- Utilize trails, waterways and wetlands through parks and linear greenways to connect neighborhoods, historic areas, parks, educational sites and commercial locations where feasible.
- Meet national standards for the amount of park land and open space needed for the projected population.
- Target and explore the establishment of 1 – 2 county parks within the “Golden Triangle” to serve the needs of the more highly populated areas of the county.
- Create innovative partnerships for development of park and recreation amenities and leisure pursuits.
- Seek partnerships and alliances which enhance both private interests and public need for open space, recreation, cultural and historical development and tourism to effect both economic development and efficient use of monetary and natural resources.

GOAL The county will provide quality and effective services to its residents.

STRATEGIES

- Continue the use of the 1/5 cent capital improvement tax beyond 2021 for providing needed capital improvements in a timely manner.



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3.5 HUMAN SERVICES

VISION

We ensure all residents have access to a wide variety of high quality human services.

ISSUES

- Social needs are increasing and changing as the demographics change.
- Homelessness.
- Service needs for the at risk population.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Health and human services will have a seamless, coordinated system of services.

STRATEGIES

- Provide an annual updated directory of social service agencies in print and/or electronic format available through local libraries, churches, law enforcement agencies, hospitals, appropriate websites, and chambers of commerce.
- Maintain balanced and well funded programs for at risk populations such as programs for the disabled, disadvantaged, elderly, etc.
- Assess the homeless and at risk populations in the county.

3.6 PUBLIC HEALTH

VISION

We have excellent health service programs that are high in quality, effectiveness and efficiency that meet the demands of increasing and diverse population.

ISSUES

- Public is not well aware of information sources available or health services provided.
- Quality and effectiveness of public health needs to be assessed in order to provide the necessary health services.
- Diversity of health services demanded is increasing as the diversity of population increases.



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GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL Increase the role of the Department of Community Health and the Environment in providing effective public health education to residents.

STRATEGIES

- Provide the general public and policy leaders with information on health risks, health status and health needs in St. Charles County as well as information describing policies and programs that can potentially improve community health.
- Provide health information to enable individuals and groups, including vulnerable populations and those at increased risk, to make informed decisions about healthy living and lifestyle choices and sponsor education programs to develop knowledge, skills and behavior needed to improve individual and community health.
- Use appropriate media (print, radio, television, and Internet) to communicate health information to the community at large.
- Evaluate the appropriateness, quality and effectiveness of public health education activities at least every two years.

GOAL The Department of Community Health and the Environment will directly, and through partnerships, design and implement a wide range of health promotion activities to facilitate healthy living throughout the County.

STRATEGIES

- Conduct health promotion activities for the community at large and for populations at increased risk for negative health outcomes.
- Develop collaborative networks for health promotion activities that facilitate healthy living in healthy communities.
- Assess the appropriateness, quality and effectiveness of health promotion activities at least every two years.



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GOALS & STRATEGIES

GOAL The Department of Community Health and the Environment shall keep pace with the population growth of the County and the need for public health services.

STRATEGIES

- Evaluate the need for additional space to house the program of the Division of Public Health with special attention directed at finding a secondary location in central to central/western portion of the County to replace donated space and provide a presence in these growing areas.

