

## VISION

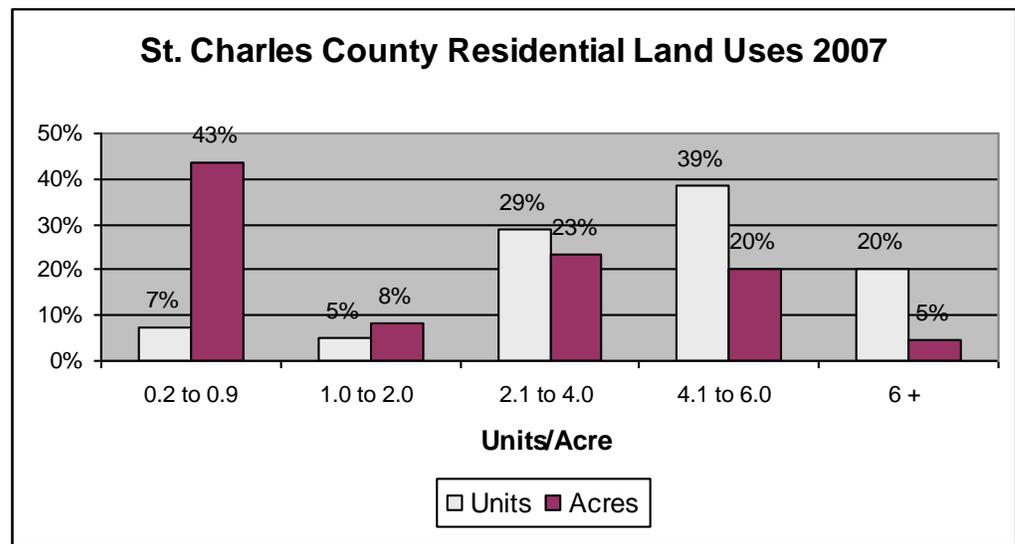
*Development and population growth is well-planned and our natural resources are maintained and protected.*

## SUMMARY

Over the past several decades St. Charles County has experienced high levels of growth, currently the fastest growing county in the state. The pressures from this growth, coupled with an increased awareness of economic, environmental, as well as social issues, leads to increasing concern in how we use our land. St. Charles County's land area is 561.35 square miles. Of this total area approximately 29 percent is situated within the incorporated communities of the county. The remaining 71 percent are situated within unincorporated St. Charles County. The projected land use is driven by population and employment growth. Future land use projections apply the assumption that the land use patterns and trends would remain the same and will provide a guide for the future.

St. Charles County's current residential land uses contain 99,507 detached single-family units occupying 54,380 acres, and 24,839 attached multi-family units occupying 2,699 acres to accommodate a population of 338,719 as estimated by the Census Bureau for 2006. Chart 6-1 shows the percentage of existing units and the density they occupy in 2007. In addition to residential land uses, there are about 3,634 hotel/motel units occupying approximately 431 acres.

CHART 6-1



**SUMMARY**

The workforce in St. Charles County consists of 179,539 employees utilizing 17,352 acres to accommodate industrial, retail trade, and office sectors. In 2007, 68 percent of employment acres were used for the industrial sector; 13 percent of employment acres were used for the retail trade sector; and 19 percent of employment acres were used for the office sector.

Facilities in the county of St. Charles consist of general government, parks and open space, private golf courses, and religious facilities. General government facilities, which also include police, fire, and jail, occupy 7,385 acres and serve 304,044 functional residents estimated by the Census Bureau for 2005. Functional population is the equivalent number of people occupying space within a community on a 24-hour-per-day, seven-day-per-week basis. Parks occupy 5,294 acres, private golf courses occupy 3,767 acres, and religious facilities occupy 2,400 acres.

Education facilities occupy 2,188 acres to accommodate a total of 60,232 public and private K-12 students. In addition, St. Charles County utilizes approximately 471 acres to accommodate 6,669 St. Charles Community College students, and 9,076 Lindenwood University students.

Demographic changes have important implications for future land use demands. These changes in population directly affect the need for housing, employment, and public facilities. St. Charles County's population is projected (using the Cohort-Survival Method) to reach 441,281 and employment is projected to reach 207,573 by 2020. These estimates are used to project the amount of land needed in order to accommodate its citizens. The purpose of these projections is not to advocate one development scenario over another, but rather to gather a first impression of future land use needs. It does not allocate land uses to the land, nor does it say where development should or should not go. As a first impression device, it allows one to see a first cut estimate, not precise figures, of land use needs. Assuming the projections hold, they show in general terms the magnitude of change facing St. Charles County. Table 6-I shows the acreages of current land uses as well as the projected land use acreages for the year 2020.



## SUMMARY

TABLE 6-I

St. Charles County Land Use Acreage Estimates and Projections								
Year	Undeveloped & low density Residential	Residential	Commercial and Office	Industrial	Education	Government	Parks	Misc
2007	261,830	57,079	6,132	11,845	2,659	7,385	5,294	6,167
2020	229,053	79,669	8,624	13,528	2,801	9,168	8,000	7,557

Residential needs were estimated for single-family, multi-family, and hotel/motel land uses. To accommodate the housing needs of 441,281 residents by the year 2020, a 42 percent increase in housing units and a 40 percent increase in acres would be needed. In addition to residential units, hotel/motel units would need to be constructed as well. To accommodate the lodging needs of the population, a 14 percent increase in units and a 21 percent increase in acres would be needed.

Proportionally, growth would also be seen in the space needed to accommodate employment. Requirements associated with private and public sector employment to accommodate a total of 207,573 employees would require a 23 percent increase in acres.

Estimating the need for public facilities and associated land use needs affect all people in the community. To accommodate the county's functional population of 471,893, general government facilities would require a 25 percent of increase in acres from 2007 to accommodate the increased population as well as to maintain the same level of service. Parks and open space would require a 51 percent increase; private golf courses would require a 26 percent increase; religious facilities would require a 17 percent increase; and education facilities would require a 5 percent increase from 2007 to accommodate the increased student enrollment.



**ISSUES**

- Development of the land is rapid.
- Land uses need to be distributed and balanced.
- Land use growth is outpacing infrastructure development.
- Large tracts for industrial use and research parks are lacking.
- Coordination of land use plans between county and cities is needed.
- Inefficient development is increasing the cost of providing infrastructure.

**GOALS &  
STRATEGIES**

**GOAL** Plan for land use development and growth in a sustainable way.

**STRATEGIES**

- Provide a balance of integrated and complimentary land uses.
- Establish areas for growth that are compact where utilities and infrastructure can be provided.
- Coordinate zoning for land uses with the growth patterns, trends, and densities as identified on the adopted land use plan.
- Discourage inefficient growth patterns and development types.
- Establish requirements for and encourage cluster residential development where appropriate.
- Encourage in-fill developments.
- Influence the timing of development to coincide with the provision of public facilities, water, sanitary sewer, etc.
- Promote mixed-use development, combining residential and retail components, as a means of reducing traffic congestion and fostering neighborhood identity.
- Designate appropriate tracts for industrial use and research parks.
- Coordinate land use plans between county and cities.
- Develop a land use plan that designates land use acreages that to some extent exceed our projected needs.
- Create minimum development standards for growth areas to address underutilized development patterns.
- Create an exclusive agricultural zoning district that supports and preserves actual agricultural uses.

