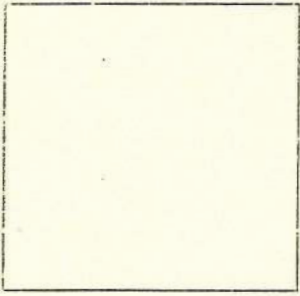
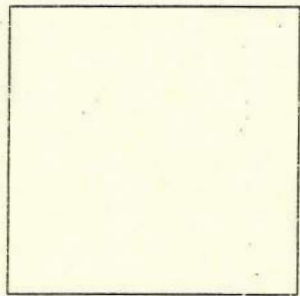
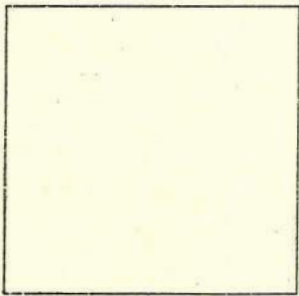
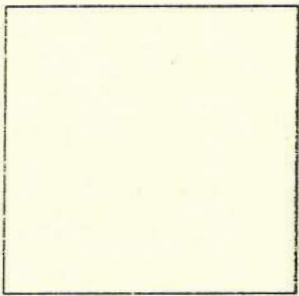
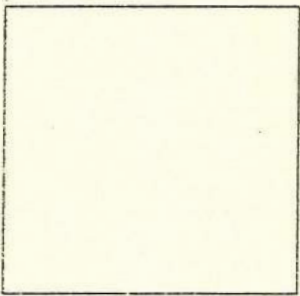
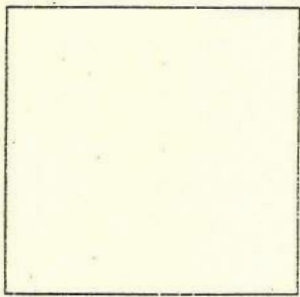
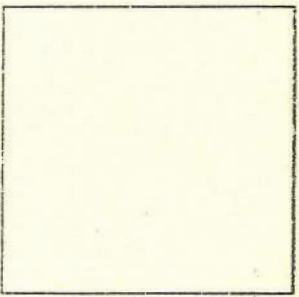
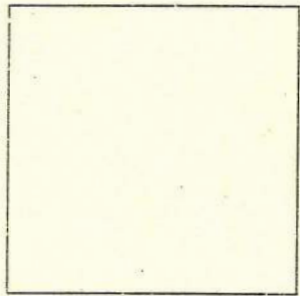
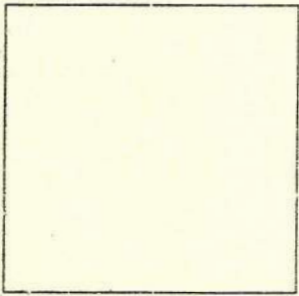
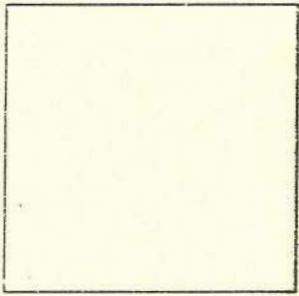
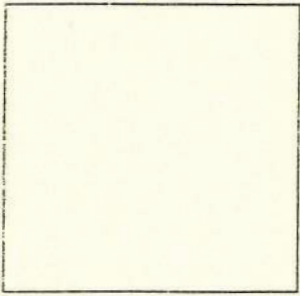


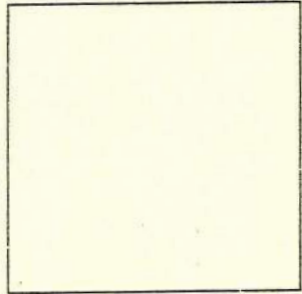
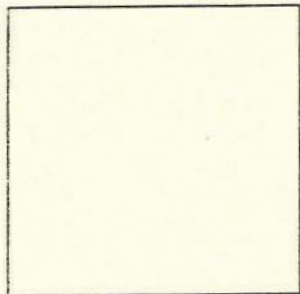
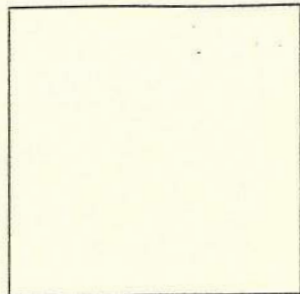
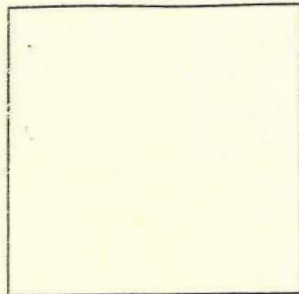
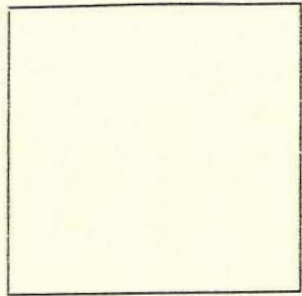
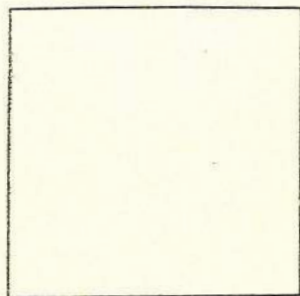
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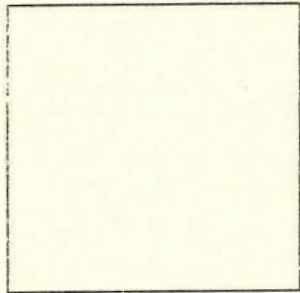
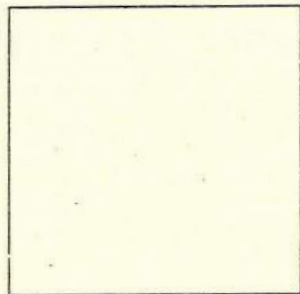
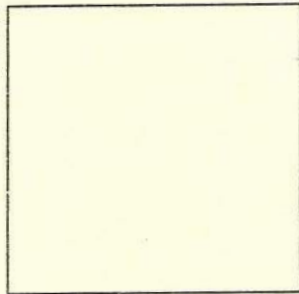
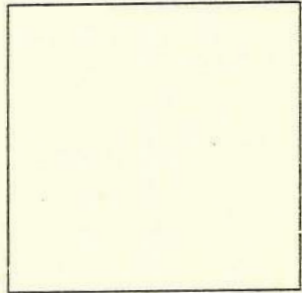
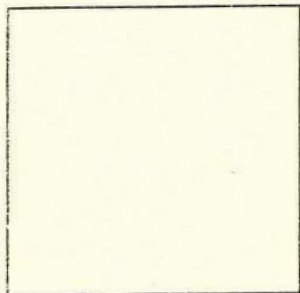
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 Part 1 - *Issues Identification and Inventory*  
 Part 2- *Issues Summary, Policy Plan, and  
 Development Framework*



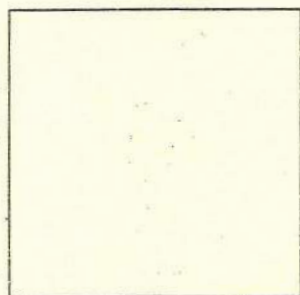
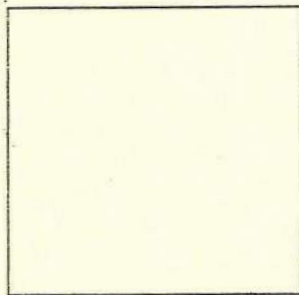
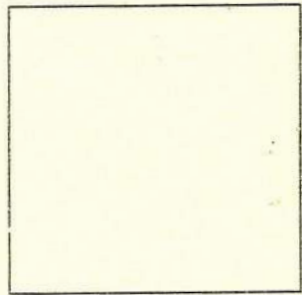
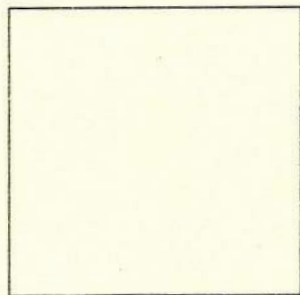
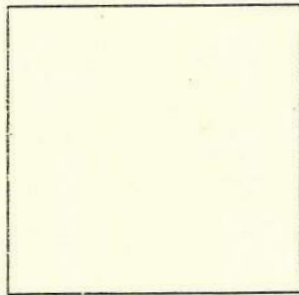
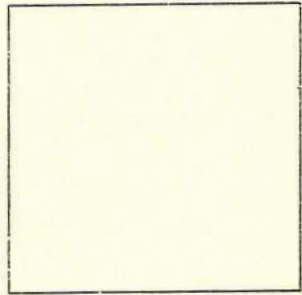
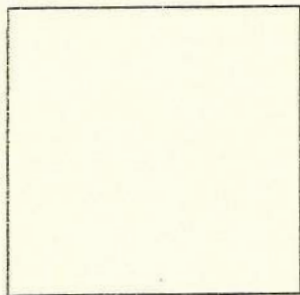
**October  
 2001**



*City of*  
**St. Augusta**



**Comprehensive Plan Update - Part 1**  
*Issues Identification and Inventory*



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**Comprehensive Plan Update - Part 1**  
***Issues Identification***

## **INTRODUCTION**

The City of St. Augusta is pursuing an update of the community's existing Comprehensive Plan, adopted in November 1995, in response to a number of significant changes in the community. First and foremost is the incorporation of the community as a City by administrative court order. Concurrent with the incorporation of the City is the simultaneous annexation of the former St. Augusta Township to the City of St. Cloud along the Interstate 94 corridor, which included much of the community's existing commercial and industrial tax base. Finally, there are potential alternatives to provide sanitary sewer service to the St. Augusta and Luxemburg hamlets within the City, either with service from the City of Cold Spring or the City of St. Cloud. The City needs to evaluate all of these issues collectively in an effort to re-examine the future direction for the community.

The format of this report is structured to first identify those that have contributed their opinions and insights to issues and opportunities within the City. This is followed by a brief description of the process the City will follow in updating its Comprehensive Plan. The third section of the report details the information gathered during individual interviews and a community meeting. This information is most important in that it provides a listing of the issues and opportunities that City officials and residents believe are most important and must be given due attention as part of the planning process. The fourth and final section of the report is a professional analysis of the information gathered during this initial community based effort and a summary of those community issues that the professional planner would consider to be of fundamental importance and needing immediate action.

This report is intended to establish a foundation for the process the City will undertake in updating its Comprehensive Plan by identifying the issues most important to the community and gaining local perspectives on existing conditions. As this report identifies initial issues that require consensus and direction at the outset of the project to be further developed as part of the actual plan, it is critical that this information is reviewed and discussed at the earliest opportunity.

## **CREDITS**

To ensure that the Comprehensive Plan update process reflects the interests and objectives of the community, it is critical to incorporate local views and opinions from officials, citizens property owners and other stakeholders at the outset of the project. As such, the initial task of the planning process was individual interviews with a broad cross section of individuals. In addition to the interview process a community meeting was held on August 3, 2000 at St. Mary's School, which was attended by approximately 100 persons. We wish to extend our sincere appreciation to those individuals who contributed their time, views and opinions that made this issues identification report possible.

### **City Council**

Ollie Mondloch, Mayor  
Cheryl Honer  
Robert Laudenbach  
John Kaiser  
Mike Zenzen

### **Planning Commission**

Gayle Rosha, Chair  
Rick Christen, Dave Lavoie  
Patricia Osborn, Cliff Schlagen  
Darwin Voigt, Glen Lommel

### **City Staff**

Aaron Anderson, City Clerk/Administrator  
Richard Hurd, Treasurer  
Joe Bettendorf, City Engineer

### **Others**

Harlan Jopp, Former Clerk  
Howard Carter  
Mr. and Mrs. Dean Klaverkamp  
Gary Goebel, St. Augusta Bank  
Dave Gruenes, Stearns Electric

## PLANNING PROCESS

The City government of St. Augusta serves to maintain and enhance the living and working environment of the residents and labor force. This is accomplished by providing basic services plus establishing an organized setting in which day-to-day activities take place. Central to this management function is the structuring and ordering of change which will take place plus the programming of policies which guide performance and actions of both the private and public sectors. The primary tool which the City has to accomplish these responsibilities is the Comprehensive Plan.

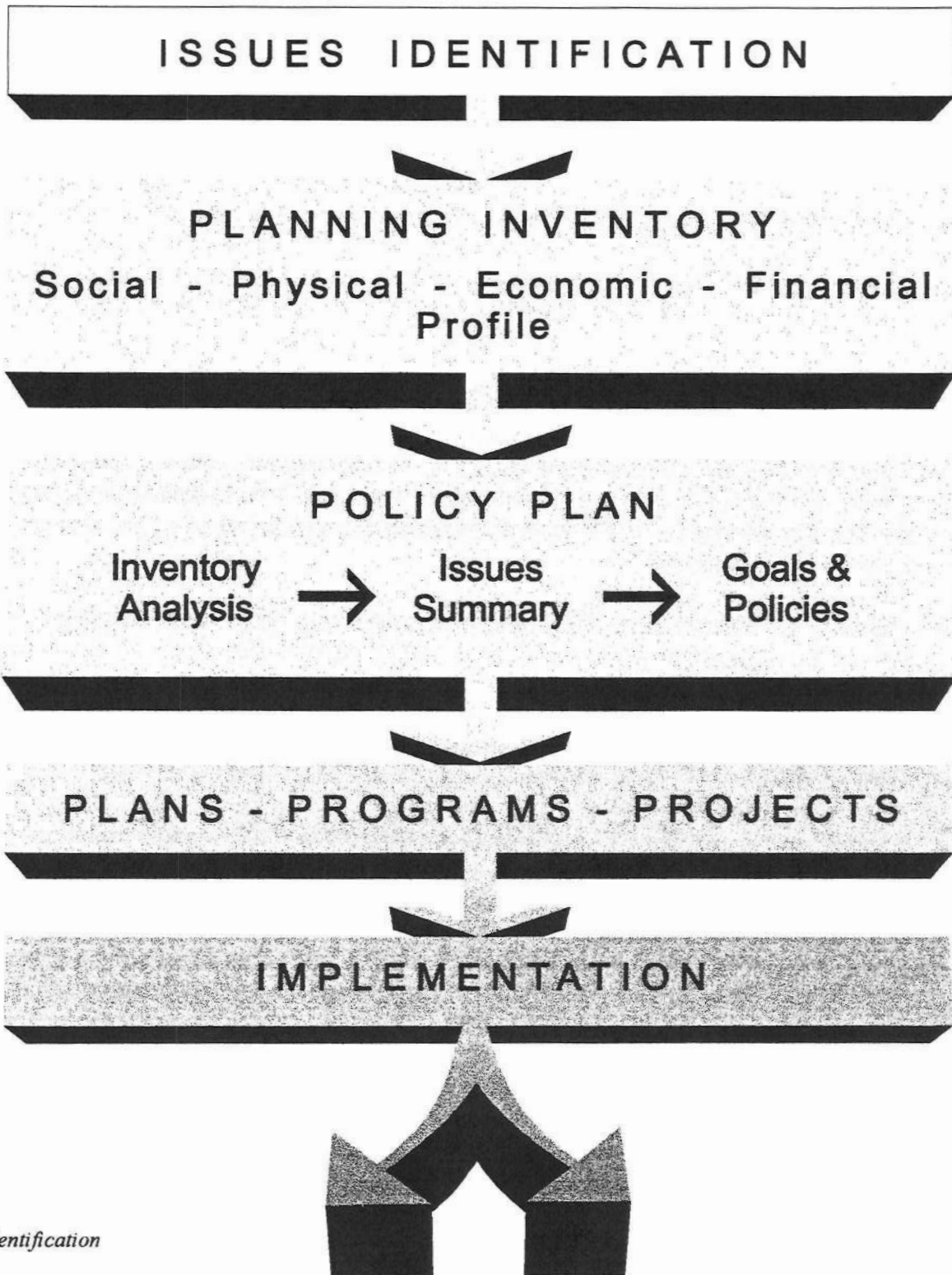
The Comprehensive Plan Update is responsive to the advanced current and future management needs of the City. Besides addressing the typical land use concerns, transportation, community facilities and services, economic development, and natural environment are primary topics which will also be included. The range of topics covered provides a truly "comprehensive" perspective of the physical environment which the City serves to direct.

The completion of a Comprehensive Plan follows a basic problem solving process. This process is graphically depicted on the following diagram. In essence, this process is a progressive, step-by-step decision-making effort. It begins with problem identification. Subsequently, problem resolutions are formulated. Next, actions necessary for achieving these solutions are selected. Finally, work efforts necessary to accomplish the stated ends are programmed and pursued.

While simplistic in its basic form, the comprehensive planning process currently being undertaken by St. Augusta is a highly detailed and complex work effort. Moreover, it is important that all involved understand this process and the various aspects of which it is comprised. It is only through such an appreciation that the logic and purpose of the various elements of work and effort become meaningful and can therefore contribute to a useful end product.

The first phase of the current St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update involves data gathering and evaluation. Two specific sub-tasks will comprise this phase of work. The first task, represented by this report, is termed "Issues Identification". As the name implies, this task involves basic organization of the process to be followed, as well as an educational function directed at informing participants of the purpose, content, and scope of the undertaking. The Issues Identification report also serves to provide an initial community based focus for the planning effort. Through individual meetings with City officials, staff, residents and business persons, a perspective of community concerns and desires are identified. These locally based opinions are intended to direct work efforts and attention to those matters which are viewed of primary importance to and by the community. This approach to the plan is critical if the final product is to be meaningful and responsive as a tool which will be used as a decision-making guide.

# COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS





The second task of phase one is the technical data base inventory. This will involve the assembly of all relevant factual information generally organized on the basis of social, physical, and economic matters. This data base is a staff and consultant responsibility which provides a statistical and historic perspective of the community. As such, it serves as another source of problem and opportunity identification, as well as a basis upon which to orient plans and proposed actions.

Upon completion of data and background assembly, the second phase of the process will involve analysis of information and the summarizing of resulting issues and opportunities. This summary establishes direction for the planning effort as well as criteria upon which the final planning effort can be evaluated.

The third phase of the comprehensive planning process constitutes actual plan formulation. There are three sub-components of this phase. The first and fundamental plan element is the "Policy Plan". This will include a statement of ends or goals to be achieved. The means whereby these are accomplished will then be defined in specific objective and policy statements intended to guide and direct both public and private actions. The Policy Plan is viewed as the "heart" of the Comprehensive Plan which is being prepared. The standards and criteria offer City decision-makers the basis upon which to evaluate and program actions. Moreover, the policies provide flexibility plus ongoing applicability. As events change or unanticipated situations arise, the Policy Plan provides ongoing guidance which is not always the case with static graphic or map type plans.

The Concept Plan is a second plan element. This will be an initial, graphic interpretation of the Policy Plan which sets forth in general terms the physical layout and guiding graphic principals for development. Along with the Policy Plan, the Concept Plan adds flexibility to the Comprehensive Plan and related decision-making. Such plans can be readily adapted to most matters which come before the City and therefore offer a long lasting reference.

The final and most detailed plan element will be the Development Framework. Founded upon and directed by the Policy and Concept Plans, the Development Framework will organize the physical aspects of St. Augusta into four categorical plans: natural environment; land use; transportation; and community facilities and services. A key element also guiding the Development Framework and notably the Land Use Plan is economic base data. Such perspective aids in providing realistic and practical assignments of land use by type and also allows for proper phasing of development and land absorption.

So as to make the categorical plans more direct and meaningful, the final portion of the Development Framework will be a chapter termed Planning Districts. The community will be geographically divided into neighborhoods. Within these sub-areas of the City, the natural environment, land use, transportation, and community facilities and services plans are combined and consolidated. This allows for a quick summary and comprehensive picture of actions and directions which are to take place in any given area of the City.

The final portion and phase of St. Augusta's Comprehensive Plan Update will be the programming of implementation efforts. Based upon discussions with City officials, projects and actions will be prioritized as a means to organize and focus work which will lead to accomplishing the plans which have been formulated and approved. The initial implementation program is intended as an example which should be periodically reviewed and updated by the City as part of the ongoing practice of growth management.

A final note needs to be made regarding the continuing nature of the comprehensive planning process and specifically, the St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update. Planning is ongoing, as is change. As a result, it can be expected that as special issues or subjects arise, detailed plans expanding upon the base provided by the Comprehensive Plan will be necessary. Furthermore, as time progresses and situations change, the Comprehensive Plan should be updated and amended on an incremental basis to insure it is responsive as well as reflective of City policy. If continually approached in such a fashion, the plan will remain current and the central, vital core of St. Augusta's growth management program.

## COMMUNITY VIEWS

The primary purpose of the issues identification process is to identify current community issues, concerns and opportunities. This section is a summary of the comments and views of various City officials, staff and participants in the interviews and community meeting that were conducted in July and August of 2000.

## BACKGROUND

The success of any comprehensive planning effort depends greatly on the resulting document being reflective of actual community issues and objectives. The drafting of a plan that is based upon the goals of the community will result in the document being a more useful and often used tool for City officials, as well as residents or property owners, for direction and decision making.

Based upon the process outlined in the previous section, interviews with community officials, stakeholder representatives and citizens were held on July 13, 2000 and July 19, 2000. Those participating in this process have been identified in the Credits section of this report. To facilitate the interview process, participating individuals were provided a framework intended to assist organize their comments. This outline, provided below for reference, is anticipated to be the basic format for the findings of the issues identification process and subsequent Comprehensive Plan documents:

- A. Natural Resources / Environmental Protection
  - 1. Storm Drainage
  - 2. Agricultural Preservation
- B. Land Use
  - 1. Agricultural
  - 2. Residential (types/rate of growth)
  - 3. Commercial
  - 4. Industrial
  - 5. Public / Quasi-Public
- C. Transportation
- D. Community Facilities and Services
- E. Economic Development

The issues identification process identified a number of specific issues that were of importance to a majority of the participants. While these issues are more thoroughly outlined in later paragraphs, community identity, sanitary sewer service and development concepts were considered to be the most significant and fundamental issues facing the community to be addressed by the updated Comprehensive Plan.

In the summary and analysis that follows, the participant comments have been generalized so as not to be attributable to any single individual or group. Additionally, it must be recognized that there was often a wide range of opinion generated on the issues outlined above. A major outcome of the issues identification effort should be some consensus as to the approach the City will pursue and evaluate further as part of the Comprehensive Plan process. Therefore, there is a need for review and discussion among City Officials concerning the findings of this report.

In that this issues identification effort is primarily oriented towards identifying the problems currently facing the community, its tone may be considered overly negative. This negative theme should not be taken as the prevailing opinion of St. Augusta by City leaders or residents. To the contrary, the City is viewed as a unique and diverse community that provides great opportunity for quality of life with the fresh start that is presented by current conditions. The purpose of identifying the City's current issues and concerns is to insure that these items are addressed and a plan for resolving them is developed as part of the Comprehensive Plan update such that the community's positive attributes are enhanced.

Finally, not all of the issues or concerns identified by the issues identification process have been outlined herein. The scope of the elements involved would be too broad to be effectively summarized within the focus of this effort. Rather, the issues that are raised by this report represent a generalized categorization of topics, which will facilitate the organization of responses and plans dealing with more specific community concerns.

## **PRIMARY ISSUES**

### **Community Identity**

Community identity has long been an issue for the City. Development within the City has occurred in the two primary growth hamlets of Luxemburg and St. Augusta in the western and eastern portions of the community respectively. Based upon this development pattern, residents tend to identify more with the hamlet to which they are most closely located versus the overall City.

During the interview process, City officials emphasized the need to increase the physical connections between the two growth centers in order to unify the community psychologically. These physical connections include encouraging infill development of the area between the two hamlets, improving and upgrading east-west street connections, and providing a trails system that connects all areas of the community. City officials also expressed interest in developing a new government center that would be more centrally located than the present facility in the east portion of the community.

There was also a level of uncertainty expressed during the interviews as to the levels of services that the City should provide. Specific needs for improved fire and police protection, a future post office, additional parks and trails, street lights, improved streets were all areas of need identified by participants of this process. These expectations are based in part on the change from township to municipal government, which typically deliver a higher level of services to residents. What needs to be understood and clearly communicated as part of the Comprehensive Plan is that there will be a transition period in the level of services the City may provide due to the constraints in terms of staff, equipment, time and financial resources. As the community grows and service increases result in higher operational expenditures, the City will have to be cautious in its distribution of the costs for these services. Those areas or residents receiving the most benefit for the desired services should be primarily responsible for its cost, such as a distinction between urban and rural residents.

### **Sanitary Sewer Service**

The City of St. Augusta is considering two potential options for providing sanitary sewer service to one or both of the hamlets within the community. The availability of sanitary sewer service either from Cold Spring or St. Cloud has led to a recognition among City officials that the extension of this service is inevitable. Further, City officials understand the importance of providing this service for economic development and continued residential development.

City officials also acknowledge a need to concentrate growth into urban centers in order to fully utilize available sanitary sewer service capacities, as well as fund development of the system. The existing growth centers of St. Augusta and Luxemburg are viewed as the natural starting point for sanitary sewer service based upon the existing concentration of development and access to major transportation corridors for economic development. City officials also understand the need to plan rural development outside of the urban centers in order to allow for orderly extension of utilities as development continues. Density limitations, clustering and ghost platting were all mentioned as techniques that should be implemented to ensure that rural development which is allowed will not hinder future urban expansion.

City officials must still make a number of significant decisions regarding the provision of sanitary sewer service concurrent with this planning effort. First is the determination as to whether service is to be provided by Cold Spring, St. Cloud or both. Other decisions include an anticipated growth rate, the areas to be served based upon a trunk system design, connection policies and system funding. These issues will need to be decided early in the Comprehensive Plan process due to the implications for the plans that are developed. Concern was expressed during the interviews and community meeting about growing too rapidly or over allocating areas for urban uses in a manner that would negatively effect the City's existing character.



## **Development Concepts**

Within the context of providing sanitary sewer service, City officials have already established the need to limit growth outside of the proposed urban areas. The need to concentrate growth into urban centers is based upon the efficiency providing services (police, fire, parks, street maintenance, etc.) and infrastructure within smaller areas, opposed to the entire community. Concentrating growth into the urban centers will also be critical in order to provide the necessary hook-ups to fund development of a sanitary sewer system.

The transition between urban and rural areas was also a concern. There was no consensus on the level of non-farm development that should be allowed, with a range of four units per forty acres up to the present allowance of the Comprehensive Plan at ten units per forty acres suggested. As part of its annexation settlement agreement with the City of St. Cloud, the City of St. Augusta agreed to consider imposing a four units per forty acres in areas not served by sanitary sewer service.

Limitations on non-farm development outside of the urban centers is also viewed as important for allowing continued agriculture. The view of the community is that there are several established farm families within the City that are turning over their operations to the next generation, who intend to continue farming. Limitations on non-farm subdivisions in rural areas is necessary to preserve large tracts of land for these purposes and minimize potential conflicts between modern farm practices and residential uses.

It was frequently mentioned that the City consider establishing requirements for protection of prime agricultural lands and forested areas both to protect existing agriculture and allow for future urban expansion. Again, specific mention was made for rural clustering, ghost platting and transfer of development rights. The idea of utilizing alternative septic system designs that serve an entire neighborhood would also be considered a useful transition that would allow for utility pipe installation that could be connected into the municipal trunk in the future.

## SECONDARY ISSUES

In addition to the issues discussed above, which are considered to be of primary importance based upon participant comments and the frequency of which they were mentioned, several other issues were identified. These secondary issues are all relevant and will require further attention as the Comprehensive Plan update is developed.

### Natural Resources

Participants in the issues identification process stated that it is important that the City protect its naturally significant areas from encroachment by new development. It was noted that protection of existing tree stands in the rural areas is equally important as protecting land for agricultural production. Preservation of such large rural areas is viewed as fundamental to the community's rural and small town character.

Also mentioned was the importance of storm water drainage. There was concern that ongoing development within the community has altered existing drainage patterns and resulted in a degradation of waterways within the City. The impacts of these changes include loss of fish and wildlife and aesthetic values. The City will need to be attentive to these issues and implement appropriate controls as part of its development regulations to protect these important features.

### Land Use

As may be expected with any community planning effort, land use was one of the primary concerns of process participants. The topics discussed, as well as opinions ranged greatly concerning both the rate and type of growth that the Comprehensive Plan update should encourage. Most view increased development in the community as inevitable due to proximity of the City to the St. Cloud MSA, positive economic environment and available vacant land. It was also expressed that St. Augusta has a great opportunity to define a character for the community as a foundation for future growth. In talking with the interviewees, most discussed the idea of concentrating growth and providing a broad range of uses within the defined service areas. The following paragraphs discuss specific issues that were raised based upon land use categories.

- **Agricultural.** Opinions on continued agriculture uses were split between participants. There are a number of existing farms within the community that are being transferred to younger generations that wish to continue farming. There are also older farmers interested in retirement and selling their land for development. There was general disagreement as to whether St. Augusta's existing agricultural lands would be considered "prime" for agricultural production.

While urban development in St. Augusta is considered inevitable, most recognize that the transition from a rural township to urban city will occur gradually overtime, if for no other reason the size of the community. Therefore, while the importance of agricultural preservation in terms of economy/employment may be in dispute, sustaining farming as a viable use is recognized as important from a growth management standpoint. Issues to be addressed as part of the Comprehensive Plan must include provisions for sustainable agricultural use in consideration of present business practices and minimizing rural/urban conflicts.

- **Residential.** Residential land use was discussed more from the perspective of potential locations, rather than any particular concern or issue. City officials wish to encourage residential development in the area between the two growth centers in order to connect the community. That said, there were also comments that the City must control the rate of growth such that it does not occur too fast and compromise the City's service capacity and existing character.

The expectation is that the primary growth in the community will be single family residential development. The participants also addressed the need to diversify the City's existing housing stock in terms of higher density housing. The opportunity to develop additional housing types within the community will be possible with sanitary sewer service. At a minimum, there is general support for development of senior oriented housing that older residents may move into when they are no longer interested or able to maintain a single family residence.

- **Commercial.** There were strong opinions that development of commercial (and industrial) uses is critical for the City to restore and improve its tax base, as well as provide markets for residents. It is generally accepted that commercial development potential is limited due the regional commercial facilities available in St. Cloud. These uses will limit commercial development in St. Augusta to areas of high traffic or locally oriented businesses. There is an opportunity for market capture with construction of a new interchange at Interstate 94 and CR 75 in the east portion of the community. Concern about potential adult use business locations and the need for solid regulations was also noted.
- **Industrial.** Even more than commercial land use, development of industrial land uses is a primary goal for the City to enhance its financial situation. Industrial development is anticipated to be concentrated within urban service areas, in particular along the T.H. 15 corridor south of I-94. It was indicated that sanitary sewer service in this area is critical for encouraging new industrial development.

- **Public/Quasi-Public.** Institutional uses are at the very center of the community's identity in that the two hamlets have developed around Catholic parishes. Both of these quasi-public facilities are integral to the community and are expected to remain so in the future.

## **Transportation**

Generally positive comments were received concerning the City's existing street network, in terms of maintenance and snow plowing. Attention items include defining future arterial and collector street corridors in advance of new development and improving the collector and local street connections between the east and west portions of the City. Several farmers noted concern about increased traffic on City streets and how that makes it difficult to get to and from fields.

## **Community Facilities and Services**

Sanitary sewer service is obviously the foremost community facility issue, and has been discussed above. In terms of public facilities, development of additional park facilities was also identified as a need, particularly in the Luxemburg area. Park facilities will be an important consideration in areas of future development. Development of a community trail system is equally important, not only because of the recreational value, but due to the connections they make between areas of the community. The City has an existing fund for development of a park and trail system. As such the Comprehensive Plan should establish a guide for development of a balanced community park system which the City may being to implement as soon as possible. The City should also pursue Federal or State grant funds when available for parks and trails.

The City also recognizes a need for administrative facilities that have expansion potential corresponding to anticipated growth of the community. The City desires to establish a new City Hall facility somewhere in the north central region of the community. Such a location would be equally accessible to residents of the east, west and south portions of the City and serve to establish a connection. Development of a new City administration facility may be planned to accommodate future fire, police and public works space, as well as a park. No sites have been selected and the City is not actively pursuing acquisition of land.

School facilities received very little attention as part of the tactic process, only being mentioned by one group at the public meeting. The sentiment was that the City should work cooperatively with the school district (and private schools) to provide quality education.

## **Economic Development**

The need to expand the City's tax base was of primary importance to all participants. City officials stressed that the City must pursue development of commercial and industrial uses aggressively to replace and expand the tax revenue generated by the industrial development that has been annexed to St. Cloud. Providing sanitary sewer (and water) service is absolutely necessary for encouraging new business sites within the City. The general consensus is that the City should develop municipal utilities as soon as possible.

Also in consideration of tax base support, the City should encourage high quality development, in terms of building and site design. Opportunity should also be made for start-up small businesses, but those locations should be secondary to high quality developments with access and visibility.

The City's ability to provide the services common of municipal government will depend greatly on its success at economic development. At present, the City is limited in the range of services it can provide due to the revenue generated by existing development. To this end, the City should be active in pursuing grants or aid when available to assist with its various activities. Until the City experiences new development that makes a positive contribution to tax revenue, it is important to emphasize that the level of service that is provided will likely to be more similar to that of a township than a municipality. This is not entirely negative, in that it encourages fiscal conservatism and attention to the property tax impact of major decisions.



## **PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY**

The following is a brief summary of comments and issues identified as part of the public open house meeting.

### **NEEDS**

Commercial and Industrial Development  
Fire, Post Office, Schools  
Community Based Government and Plan  
Sanitary Sewer  
Parks and Trails  
Street Improvements and E/W Streets  
Planned Unit Development Zoning  
Minimize use of TIF  
Preserve Small Town Atmosphere  
Government Communication  
Agricultural Preservation (!)  
Rural/Urban Transition

### **STRENGTHS**

Undeveloped Land Supply  
Location  
Transportation  
People/Community Involvement  
Park and Recreation  
Government  
Rural Atmosphere  
Not in Floodplain/Physical Features  
Clean  
Existing Centers  
Safe Place to Live  
Existing Businesses  
Rural Atmosphere  
Time to Plan/Develop

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

Define Land Use Locations  
New Businesses  
Residential Growth  
Environmental Preservation  
Regulate Adult Uses  
Combine Centers  
Fresh Start  
Community Center  
Available Land (willing sellers)  
Public Participation/ Community Plan  
Maintain Low Density  
Transportation Access  
Senior Housing  
Parks  
Preserve "PRIME" Ag Land  
Sanitary Sewer

## **PROFESSIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

As stated previously, the principal focus of this report is to present the views and opinions expressed by City officials, residents, property owners and other local stakeholders as to the most important issues before the City of St. Augusta. However, this initial process also provides an opportunity for some preliminary analysis by the professional planner regarding the conditions of the community. This preliminary insight is presented in order to assist community decision makers organize and direct actions intended to formulate the long range future of the City. It must be emphasized that at this level of analysis, specific comment will not be given to detailed problems nor will possible solutions be outlined. The focus of the following paragraphs is instead more philosophic, broad based issues that must be resolved as critical elements of this Comprehensive Plan update.

While the perspectives discussed in this section are not those of the community, the community has in fact already placed them on the agenda. Further, while these three topics are independent, they are also interrelated. Two of these issues relate to the potential availability of sanitary sewer service and whether a philosophy of agricultural preservation will continue to be implemented and to what extent. A third concern which as always been known seems to be taking on greater importance with the changes the community has experienced to date and those yet to come. That issue is community identity involving a symbolic unification of the two historic hamlets within the City. Also important within the context of community identity is communicating a basic understanding of incorporation including the geographic areas included and the value of this effort for continued local governance.

## **COMMUNITY IDENTITY**

In addition to the issues of community identity detailed in the previous section, another significant issue became apparent during the issues identification process. There seems to be a general a lack of understanding regarding the implications of incorporation or even what area has been incorporated as the City of St. Augusta.

During the public meeting, it was clear that residents from the Luxemburg area perceive the City of St. Augusta as including only the area surrounding the St. Augusta hamlet. Further, the public did not seem to be aware of the land annexed to the City of St. Cloud. This was true even of some of the affected property owners. There was also no clear understanding of what the benefits to the community are of municipal status, particularly with regard to potential future detachment of land and the ability to adopt local development standards.

Many anticipate future detachment of land to the City of St. Cloud, in addition to the most recent action. As a City, the community would have greater standing with Minnesota Planning in opposition to such a proposal. Further, the adoption and implementation of a Comprehensive Plan update with a defined service and growth strategy for border areas will serve to minimize these threats.

St. Augusta also has the authority to define and implement local development controls. As a township, the community was limited in its ability to establish development controls by those imposed by Stearns County. The community could adopt standards more restrictive than those established by the County's Plan and Ordinances, but not less. This change is significant, especially concerning rural development density. Under the County's recently adopted Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, development density outside of the St. Augusta and Luxemburg growth areas would be limited to one dwelling per 80 acres. As a township, the community could not have allowed any density greater than this one unit per 80 acre standard. However, as a City, the community may define locally what level of rural development it believes is appropriate.

It is imperative that City officials initiate measures to address these concerns. It may be advisable to develop a regular community newsletter that outlines the changes to the community that have occurred with incorporation, as well as provide updates on the Comprehensive Plan process. As government relations was a need identified at the public meetings, the City may wish to continue such a news letter following completion of this planning process.

## **SANITARY SEWER**

There is general agreement that a sanitary sewer service system will be developed within the City in the immediate future. The next step of this process is to determine where and how the service is to be provided.

The need for sanitary sewer service in St. Augusta is based in part on the platting of unsewered residential lots within the two growth centers. The allowance of these plats ultimately has had a monumental impact to the character of the area and will result in the future direction of the community towards full urban development. These unsewered areas create a long term concern for environmental pollution and ground water contamination. As such, the City must be able to provide for future sanitary sewer service as a form of public protection. This public purpose is in fact one of the reasons for incorporation of the City because of the ability of a municipal government to respond to such a crisis versus a township.

The 1995 Comprehensive Plan was based in part upon the pollution concern and anticipation of future service being obtained from the City of St. Cloud. In the period since, the City has reach agreement with St. Cloud to provide service across I-94. The opportunity to receive sanitary sewer service from Cold Spring has also been presented for consideration. As no decision on service has been made, the considerations mandating that the City undertake the effort should be stated.

A potential major failure of septic systems in the platted areas becomes more likely as time passes. Occurrence of widespread septic system failures has potential financial implications for property owners and the City, in addition to the public health crisis. An individual property owner or owners may not have the financial resources to deal with an area wide ground water contamination problem caused by septic failure, leading possibly to financial ruin and leaving the property almost useless. This type of event would likely cost the City a significant amount as well, if caught unprepared. The 1995 Comprehensive Plan, therefore, was intended to make sanitary sewer service available in close proximity to areas at risk. This strategy does not eliminate the risks involved, but would minimize the impact should the need arise.

A secondary purpose for sanitary sewer service is economic development along the City's high traffic corridors. Commercial and industrial uses require sanitary sewer and water service primarily for fire protection, as well as business operations. Provision of these services in combination with the access and visibility along T.H. 15 and the future interchange at CR 75 and I-94 provides the City the necessary opportunities to expand its tax base. The need for tax base expansion rests with the revenue generated by commercial and industrial properties based on higher valued property and the present tax classification systems. This revenue can be used to offset the negative net revenue generated by most rural or residential development, reducing the tax burden in consideration of necessary services.

While sanitary sewer service will likely be made available, the City must protect its existing septic users in order to delay the necessary connection of existing properties. The City must implement a regular inspection program of existing septic systems to ensure that they are properly maintained. It must also be understood that a sanitary sewer systems will be primarily financed by new development. The rate of new development is most dependent upon the national and regional economies, of which the City has little control. The necessary rate of development to support a sanitary sewer system will likely need to be greater than that experienced in the City to date. These are some of the risks and impacts that must be considered as the City moves forward with development of local utilities.

## **GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

There is a wide view on the need for agricultural preservation within the community. While there are property owners interested in continuing to farm the land, others are ready to retire and wish to sell their property for development, rather than farm land which brings a lower return. The issue of agricultural preservation or continued farming can be addressed as a stand alone issue. The City must consider the implications of its plans that may constrain sustainable agriculture or increase potential farm/residence conflicts as part of its development plans.

However, agricultural preservation also serves an important growth management task as well. As noted previously, there is an understanding that future growth needs to be concentrated into growth centers to ensure fiscally efficient service and facility delivery. Concentrating new development into specific growth areas is even more critical with construction of sanitary sewer service. The demand for new residential dwellings and commercial/industrial buildings is limited. The City must already compete with surrounding communities for new businesses and residential development, necessary to finance the utility systems. Allowing growth outside of the sanitary sewer service district has the effect of introducing additional competition in the market place and potentially reducing development in the urban areas. The level of development that will be allowed outside of anticipated growth centers is an issue that City officials will need to determine. This is a difficult decision that often involves weighting the good of the community against the good of a minority of individuals, as well as a long range perspective.

## **PROJECT SCHEDULE**

The future of the City of St. Augusta has been the subject of extensive study and debate since 1993 as part of incorporation, comprehensive planning, and development regulation studies and plans. These include not only local efforts, but those of the St. Cloud Metropolitan Area Regional Plan and Stearns County. These efforts have impeded local owners ability to plan for their own properties. As a consequence, City officials have stressed the need to move this comprehensive plan forward as rapidly as possible. A moratorium has been imposed on all subdivisions and is intended to allow the City the opportunity to develop its future plans without concern for a development that may be counter to what may ultimately be the direction established for the long term.

The intent of City officials is to have the Comprehensive Plan update finalized and adopted prior to the start of the 2001 building season. This schedule is ambitious but can be realized depending on how quickly issues can be resolved and consensus achieved. Finalizing the details of how and where to provide sanitary sewer (and water) service to the community will need to be a concurrent effort with development of the plan.




## **CONCLUSIONS**

The extent of the comments and discussions offered by participants in the issues identification interviews speaks positively for the community and the consideration given to present opportunities and the direction of future growth. There is an evident understanding of the complex issues facing the City of St. Augusta and a resolve to act assertively to address them.

Of particular note is a general, if not specific, consensus on the issues of sanitary sewer and development concept. At this point, a significant issue is communication. Communication of the City's abilities, opportunities and issues will help City officials work with residents, property owners and other stakeholders to understand the City's present conditions and transition from rural township to urban city.

These insights and directions are a major benefit to have identified at the outset of the planning process. Coupled with the technical information presented in the inventory chapter, City officials have a sound foundation upon which to formulate specific policy and plans. With this basic understanding, the Comprehensive Plan update process may move forward to deal with the specifics of the issues and prepare solutions.

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**Comprehensive Plan Update - Part 1**  
*Inventory*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The St. Augusta City Council has recognized the need to identify the growth that has occurred in population and land use within the City boundaries. Currently, St. Augusta City is comprised of two separate hamlets with the rest of the City made up of rural density development and agricultural uses. St. Augusta has been growing at a rapid rate since 1970 and is expected to continue this trend into the next decade. Growth translates into increased demands on public facilities and services.

The purpose of the Inventory chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is to identify the type, amount and pattern of growth that has taken place within the City. To this end, a thorough inventory of existing conditions has been conducted. This Inventory encompasses three general categories of information. The first category, entitled Social Profile, contains population information as it relates to growth, age characteristics, education, occupation and income level.

The second area of Inventory is summarized under the Physical Profile section. This information includes physical aspects such as soils, floodplains, existing land use, zoning, land and structure value, physical barriers, transportation classifications, traffic levels and community facilities (parks, public buildings).

The third area of Inventory data is the Economic Profile, which consists of population, household, and employment trends and projections, housing market potential, and commercial market potential.

The St. Augusta Inventory provides a base for identifying issues and setting up a hierarchy of policies which will help the community deal with a broad base of development issues on a pre-determined basis. With the help of a solid informational and policy base, decision makers can evaluate and guide proposals to benefit the residents of St. Augusta while fulfilling the City's goals and policies.

In completing this Inventory, a wide variety of data sources have been utilized. Raw data such as Census or field research is the typical source of information outlined herein. However, this community has been the subject of significant and almost continuous planning study since pursuit of incorporation was first initiated in 1993. As such, there is a wealth of existing data and analysis to draw upon in creating this Inventory.



## **SUMMARY OF SOCIAL PROFILE**

- St. Augusta's population has grown steadily since 1970, averaging 534 persons per decade.
- According to the 1990 U.S. Census, only 8 percent of persons in St. Augusta are farm related, attesting to the changing nature of St. Augusta's social, physical and economic character.
- St. Augusta's household size is larger than the Stearns County average and can be attributed to St. Augusta's high percentage of young married families with children.
- In 1990, St. Augusta's largest age group was the 25-44 year old age group, consisting of 34.4 percent of the total population. The second largest age group in 1990 was the 5-17 year old age group, consisting of 25.6 percent of the total population. These numbers reflect the high number of young married families with children in St. Augusta.
- According to the 1990 Census, the majority of the labor force living in St. Augusta traveled 15 minutes or more to work, suggesting that St. Augusta is a bedroom community for much of its residents.
- According to the 1990 Census, the occupations of administrative support, precision product craft and repair, and machine operators assemblers and inspection fields employed more than 40 percent of St. Augusta's labor force.
- According to the 1990 Census, the levels of education attainment in St. Augusta have been slightly higher than the remainder of Stearns County. The percentage of people 25 years and older who have received a high school degree or higher is 82.9 percent for St. Augusta and 78.3 percent for Stearns County.
- According to the 1990 Census, St. Augusta's percentage of low income persons and families is significantly lower than the low income populations of several surrounding communities.



## POPULATION GROWTH

The statistics displayed in the following table illustrate the population growth trends within St. Augusta as compared to adjacent communities. The table shows that growth in St. Augusta over the last decade trails that of surrounding communities, although it is consistent with that of Stearns County.

POPULATION GROWTH 1970-2000					
Community	1970	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change 1990-2000
St. Augusta	1,584	2,169	2,657	2,873	8.1%
Clearwater	282	379	597	830	39.0%
Cold Spring	2,006	2,294	2,459	3,003	22.1%
Rockville	302	597	579	671	15.9%
Sauk Rapids	5,051	5,793	7,825	9,957	27.2%
St. Cloud	39,691	42,566	48,812	60,335	23.6%
Waite Park	2,824	3,496	5,020	6,599	31.5%
Stearns Co.	95,400	108,161	118,791	128,522	8.2%
Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990 Minnesota Planning Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.					

Between 1960 and 1990, St. Augusta's population grew from 1,056 to 2,657. Of the 1,601 individuals added over this 30 year period, the majority (585 or 37 percent), came to St. Augusta during the 1970s, although growth remained fairly constant throughout the three decades at an average of 53 persons per year. The increased growth is typical of communities proximate to the City of St. Cloud and in general, northwest of the Twin Cities.

St. Augusta's population growth has remained relatively constant over the last three decades with an average increase of 534 persons per decade. At present, approximately 92 percent of the community's population is located in platted residential areas or on large lot divisions which are non-agricultural in use. The City's growth patterns have been influenced by both its access and proximity to St. Cloud, and to a lesser extent, the Twin Cities area.

Correspondingly, the 1990 Census identified only 211 persons (8 percent) as being farm related individuals. This very limited farm oriented population attests to the changing nature and character of St. Augusta's social, physical, and economic fabric.

The community's 2000 population has been estimated by Minnesota Planning as 2,873. This estimate is reflective of the close to 200 total housing units constructed in St. Augusta throughout the decades of the 1970s and 1980s and retention of its large household size of 3.38 persons per household (1990) in comparison to Stearns County which had an average household size of 2.99 (1990). The current population estimate also reflects annexation of land to St. Cloud in 2000.

## HOUSEHOLDS

The following table illustrates St. Augusta's household growth over the past three decades. In 1970, the City had a total of 356 households with an average household size of 4.45 persons. Since then, the total number of households has steadily increased while the household size has simultaneously decreased. The number of households totaled 785 in 1990, while the household size was 3.38 persons. This household size is larger than the average of 2.81 for Stearns County. St. Augusta's current households are estimated at 833 based upon current population figures. These estimates include the loss of households as part of the territory annexed to St. Cloud in 2000.

HOUSEHOLD GROWTH			
	Population	Households	Household Size
1970	1,584	356	4.45
1980	2,169	588	3.69
1990	2,657	785	3.38
1999	3,132	965	3.25
2000	2,837	833	3.44

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 1970, 1980, 1990, Minnesota Planning, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc

The 1990 Census provides a demographic profile of the households living in St. Augusta. The next table indicates that in 1990, of those households in the community, 86 percent are families, the vast majority of which are married couples. Of the total families, just over half contain children under 18 years of age. A relatively small percentage of households consists of single parent families (6.8 percent). This Census data indicates a strong family orientation to the City's housing market, particularly families with children.

1990 HOUSEHOLD TYPES						
	Total		With Children		Without Children	
	Number	Percent of Total HH	Number	Percent of Total HH	Number	Percent of Total HH
Total Families	681	86.0	427	53.9	254	32.1
Married Couples	627	79.2	390	49.2	237	29.9
Female Householder	39	4.9	26	3.3	13	1.6
Male Householder	15	1.9	11	1.4	4	0.6
Non-Family Households	111	14.0	--	--	--	--
<b>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	<b>792</b>					

Source: U.S. Census, 1990, Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.

## AGE CHARACTERISTICS

The following table illustrates age characteristics of St. Augusta as identified in the 1990 U.S. Census data. The City's largest age category is the labor force age group which comprises 59.4 percent of St. Augusta's population. This is generally consistent with Stearns County in which 61.6 percent of the total population is made up of persons within the labor force age group.

The school age population in 1990 accounted for 35 percent of the population. This age group holds particular significance in planning for area school, park and recreational facilities.

The retirement age population in 1990 comprised 5.6 percent of the City's population. This is significantly less than Stearns County average in which 10.6 percent of its total population is of retirement age. Such discrepancy in the retired age group is likely reflective of a lack of elderly housing facilities. It should be emphasized that the lack of such facilities is due to the fact the City does not currently provide public sewer and water services. Elderly facilities are most often medium or high density developments which require public sewer and water.

1990 POPULATION ACCORDING TO AGE GROUP				
Age Group	St. Augusta	Percent	Stearns County	Percent
<b>School Age:</b>				
Under 5 years	249	9.4	8,983	7.6
5 to 17 years	681	25.6	24,026	20.2
Sub-Total		35.0		27.8
<b>Labor Force:</b>				
18 to 20 years	115	4.3	9,927	8.4
21 to 24 years	154	5.8	10,738	9.0
25 to 44 years	914	34.4	34,600	29.1
45 to 54 years	256	9.6	9,603	8.1
55 to 59 years	89	3.3	4,282	3.5
60 to 64 years	53	2.0	4,156	3.5
Sub-Total		59.4		61.6
<b>Retired:</b>				
65 to 74 years	84	3.2	6,949	5.8
75 years and over	62	2.3	5,531	4.7
Sub-Total		5.6		
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>2,657</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>118,791</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990				



## COMMUTER EMPLOYMENT

The table below illustrates various commuter times of St. Augusta's residents. According to the 1990 Census, 78.2 percent of St. Augusta's work force traveled 15 or more minutes to work. This high percentage of commuter workers suggests that St. Augusta is a "bedroom" community for the majority of its labor force. Other than commuting time statistics, there is insufficient information to determine where St. Augusta's population is employed. Again, this suggests a possible shift in community character from rural agriculture to a suburban bedroom city.

COMMUTING TIME OF RESIDENTS WITHIN ST. AUGUSTA		
Time	Number of Persons	Percent
Less than 5 minutes	26	1.9
5 to 9 minutes	108	8.1
10 to 14 minutes	165	12.4
15 to 19 minutes	442	33.3
20 to 29 minutes	416	31.4
30 to 44 minutes	81	6.1
45 to 59 minutes	15	1.1
60 or more minutes	83	6.3
MEAN TRAVEL TIME	20.6 minutes	
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990		

## OCCUPATION

The 1990 Census provides information regarding occupation and employment for St. Augusta's residents. The information in the following table indicates the administrative support occupations account for 20.5 percent of the City's labor force. Precision production, craft and repair occupations also comprise a large share of St. Augusta's labor force accounting for 14.9 percent of all jobs. With an extensive amount of land currently devoted to agriculture in the City, it is interesting to note that only 4.3 percent of those employed work in agricultural pursuits.

1990 EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION (16 YEARS AND OVER)		
Occupation	Number	Percent
Executive, administrative, managerial occupations	139	9.8
Professional specialty occupations	89	6.3
Technicians and related support occupations	50	3.5
Sales occupations	127	8.9
Administrative support occupations, including clerical	291	20.5
Private household occupations	3	0.2
Protective service occupations	27	1.9
Service occupations, except protective and household	181	12.8
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	61	4.3
Precision production, craft, repair occupations	211	14.9
Machine operators, assemblers, inspectors	88	6.2
Transportation and material moving occupations	93	6.5
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, laborers	60	4.2
TOTAL	1,420	100.0
Source: U.S. Census		

## EDUCATION

According to U.S. Census information, the levels of education attainment in St. Augusta have been slightly higher than the remainder of Stearns County. The percentage of persons 25 years and older who have received a high school degree or higher is 82.9 percent for St. Augusta and 78.3 percent for Stearns County.

1990 EDUCATION LEVELS AGE 25 AND OVER				
Level Attained	St. Augusta		Stearns County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	171	11.7	8,980	13.8
9th to 12th Grade (no diploma)	78	5.3	5,102	7.8
High School Graduate	668	45.8	24,154	37.1
Some College, No Degree	231	15.8	10,120	15.6
Associate Degree	162	11.1	5,265	8.1
Bachelors Degree	106	7.3	7,814	12.0
Graduate Degree	42	2.8	3,590	5.5
TOTAL PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OVER	1,458		65,025	
PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR HIGHER		82.9		78.3
PERCENT BACHELORS DEGREE OR HIGHER		10.2		17.5
Source: U.S. Census				

## INCOME

As shown below, the median family income in St. Augusta was \$39,831 in 1989, which was higher than the median family incomes of St. Cloud (\$32,468); Kimball (\$26,000); Rockville Township (\$38,158); and Stearns County (\$32,949). The median family income in St. Augusta is lower than the median family income in the former St. Cloud Township (\$44,934).

1989 MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME	
Area	1989 Median Family Income
St. Augusta	\$39,831
St. Cloud (City)	\$32,468
Kimball	\$26,000
Rockville Township	\$38,158
St. Cloud Township	\$44,934
Stearns County	\$32,949
Source: U.S. Census 1990	

### Per Capita Income

The following table illustrates the per capita income for St. Augusta, St. Cloud (City), Kimball, Rockville City, former St. Cloud Township, and Stearns County. As was the case with median family incomes, St. Augusta's per capita income (\$12,301) is higher than the per capita incomes of St. Cloud (\$11,944); Kimball (\$9,211); Rockville Township (\$11,512); and Stearns County (\$11,620). Only former St. Cloud Township (\$16,948) had a higher per capita income in this sample.

1989 PER CAPITA INCOME	
Area	1989 Per Capita Income
St. Augusta	\$12,301
St. Cloud (City)	\$11,944
Kimball	\$9,211
Rockville Township	\$11,512
St. Cloud Township	\$16,948
Stearns County	\$11,620
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990	

### Low Income

The percentage of persons and families classified as low income by the 1990 Census is shown on the following table. The average poverty threshold for unrelated individuals in 1989 was \$6,310. The average property threshold for a family of four persons was \$12,674. These people may require public assistance to meet their housing needs. As such, they are an important consideration in future planning. As the table illustrates, the number and percentages of low income people and families is significantly lower than in surrounding areas. Although only a small percentage of the population, it is essential that this population be closely monitored and sufficiently addressed in the planning process to ensure the provisions of services, assistance and housing for those persons. As the table following indicates, only 3.2 percent of the population of St. Augusta was classified as low income in 1990.



1990 LOW INCOME POPULATION				
	Number of Low Income Persons	Percent of Population	Number of Families	Percent of Total Families
St. Augusta	85	3.2	14	2.1
St. Cloud (City)	6,715	19.7	679	8.9
Kimball	128	19.5	20	12.3
Rockville Township	49	3.5	11	3.2
St. Cloud Township	204	2.7	36	1.8
Stearns County	13,824	12.3	2,043	7.3
Source: U.S. Census 1990				

Analysis of the median family income, per capita income and low income statistics reveals that St. Augusta is a community with income averages slightly higher than those of most adjacent communities.

## **SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

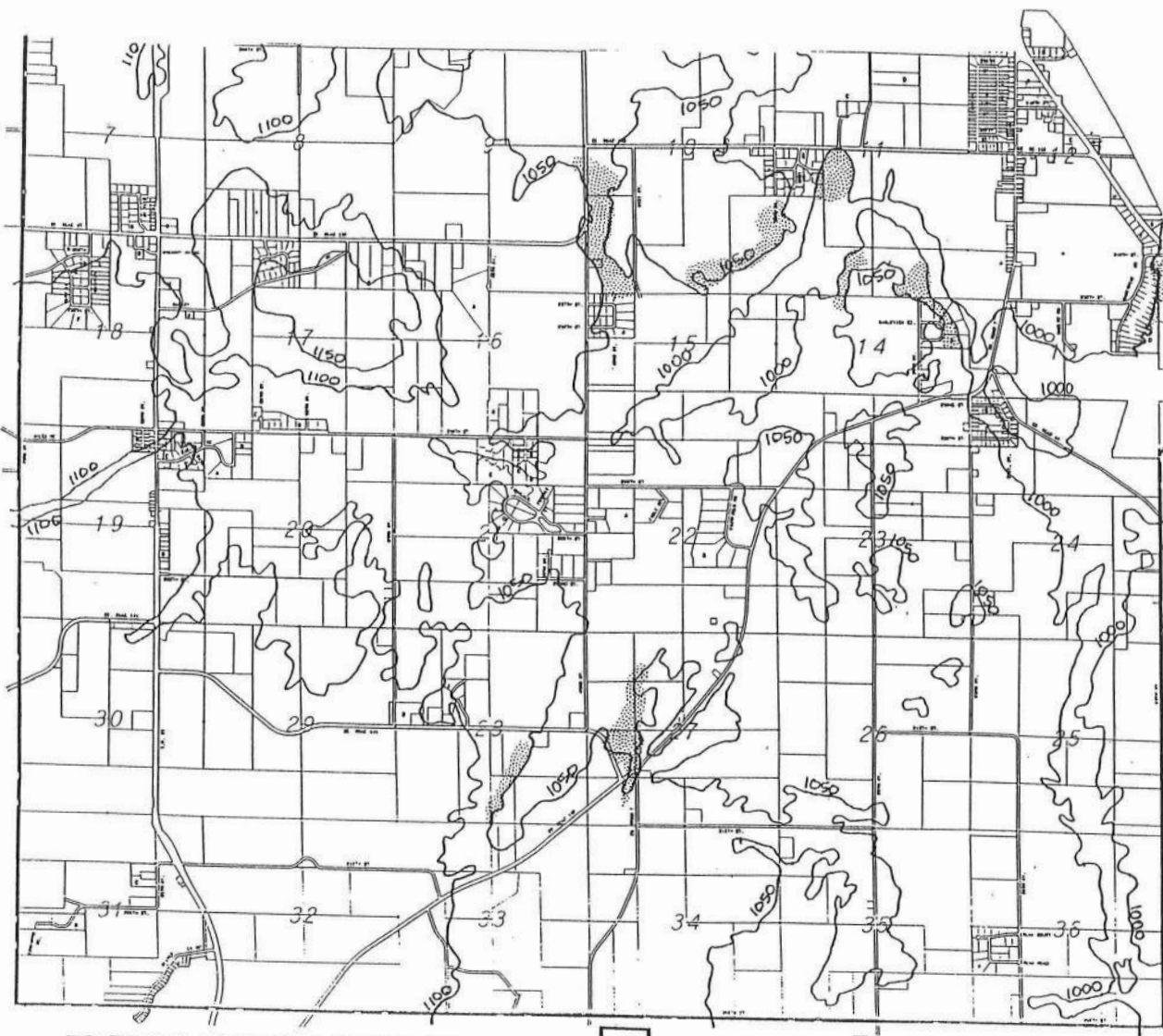
- The topography within St. Augusta is mostly flat with some areas of rolling hills. There is a ridge of steep slope which runs north-south through the central area of the City. This ridge of steep slope creates a physical barrier which divides the City.
- All of the soils found within St. Augusta are considered good for farming purposes. The prevalence of these soils indicate that agricultural activity will remain important in the region.
- Numerous wetlands, swales and natural ponding areas exist throughout St. Augusta. These areas are valuable for their role in flood water retention, ground water recharge, nutrient assimilation, livestock watering, and aesthetics. These wetland areas are regulated by several State and Federal agencies and protected by the Conservation Act of 1991.
- Vegetation within St. Augusta is generally located near areas of steep slopes due to the agricultural activity that has taken place within the community.
- Existing development within the community is served by individual septic and well systems. These systems require ongoing maintenance and monitoring to prevent failures. Concern has been noted regarding potential septic system failures in older subdivisions, especially in the older St. Augusta hamlet.


## **TOPOGRAPHY**

The topography within St. Augusta is characterized as fairly flat to rolling overall, with the eastern portion of the community being nearly level and gently increasing in elevation to the western boundary of the City. A high point exists just to the northeast of Luxemburg hamlet which creates somewhat of a land divide in this region. This land divide may make the extension of municipal water and sewer utilities between the two existing growth centers problematic.

Scattered locations throughout the community contain slopes in excess of twelve percent which are considered steep for development purposes and typically require special construction and/or protection measures. The topography has been indicated on the following map in 50 foot intervals as have the areas of steep slopes, which provides for a general interpretation of such conditions.

# City of St. Augusta Topography



50 FOOT TOPOGRAPHIC INTERVALS   
STEEP SLOPES 







## SOILS

All soil classifications within the City are considered to be excellent for the farming of corn and small grains as well as pasture land for livestock. The prevalence of these soil types indicates that agricultural activities will remain an important land use throughout the community and region. The soils are also beneficial for urban development given their positive drainage patterns, but preferably in association with public utility systems to alleviate the potential for ground water pollution which can be a result of the poor effluent absorption qualities of the soils from septic system drainfields. The following list of soil types describes those which are most readily found within the City, obtained from the 1984 U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Survey

### 1. Hubbard-Dickman Association

These soils making up this association are typically nearly level to sloping, well drained, and coarsely textured on outwash plains and stream terraces. They are used mainly for dairy farming although corn, small grains and hay are the major crops. Management concerns include low water holding capacity, soil blowing and low natural fertility. The soils have fair suitability for pasture and woodland but are well suited for building site development. The underground water supply and nearby water bodies can become polluted if septic tank absorption fields are placed on these soils.

### 2. Dorset-Nymore Association

The soils making up this association are undulating to steep, excessively drained, moderately coarse textured, and very similar to the Hubbard-Dickman Association although more steep slopes exist in areas of troughs and ridges, along drainageways, and around depressions. They are used primarily for dairy farming, but small grains, corn and alfalfa can be successfully grown. The building site development potential is good, but ground water contamination can easily occur from septic systems if not carefully monitored.

### 3. Fairhaven-Estherville Association

The soils in this association are nearly level to steep, medium textured and well drained. They are located mainly on broad, smooth plains that have convex rises and are used primarily for dairy farming and crops which include corn, small grains, and alfalfa. The main concerns in management are droughtiness, wind erosion, and low natural fertility. They are suited to a wide variety of uses including building site development.

#### 4. Cushing-Mahtomedi Association

The soils making up this association are undulating to very steep and are located on end moraines and outwash plains. The slopes are complex and irregular and may be as steep as 40 percent. They are tilled for corn, small grains and alfalfa as well as being utilized as pasture land and dairy farms. The main concerns with the management of farmed areas is erosion control, stone and tree removal, and maintenance of tilth and fertility. The soils are well suited to use as pasture, woodland and building sites. Granite is quarried in a few areas throughout the County. The major limitations to non-farm uses are the slope gradients and slow permeability.

Urban development has primarily been concentrated in areas surrounding the two hamlets and in spot locations throughout the remainder of St. Augusta. Soils information should always be utilized as an integral part of the planning and development process. Therefore, when questionable areas are an issue, inquiry should be made regarding more specific soils information within the Stearns County Soil Survey. Soil testing procedures, however, will clearly provide the best information, when deemed necessary.

## **WETLANDS/DRAINAGE AREAS**

Numerous wetlands, swales, and natural ponding areas exist throughout the City, as shown on the map that follows. These areas are valuable for their role in groundwater recharge, nutrient assimilation, livestock watering and aesthetics. In addition, they provide a natural habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife.

Both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Department of Natural Resources protect and regulate the use and alteration of wetland/drainage areas. The waters under the jurisdiction of each organization vary as to their location and characteristics, although some waters are dually protected. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service delineates their protected wetlands and waterways based on soil type, vegetation and hydrology whereas the DNR determines the locations of wetlands by the Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL). The OHWL is defined as the elevation delineating the highest water level which has been maintained for a sufficient period of time to leave evidence upon the landscape. Thus, most DNR protected wetlands are larger and remain wet most of the time, while U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service water bodies are at times dry and have been tilled for farming purposes. It is, however, important to remember that all wetlands within the State are protected from draining or filling by the Wetland Conservation Act of 1991, regardless of their protection status by other agencies.

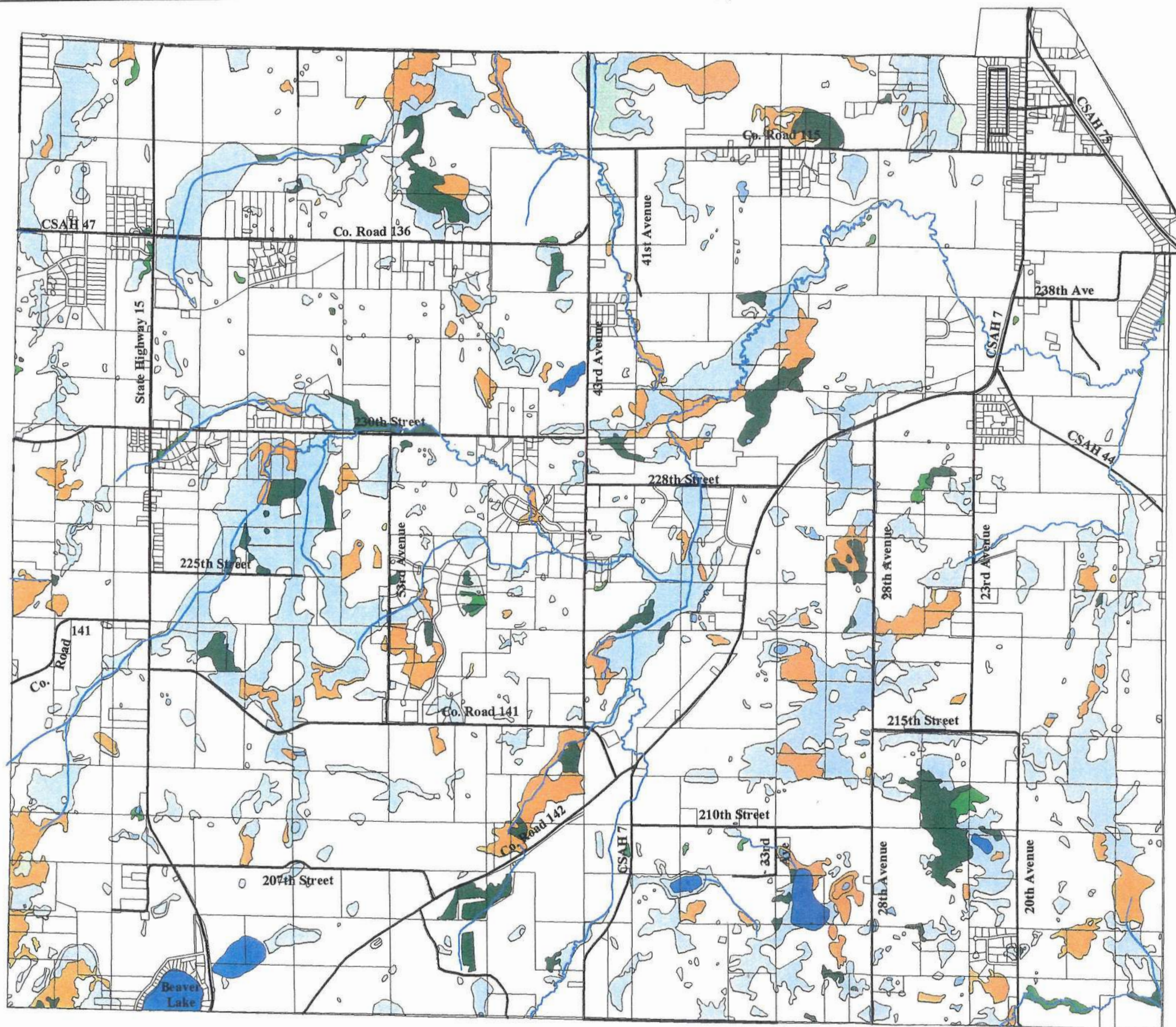
The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has not completed flood studies of waterways within the City which may potentially pose threats of flooding during periods of high water. Currently, no area of St. Augusta is designated as floodplain by FEMA.













The many wetlands, swales, and ponding areas throughout St. Augusta have provided a natural system for managing storm water runoff in association with man-made ditches/culverts along roads and highways. However, as continued growth in the community creates increased storm water runoff, the need for development and implementation of a comprehensive storm water drainage plan may be necessary. Likewise, an increase in growth and runoff raises concern about storm water quality. The City will need to enact standards to protect existing waterbodies, vegetation, and wildlife.





# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update National Wetlands Inventory



-  Seasonally Flood Basin or Flat
-  Wet Meadow
-  Shallow Marsh
-  Deep Marsh
-  Shallow Open Water
-  Shrub Swamp
-  Wooded Swamp
-  Bog
-  Industrial/Municipal
-  Riverine
-  Upland
-  Stream
-  Roads



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Source: MNDOT, National Wetlands Inventory, & Northwest Associated Consultants  
 November 2000  
 This map is for planning purposes only



## **VEGETATION**

Generally, areas within St. Augusta which have flatter topography contain relatively few clusters of natural vegetation due to continuing agricultural activities. The large tree massings appear to be interspersed within areas of steep slopes and wetlands. The natural vegetation clearly provides a unique character and adds substantially to the desirable qualities within the community, and should be maintained to the extent possible.

## **POLLUTION**

While not an overriding critical issue at present, concern has been expressed regarding anticipated septic system failures, especially in the older St. Augusta hamlet area. The age and density of development are seen as the primary factors contributing to such a situation. Two sanitary sewer service options are currently being studied and are detailed further in a latter section of this report. The St. Augusta hamlet area could be served by the St. Cloud regional system with the line eventually being extended to the Luxemburg hamlet area. Another option would be to receive service from St. Cloud for the eastern portion of the City only and receive service for the western portion of the City from Cold Spring.





## **SUMMARY OF LAND USE**

- Existing development is primarily clustered around the Luxemburg and St. Augusta hamlets.
- St. Augusta's land use is predominantly vacant/agricultural with 88 percent in this category. Projected future growth rates do not anticipate absorption of a large amount of this undeveloped land. As such, agriculture or rural uses are expected to continue for some time.
- Residential land use comprises approximately 10.7 percent of the land area within St. Augusta. The majority of residential development is single family homes, although mobile homes are interspersed. There is to date no multiple family medium or high density housing within St. Augusta.
- Commercial land use consists of 0.3 percent of the total area within the City.
- Industrial land uses in St. Augusta total 0.5 percent of the total area.
- Incorporation and annexation of land to the City of St. Cloud reduced the City's area by approximately 5,003 acres. The land annexed to St. Cloud included 43.2 acres of industrial use land, 17.5 acres of commercial, and 322.2 acres of residential. The remaining 4,620.1 acres were considered agricultural or undeveloped.

## PHYSICAL BARRIERS

Natural environmental features such as bodies of water or abrupt changes in topography, as well as man-made elements of urban development, often act as influences which can constrict land use and access. In dividing and distinguishing subareas within a community, such barriers become a vital consideration for logical planning. Physical barriers may serve to define cohesive areas and to lend structure to the arrangement of land uses; however, they may also artificially contain development, and in separating developed areas, produce problems of access and service between related land use.

Physical barriers in St. Augusta include an area of steep slope located within the north central area of the City and two creeks that bisect the City, St. Augusta Creek running east/west and Johnson Creek running north/south.

Parcels of land currently utilized for agricultural production can be considered potential development barriers for future subdivision and urban expansion. Farm production continues to be an important industry in St. Augusta with agriculture pursuits consuming nearly 50 percent of all land located throughout the City. As stated within the Soils section of this report, the majority of soils in St. Augusta are considered prime or are of state-wide importance for agricultural production. These factors suggest that farming will continue to be a vital industry in St. Augusta and should influence future land use planning. Agricultural areas will need to be designated in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and should be protected from expanding or sprawling development.

The impact of physical barriers in less developed areas should be approached with an awareness of the potential positive and negative impacts of existing (or planned) barriers on possible use. Land use patterns which can take advantage of potential beneficial aspects, while mitigating negative impacts should be encouraged.

## **EXISTING DEVELOPMENT**

### **General**

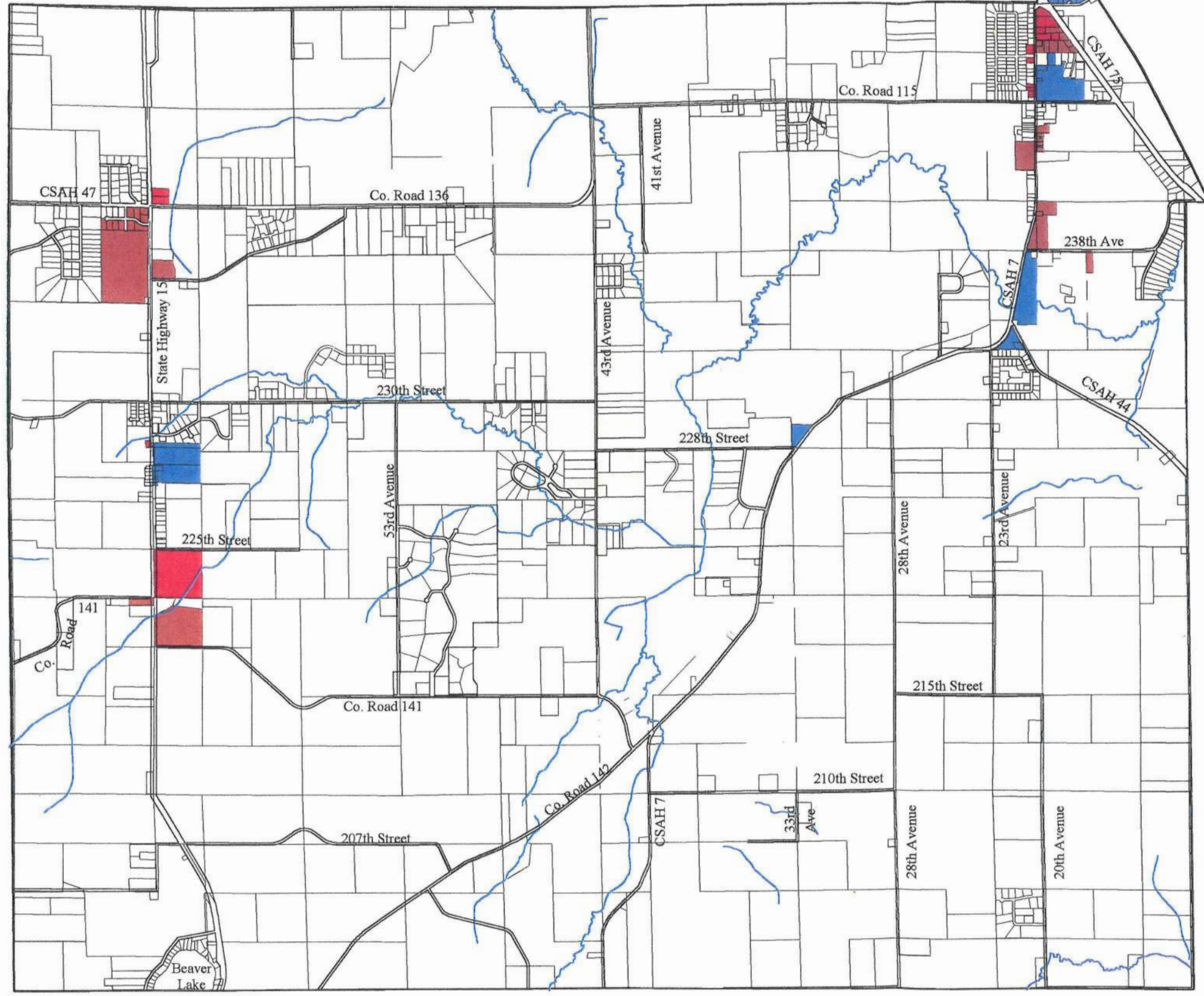
The map on the page which follows depicts the present land use patterns in St. Augusta. These patterns of existing land uses indicate several important factors. These include the clustering of development around the growth centers of St. Augusta and Luxemburg, as well as the growth of suburban residential development interspersed throughout the northern two-thirds of the community, a large number of residential parcels which gain access off of County roads, and location of new development on lands which are marginal in terms of agricultural production.

In spite of the urban expansion which has occurred, St. Augusta remains predominantly agricultural. Vacant/agricultural areas represent 88 percent of the total land area. It is expected that much of the agricultural land will remain in that pattern of land use for some time, as this seems to be many residents desire and those other vacant lands exist which are marginal for agricultural uses and more appropriate for urban development. The City has demonstrated a positive practice of only allowing new development (proposed outside the City centers) on lands which are marginal in terms of crop production and/or soil quality. This practice both minimizes intrusion of development into areas intended to continue agricultural activities and limits the City's service delivery areas beyond the existing centers.





# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update Existing Land Use Map



	Acres	Percentage
Agricultural / Vacant	16,618	87.70%
Residential	2,104	11.00%
Public / Semi-Public	100	0.50%
Commercial	59	0.30%
Industrial	94	0.50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,975</b>	<b>100%</b>

Stream  
 Water



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Source: Stearns County & Northwest Associated Consultants, January 2001  
 This Map Is For Planning Purposes Only



The specific breakdown by land use type is as follows:

LAND USE BREAKDOWN		
	Acreage	Percent of Total
Low Density Residential	2,159	10.7%
Vacant/Agricultural	16,590	88.0%
Commercial	59	0.3%
Industrial	145	0.5%
Public/Semi-Public	87	0.5%
TOTAL	19,040	100.0
Source: Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.		

### Rural/Agricultural

The most predominant land use type in St. Augusta is agricultural or vacant land comprising 88 percent of the City's total acreage. Based on the Stearns County Soil Survey, much of the community can be considered suitable agricultural land. The U.S. Department of Agriculture identifies 9,106.3 acres of land as being actively cultivated in 2000. An additional 243.9 acres of land is held in reserve or protected by the Conservation Retirement Program (CRP) or Water Bank Program (WBP). Grassland areas account for an additional 3,920.3 acres according to the Department of Agriculture estimates.

Some cattle, dairy, and hog farms were recognized as were scattered "hobby" farms. Several existing farms may be classified as feedlot operations. The sizes of farms and fields varies greatly throughout the City due to the large amount of wetland area and some topography which limits the amount of contiguous area which can be tilled. Additionally, the influx of residential development, both multi-lot plats and single parcel divisions, has had a direct influence on agricultural land by reducing the total farmland acreage as well as creating "gaps" between farms and fields which tends to interrupt the homogeneous pattern of agricultural land uses. The largest areas of contiguous fields are located in the southern portion of the community.

## **Residential**

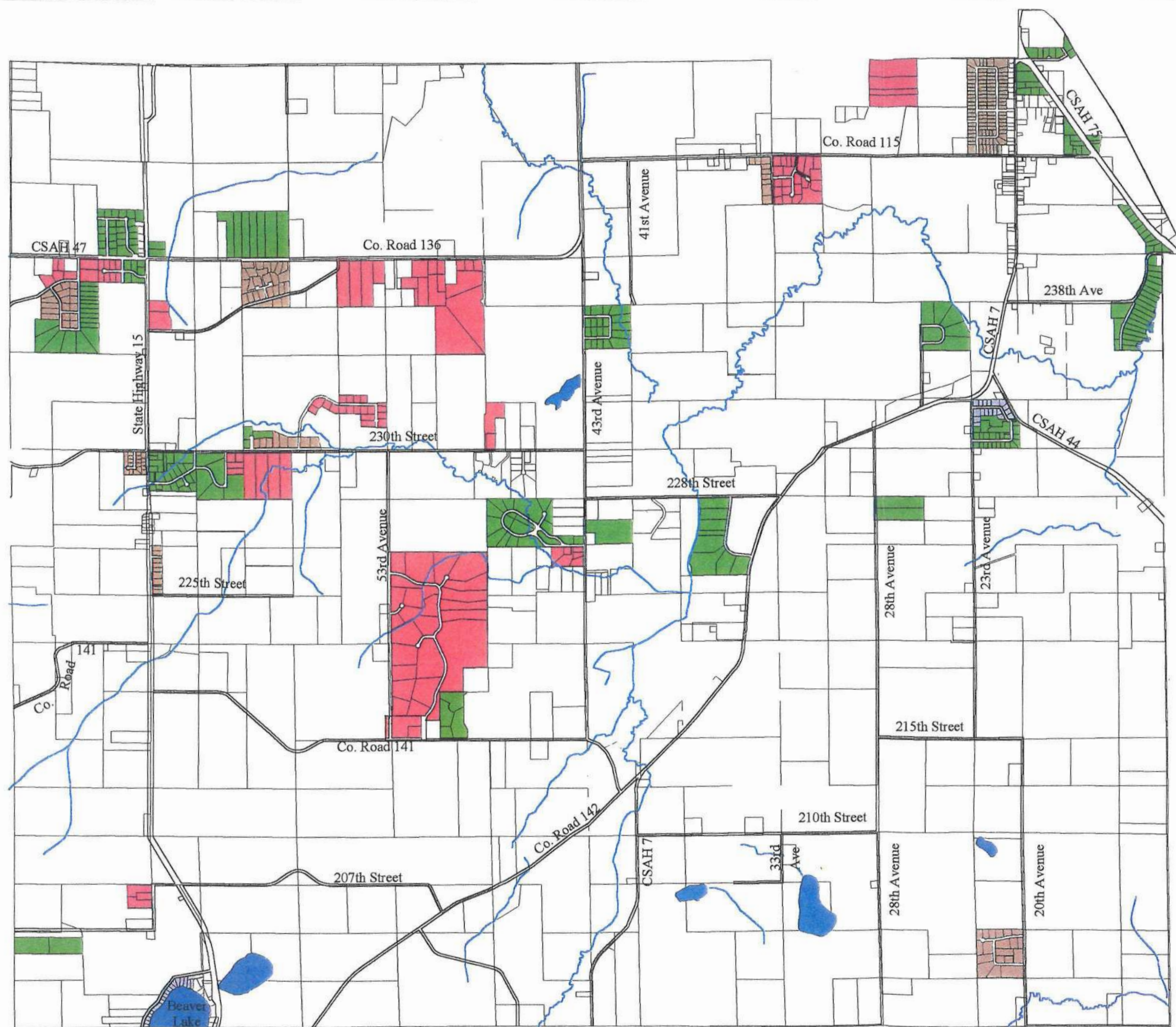
Residential land use occupies nearly 10.7 percent of St. Augusta's total land area. The predominate residential land use types are single family homes, although mobile homes are interspersed on single lots and farmsteads. Due to the lack of public sewer and water service in the community, residential development has been low density with lot sizes ranging from one to twenty acres in size. The primary concentrations of residential development has been in the northern two-thirds of the City, but can be seen scattered throughout the community and agricultural areas. While this type of development tends to interrupt the contiguous pattern of farm activities and can encumber the previously segregated agricultural uses, City officials have historically given this due consideration and have allowed new development only on lands which are marginal in terms of agricultural production.









Medium and high density residential land uses, such as townhomes and apartment buildings, have not been developed in St. Augusta. Multiple family housing is directly tied to the availability of urban service and is not anticipated until the time public sewer and water service becomes available. Options for extending such service to the community are currently being studied and plans for future development for this type of use should be anticipated.

The following map shows the platted subdivisions within St. Augusta by the decade approved. The majority of subdivisions were platted in the 1980's, although some date back to as early as the 1940's. As is evidenced by the map, platting has occurred in a sporadic manner, although more recent planning and approval processes have allowed new development only on land which is marginal for agricultural uses with more emphasis on the clustering of subdivisions. Future review and approval of plats should continue to take into consideration the preservation of farmland areas, separation of rural and urban uses, and promote the integrated development of residential lots in clusters to create neighborhoods.



# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update Platted Subdivision Map



-  Unknown
-  1959 or Earlier
-  1960's
-  1970's
-  1980's
-  1990's
-  Water
-  Stream

0 1 Miles



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Source: Stearns County & Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 January 2001  
 This Map Is For Planning Purposes Only

Age of Structures

Patterns of structure age in St. Augusta reflect a trend in which a considerable amount of fairly new development has taken place. The geographic pattern of this development is illustrated on the previous map and the table below.

HOUSING UNITS BY YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT		
Year Built	Number	Percent of Total
1980 - 1999	363	39.5
1970 - 1979	228	24.7
1960 - 1969	115	12.4
1950 - 1959	56	6.1
1940 - 1949	25	2.7
1939 - Earlier	135	14.6
TOTAL	922	100.0
Source: U.S. Census of Population 1990		

In terms of the housing stock, U.S. Census and building permit information provided in the table above indicates that roughly 35.8 percent of St. Augusta's housing units were constructed prior to 1970, while about 64.2 percent have been constructed since 1970. Building activity in recent years has been limited due to a number of platting moratoriums imposed during several City and County planning efforts.

Structure age alone is not necessarily a determining factor regarding physical deterioration. However, these problems tend to be more common in areas with older structures.



**Median Housing Value**

Land and structure values significantly influence the way in which individuals use land. It is useful in determining whether a proposed location is feasible for a particular use in terms of land cost and community interest.

The table below shows the housing values of single family homes within St. Augusta from 1990. To assure consistency, this table only takes into consideration single family homes on less than 10 acres which do not have a business located on the property. This table also excludes mobile homes. More recent data was not available and no extrapolation would be reliable.

As the table indicates, the majority of single family homes within St. Augusta are valued between \$50,000 and \$99,999. It should be noted that no multiple family housing units currently exist within the City nor are anticipated until such time as public sewer service is provided.

1990 SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED HOUSING UNIT VALUE		
Value	Number	Percent
Less than \$50,000	49	10.2
\$50,000 to \$99,999	379	79.5
\$100,000 to \$149,999	42	8.8
\$150,000 to \$199,999	5	1.1
\$200,000 to \$299,999	2	.4
\$300,000 or more	--	--
TOTAL	477	100.0
Source: U.S. Census 1990		

The median housing values of St. Augusta and surrounding communities are compared in the following table. St. Augusta's median is in the center of a wide range of median values, and is somewhat higher than the median housing value for Stearns County.

1990 MEDIAN HOUSING VALUES	
Area	Median Housing Values
St. Augusta	\$69,900
St. Cloud Township	\$83,600
Rockville Township	\$74,000
Kimball	\$35,999
St. Cloud	\$59,500
Stearns County	\$61,400
Source: U.S. Census 1990	

### Public/Semi-Public

A highly limited amount of land area within the City is devoted to public and semi-public land uses (only 0.5 percent). This use category includes government buildings, parks, churches, cemeteries, and public utilities such as telephone, electric, etc. The basic service orientation of public and semi-public land uses is reflected in its distribution related to residential land use areas.

### Commercial

Commercial land use within St. Augusta consists of only 59 acres or 0.3 percent of the total land area in the City. The greatest concentration of commercial land is located at the intersection of CSAH 75 and CSAH 7. Additionally, other commercial businesses are scattered along Trunk Highway 15.

For the most part, commercial land use is typified by individual establishments oriented to major intersections or located near residential development. Existing commercial development in and around the City centers of St. Augusta and Luxemburg includes a bank, ballroom, two bars/liquor stores, gas station, auto repair shops, the American Legion, convenience stores, offices, a furniture store, cattle breeding, bus companies, and an art preparation business.

In addition, several home extended businesses have been identified within the City. These uses raise issues with regards to compatibility and negative impacts on adjacent properties. Allowance of home businesses may also discourage development of fully developed commercial uses.



## **Industrial**

Industrial land uses in St. Augusta total 145 acres or .8 percent of the City land. Industrial businesses are predominantly trucking companies which take advantage of their proximity to Interstate 94, State Highway 15, and County Highway 75. Other industry within the City includes two bus companies, two beverage distributors, building contractor/construction companies, gravel mining, and a cabinet manufacturer.

## **LAND USE CONTROLS**

### **Comprehensive Planning**

The City of St. Augusta adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 1995 that guided anticipated development. The basis of the Comprehensive Plan was concentration of suburban development into growth centers surrounding the historic hamlets. The purpose of this growth concept was two fold; first, the growth pattern served as a staging area for future extension of municipal utilities. Secondly, the growth pattern limited the intrusion of scattered subdivisions into areas where agricultural activities were anticipated to continue. Growth outside of the primary and secondary growth areas was limited to a density of four units per 40 acres.

Stearns County completed a Comprehensive Plan Update effective September 4, 1998. As a township jurisdiction, the community was subject to the provisions of this plan. The then Township plan could differ from the County plan only when more restrictive. This is significant as the County's plan would have limited development outside of defined growth centers to one unit per 80 acres. With incorporation, St. Augusta is free to establish the rural development densities it believes appropriate.

The City of St. Augusta is also within the study boundaries of the St. Cloud Area Master Plan. This regional plan, prepared Dahlgren, Shardlow and Uban, is an agglomeration of the various land use plans of communities including and surrounding St. Cloud. The final master plan was approved by the district board in May of 2000, subject to additional State comments.

## Zoning

Zoning administration and controls in St. Augusta are the responsibility of the City which has adopted their own Zoning Ordinance. Stearns County was previously fully responsible for the review and enforcement of environmentally related regulations which include sewage treatment, wild and scenic river, floodplain, and shoreland matters. These tasks are now the City's responsibility with incorporation.

1993 ZONING BREAKDOWN		
	Acreage	Percent of Total
A-1, Agriculture	17,365	91.5
A-2, Limited Agriculture	0	0
R-1, Single Family	1,365	7.2
R-2, Multiple Family	0	0
INS, Institutional	52	.3
B-1, Neighborhood Business	0	0
B-2, General Business	22	.1
B-3, General Business	88	.5
I-1, Light Industrial	83	.4
I-2, Heavy Industrial	0	0
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>18,975</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Source: Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.		

Following completion of the Comprehensive Plan Update, the Zoning Ordinance will need to be reviewed to address the change to municipal status and anticipated development. Specific topics include feedlot regulation, environmental controls, review of adult use regulations, and urban zoning districts.

The above table and following map illustrate the current zoning district locations and breakdown of these classifications as a percent of the total City land. Additionally, an explanation of each zoning district, its purpose, and utilization in St. Augusta has been included.

## **Rural/Agricultural Districts**

### **A-1 Agricultural District**

This district was created for the purpose of preserving, promoting, maintaining and enhancing the use of land for commercial agricultural operations and is the predominant zoning district in St. Augusta. Permitted uses include low density single family dwellings, general farming practices, agricultural feed lots, roadside stands, livestock (not fur-bearing or dogs), dairying, nurseries/tree farms, and public recreation areas. These districts represent the largest portion of the City, consuming 17,365 acres or 91.5 percent of the total area.

### **A-2 Limited Agricultural District**

The purpose of the A-2 District is to provide suitable areas of the City to be retained and utilized for low density residential, open space, and/or agricultural uses and to prevent the premature conversion of rural lands to urban use. The A-2 District is further intended to govern and implement the Agricultural Transition Area of the City as defined by the Comprehensive Plan. Currently, no land is zoned A-2.

## **Residential Districts**

### **R-1 Single Family Residence District**

The purpose of this district is to allow low density residential development in areas that are marginal or non-feasible for agriculture and where public services may someday be extended or provided. Project densities may not be greater than one unit per acre. Permitted uses include single family detached dwellings, public recreation areas, schools, churches, governmental buildings, existing farming operations, and new farming operations which do not involve the construction of buildings. The R-1 Districts are the only residential districts utilized within the City. The R-1 Districts are designated over 1,365 acres or 7.2 percent of the total City.

### **R-2 Multiple Family Residence District**

This district was established to allow multiple family dwellings in areas that are provided with sewer and water via a central system. There are currently no R-2 uses or districts in St. Augusta. Densities may not exceed 2,000 square feet per unit with a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet. Permitted uses include R-1 District uses, two-family or multiple family dwellings, private clubs/lodges, and schools.

## **Commercial Districts**

### B-1 Neighborhood Business District

The B-1 District was created to accommodate commercial/retail operations which are compatible with adjacent residential development and serve smaller regional areas, rather than the entire population. There are currently no B-1 uses or districts within the City, although the District contains a list of 26 permitted uses, all of which must maintain a minimum lot size of one acre.

### B-2 Highway Commercial District

The purpose of the B-2, Highway Commercial District is to provide for and limit the establishment of motor vehicle oriented or dependent high intensity commercial and service activities. Currently, there are 22 acres of B-2 zoned land within St. Augusta.

### B-3 General Business District

The General Business District is intended to provide for general retail and commercial uses which serve the existing population and require accessibility to major streets or highways. The City's existing commercial/retail operations are all B-3 uses and are located predominantly along Highway 15 and County Roads 7 and 75. Permitted uses within the district include a vast array of retail and commercial businesses in addition to those allowed in the B-1 District. The minimum lot size required is one acre. There are 88 acres or .5 percent of the total City area zoned B-2, General Business District.

## **Industrial Districts**

### I-1 Light Industrial District

The intent of the I-1 District is to allow general industrial development which is compatible with surrounding commercial or multiple family residential districts and which form somewhat of a buffer zone from heavy industrial operations. Permitted uses include an array of supply, storage, manufacturing, assembly and research operations. The I-1 uses in St. Augusta are located along County Road 7 and Highway 15. There are 83 acres of land zoned I-1, Light Industrial within the City representing .4 percent of the total City area.

### I-2 Heavy Industrial District

The I-2 Heavy Industrial District is intended to allow for the establishment of more intense industrial uses which are typically less compatible with residential and public areas. Permitted uses include all I-1 uses, manufacturing operations which utilize chemical

processes, freight yards, brick/quarry/stone mills, and wholesale storage of gasoline/oil/petroleum. The I-2 zoned parcels in the City tend to have larger parcel sizes than the I-1 uses.

## **Overlay and Other Districts**

### Shoreland Management Overlay District

The purpose of the Shoreland District is to control the density and location of developments in and around the shorelands of public waters. The district is intended to preserve the water quality and the natural characteristics of designated public waters. The regulations in the Shoreland District of Stearns County apply to all lakes and rivers/creeks classified as either Natural Environment (NE), Recreational Development (RD), or General Development (GD) by the Department of Natural Resources, as shown on the Zoning Map.

### Floodplain Management Overlay District

The Floodplain District is created for the purpose of protecting public health and safety and to minimize property damage and pollution from flood waters. Boundaries for the district(s) are outlined on the Federal Flood Insurance Rate Maps. The standards contained in the County's Ordinance, from which review and approval of all development is based, were incorporated from the model ordinance developed by the Department of Natural Resources in conformance with the Floodplain Zoning Act.

### PUD, Planned Unit Development

This district establishes provisions for the granting of a conditional use permit to provide for a Planned Unit Development project. The purpose of the Planned Unit Development is to encourage a flexibility in the design and development of land in order to promote its appropriate use; to facilitate the adequate and economical provisions of streets and utilities, and to preserve the natural and scenic qualities for open areas. A Planned Unit Development is defined as any project utilizing ten (10) or more acres of contiguous land. St. Augusta currently has no PUD, Planned Unit Development Districts within its boundaries.

### INS, Institutional District

The INS District is intended to provide a specific zoning district for facilities devoted to serving the public. It is unique in that the primary objective of uses within this district is the provision of services, frequently on a non-profit basis, rather than the sale of goods or services. It is intended that uses within such a district will be compatible with adjoining development, and they normally will be located on an arterial street or thoroughfare. Currently, 52 acres within the City are zoned INS.



### **Building Permits/Code Enforcement/Subdivision**

The City of St. Augusta issues building permits, performs inspections and enforces the City Code in all areas and has its own Building Official to aid in the completion of these tasks. All these procedures occur in cooperation with the Stearns County Planning and Zoning Office to ensure full coordination in all situations. With incorporation, St. Augusta has sole responsibility for these responsibilities. The community will need to review these efforts and establish local procedures for their administration.

Another prime consideration is that the City Subdivision Ordinance is understandably not oriented to major urbanization situations. As such, many standard modern subdivision procedures and requirements viewed as necessary to manage growth are not imposed by the current regulations. The existing Subdivision Ordinance is proactive in anticipating future extension of urban services by requiring ghost platting of rural subdivisions. This practice should be continued for any future rural development. This situation hampers the community from properly controlling the urban development which has and continues to be experienced. Storm water management and quality improvements are an evident example of such inadequacies.

Historically, the City's subdivision process has failed to provide adequate neighborhood park facilities. Understandably, the County emphasized regional parks. Unfortunately, this focus deprives the local community of a recreation system tailored to its population, program, and geographic needs. The City will need to anticipate local recreational facilities, especially for urban developments.

## INCORPORATION/ANNEXATION

The City initiated efforts in 1993 to incorporate as a municipal government. The pursuit of incorporation was based upon the increased growth pressure experienced by the city, the need to plan for and construct future municipal utilities, and to have greater autonomy over land use planning and regulation of development. On February 11, 2000, a State of Minnesota Administrative Law Judge issued Findings and Order incorporating the former St. Augusta Township as the City of St. Augusta.

The Administrative Law Judge also granted a concurrent annexation petition from the City of St. Cloud for annexation of approximately 5,003 acres of land along the community's north and eastern boundary. Based upon previous Inventory data, the land annexed to St. Cloud included the following uses:

CITY AREA ANNEXED TO ST. CLOUD		
	Acreage	Percent of Total
Low Density Residential	322.16	6.43
Vacant/Agricultural	4,620.13	92.33
Commercial	17.51	.35
Industrial	43.16	.88
Public/Semi-Public	0	0
TOTAL	5,003.42	100.0
Source: Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.		

Of this territory, the most significant issue is the loss of existing commercial and industrial uses which were located north of the St. Augusta hamlet. A settlement agreement between St. Augusta and St. Cloud provides for property taxes from the annexation to be paid to St. Augusta for the next ten years. However, replacing this lost tax base is a critical need.

Concern has also been noted about future proposals by St. Cloud to annex additional land from St. Augusta. As a City, St. Augusta will have greater standing to oppose any such requests before the appropriate State agencies, as opposed to a township government. The City will need to clearly detail policies regarding future annexation proposals or requests.

## **CHURCH FACILITIES**

There are two Catholic Church parishes located within the City. St. Mary's is located in the hamlet of St. Augusta and St. Wendelin's is located in the hamlet of Luxemburg. Both parishes have private parochial schools and cemeteries associated with them located adjacent to the church buildings. These institutions form the backbone of the community's identity and are the focal point of each hamlet.

There are currently four cemeteries located within St. Augusta. Two of the four cemeteries are associated with the two Catholic parishes located within the City centers of St. Augusta and Luxemburg. Of the remaining two cemeteries, only one is public. The public cemetery is located in the extreme southern portion of the City. The final cemetery is a small private family cemetery which is located in the central region of the City.

## **SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION**

- Traffic volumes on St. Augusta's roads and highways are increasing along with population and development.
- St. Augusta City has 61.23 linear miles of roadways under federal, state, county, or City jurisdiction.
- City road improvements are continuing to serve new development. These improvements are undertaken semi-annually.
- Airport service is provided by St. Cloud Municipal Airport and several other smaller municipal fields throughout the region.
- Public transportation is currently provided on a limited basis by a commercial bus company and Stearns County Department of Human Services.

## **STREET AND HIGHWAY NETWORK**

### **Functional Classification**

The streets and highways within the City of St. Augusta are classified by both jurisdiction and functional classification. The following charts and maps explain and illustrate these classifications. The functional classifications of some streets have changed compared to the map found in the 1995 St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan. The functional classification map in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan was created by the Township because Stearns County did not have a functional classification map for this area at that time. Stearns County now has existing and future functional classification maps for the City, and the maps on the following pages are consistent with the Stearns County maps.

The following differences exist between the 1995 Township map and the current map that is based on Stearns County data. Trunk Highway 15 is now considered a principal arterial rather than a minor arterial. There are no minor arterials in the City. County State Aid Highways 7, 44 and 75 are classified as major collectors rather than minor arterials. CSAH 47 and County Roads 136 and 115 are also major collectors. County Roads 141 west of Trunk Highway 15 and County Road 136 north of County Road 115 are minor collectors. CSAH 47 and County Roads 115, 141, and 136 were all considered collectors in the Township plan and a distinction was not made between major and minor collectors. All streets not listed above are not classified because they are less than a minor collector.

The future functional classification map show several changes based on an assumption that additional development and demographic changes will occur in Stearns County through 2020. One change is that 43rd Avenue, as well as the parts of County Roads 141 and 142 that connect 43rd Avenue to CSAH 7, are categorized as major collectors. Currently, these routes are not classified. The Stearns County Comprehensive Plan states that many of the collector routes shown in the future functional classification plan will only be added as development occurs or as transportation needs require. The portion of County Road 136 that is north of County Road 115 is shown as a major collector, rather than a minor collector. County Road 115 east of CSAH and County Road 75 are not classified, but a new street is shown south of those streets and east of CSAH 7 for a future Interstate 94 Interchange that is classified as a major collector.



	Miles
<b>Road Classification:</b>	
Trunk Highway	10.52
County State Aid Highway	11.26
County Roads	12.17
City Streets	27.28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61.23</b>
<b>Existing Functional Classification:</b>	
Principal Arterial	10.14
Major Collector	16.48
Minor Collector	1.41
Other Roads	33.20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61.23</b>
<b>Future Functional Classification:</b>	
Principal Arterial	10.14
Major Collectors	17.37
Minor Collectors	2.96
Other Roads	31.62
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62.09</b>
Source: Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.	

### Traffic Volumes

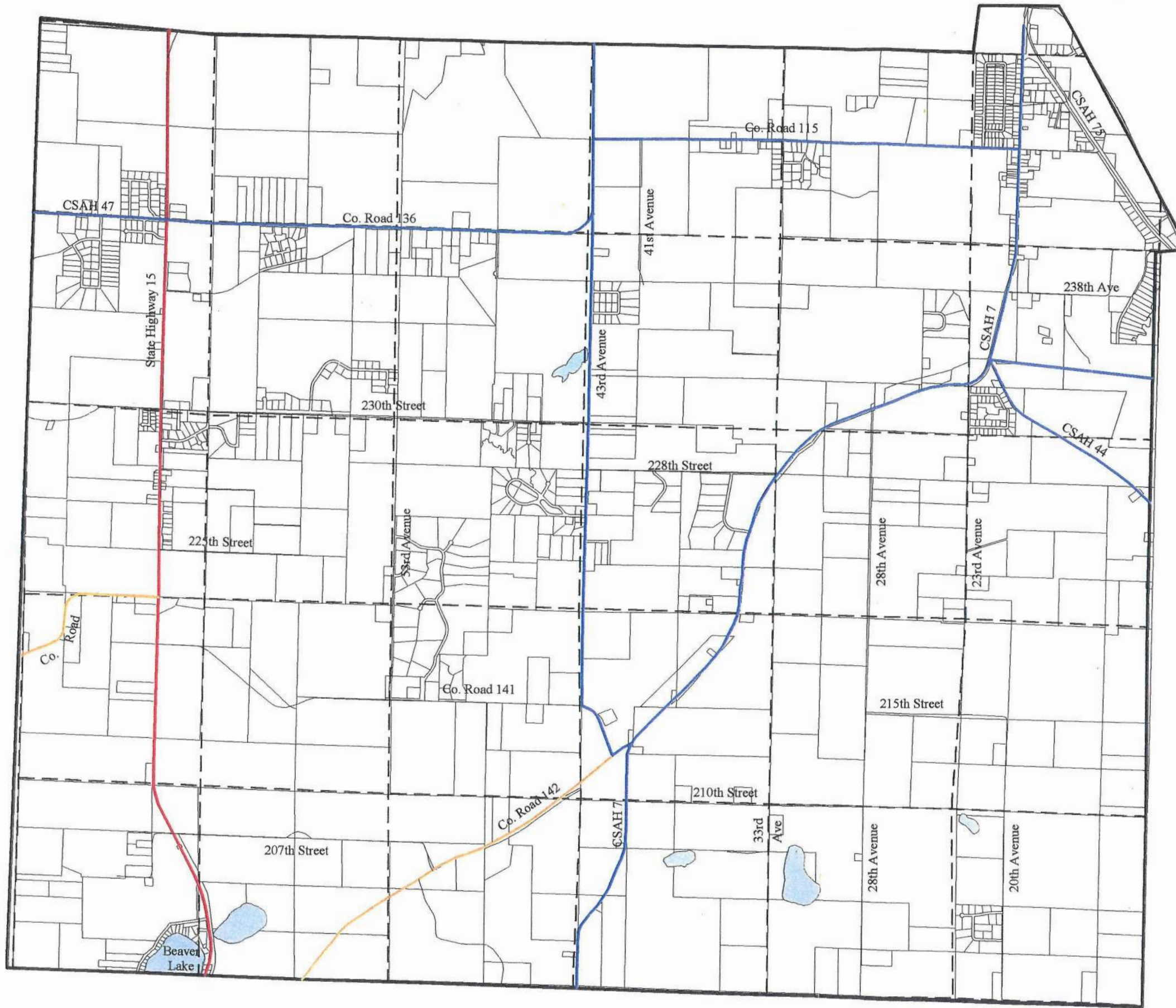
The growth of population within the City has been accompanied by increases in the volume of traffic carried by roads and highways. The following map shows traffic volumes for major thoroughfares in St. Augusta. In almost every case, the average daily number of vehicles on the roads as counted in 1999 shows an increase over the previous count completed in 1990. While these increases are quite substantial along certain linkages, the average growth rate in traffic volume is roughly 26 percent over the nine year period.





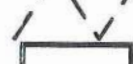


State Highway 15, County Road 7, and County Road 75 are the most heavily traveled roadways which provide higher speed vehicular routes between regional centers and are a major influence upon the community.



# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update

## Stearns County Functional Classification Plan



-  Principal Arterial
-  Major Collector
-  Minor Collector
-  Roads
-  Section Lines
-  City Limits
-  Water

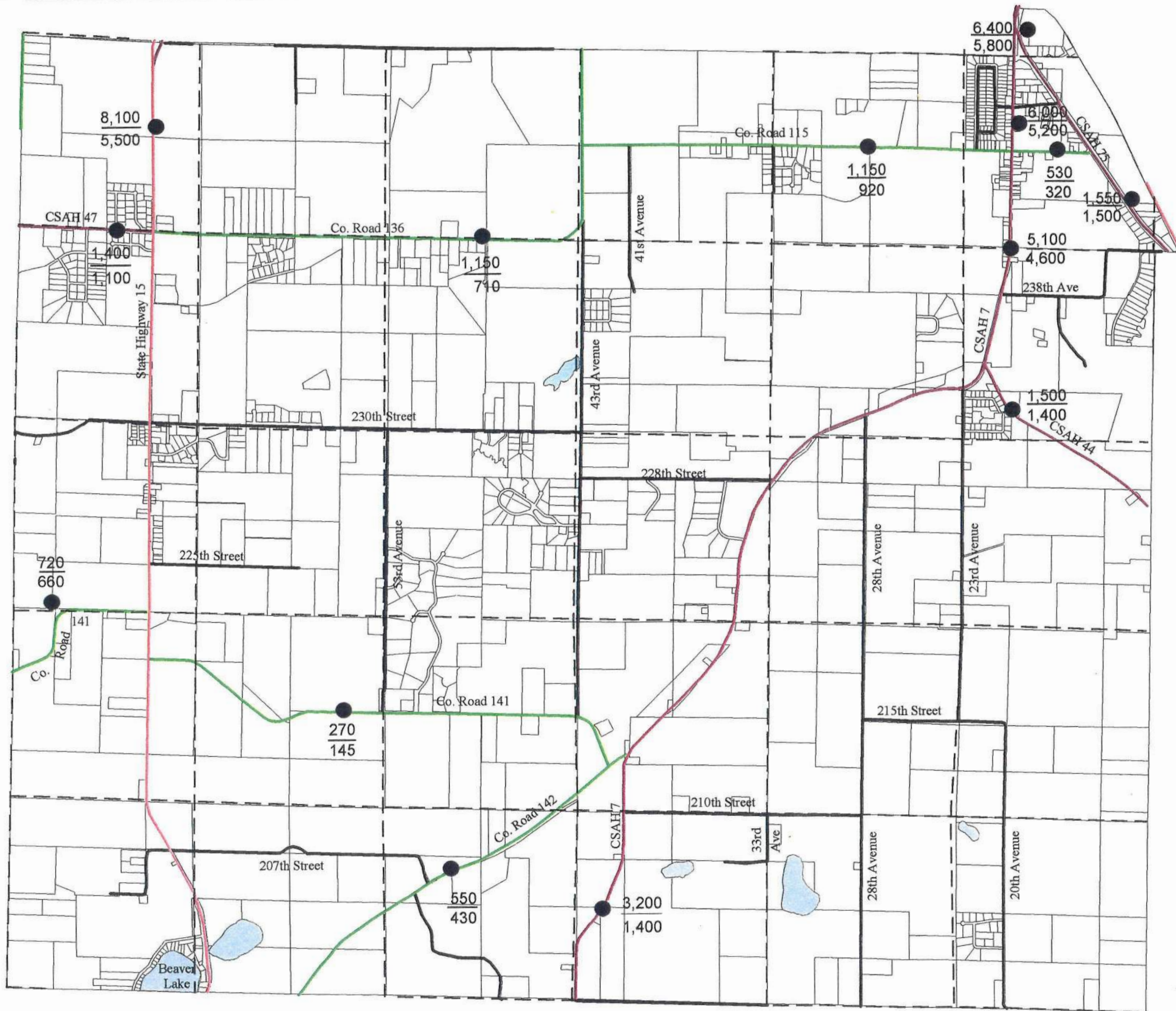


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Source: MNDOT, Stearns County & Northwest Associated Consultants  
 May 2001  
 This map is for planning purposes only



# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update Roadway Jurisdiction & Traffic Count Map



● 1999 Traffic Count  
● 1990 Traffic Count

— Trunk Highway  
— County State Aid Highway  
— County Roads  
— City Streets  
- - - Section Lines  
■ Water



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Source: MNDOT, National Wetlands Inventory, & Northwest Associated Consultants  
May 2001  
This map is for planning purposes only

## **Improvement Plans**

In 2003, the Minnesota Department of Transportation will construct a new interchange at CSAH 75 and I-94. The current plans for the full interchange are shown on the following pages. This interchange will provide new opportunities for development of commercial and/or industrial uses that may take advantage of visibility and accessibility of the interstate corridor. This new development will be critical at replacing lost tax base from the annexation to St. Cloud.

The Stearns County Highway Department has designated improvements to certain stretches of road within St. Augusta the next five years. In 2001, the County will install a bituminous overlay on CSAH 75 from CSAH 7 to the Clearwater River. In 2003, the County will reconstruct CSAH 7 from CSAH 44 to CSAH 75. This interchange will serve as a major exit and entrance point to St. Augusta and should help encourage commercial development in this area. In 2004, the County will install a bituminous overlay on County Road 141 from TH 15 to CSAH 8. Finally, in 2005, the County will reconstruct and surface County Road 115 from CSAH 75 to County Road 136.

The St. Augusta Public Works Department also plans for improvement of City streets, although no formal improvement plan has been formulated. Requests for improvements are brought to the City Council on an as-needed basis for approval. The City undertakes street improvements semi-annually. The City has adopted a subdivision policy which requires developers to pave all new public rights-of-way. This improves not only the appearance of the community, but allows for easier maintenance by public works crews. The City Council recently discussed necessary improvements to the intersection of 230th and 53rd Streets. As part of this discussion, the City Council noted a need for a Street Capital Improvements Program.

The St. Augusta Public Works Department maintains all streets which are not under the jurisdiction of the State or County. All equipment is stored in the public works garage, which was constructed as part of the City Hall facility. The community has a very progressive attitude towards paved roadways. The City provides excellent street maintenance and promotes semi-annual schedule of street improvements. The City officials do, however, recognize the need to build more streets in the community to meet the needs of residents and regional travelers. A major consideration is expanding the street connections between the two growth centers to tie the City together. Additional east-west roads are also needed in the southeast corner of the City as are completion of some north-south connections throughout the community.





# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update Stearns County Road Improvement Plan



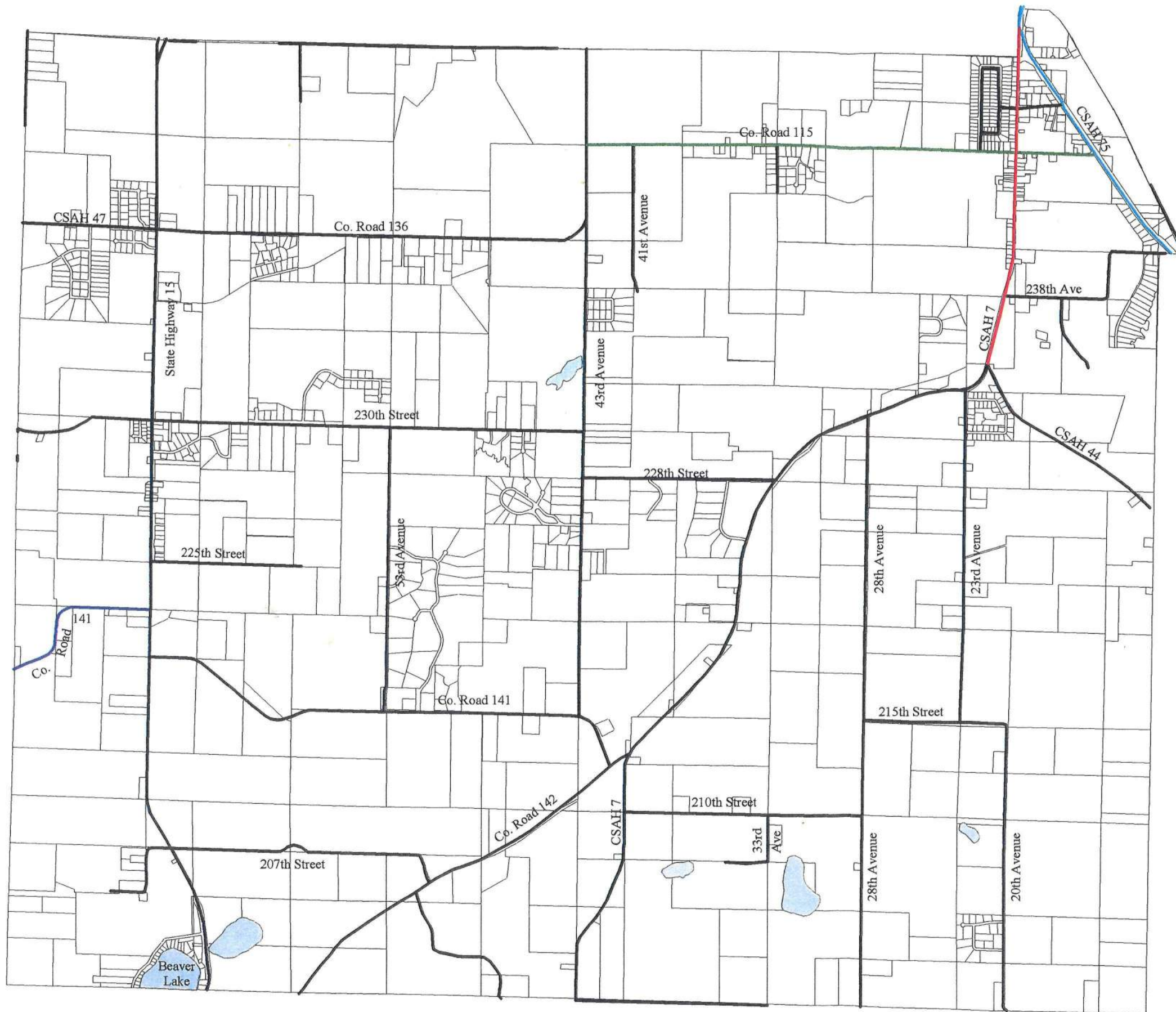
## Stearns County Road Improvement Schedule

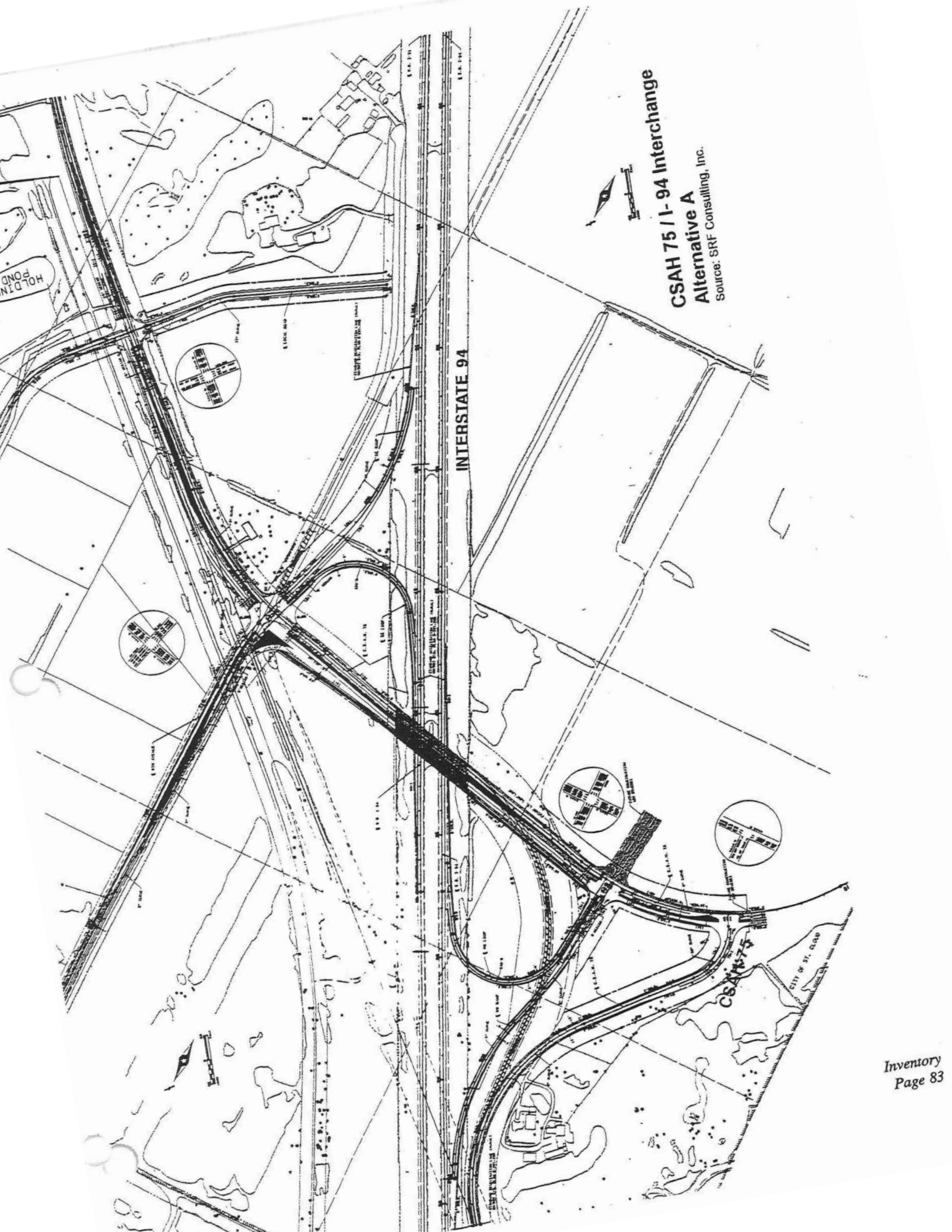
-  2001
-  2003
-  2004
-  2005
-  Roads
-  Water



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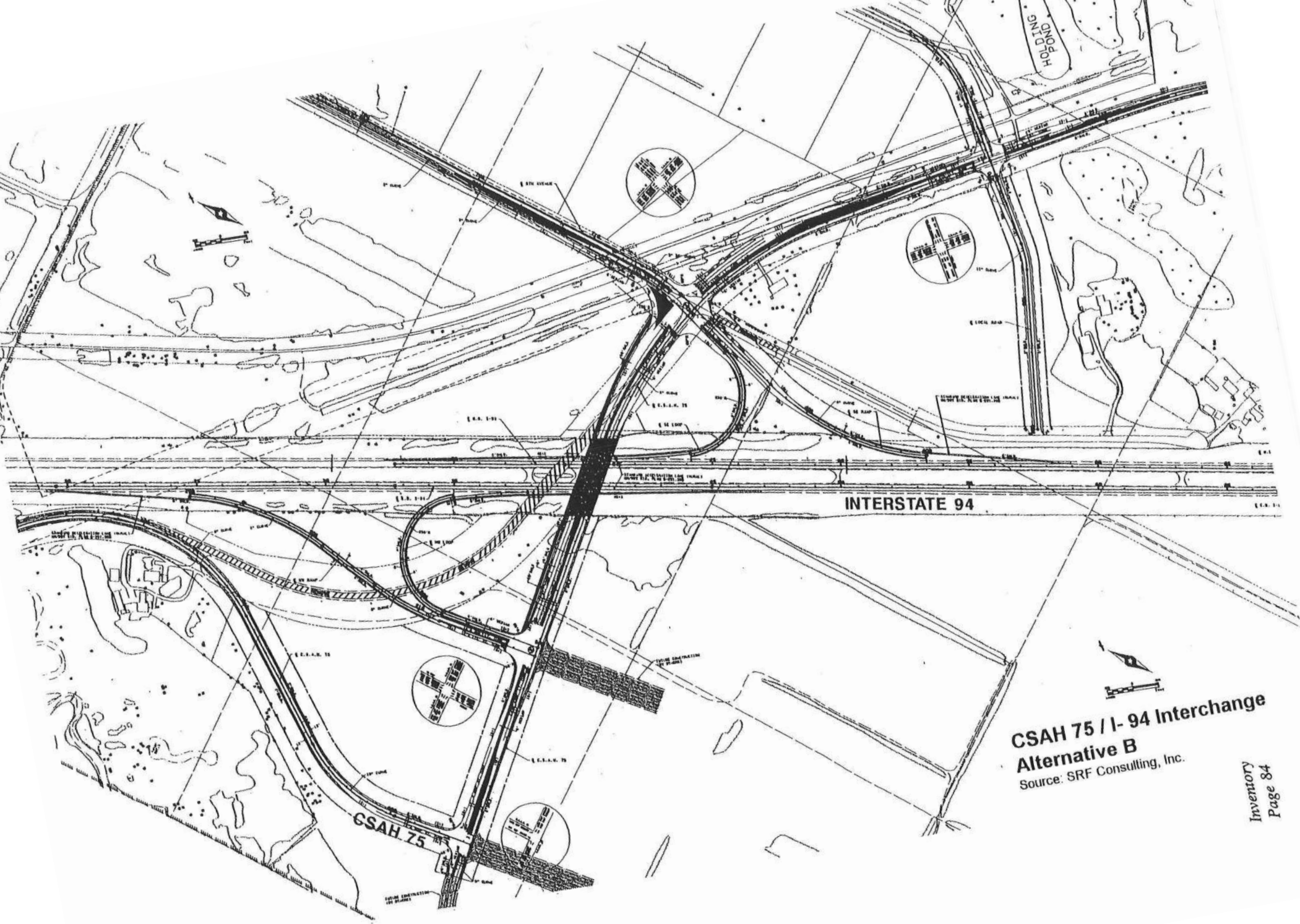
Source: MNDOT, Stearns County, & Northwest Associated Consultants  
November 2000  
This map is for planning purposes only





**CSAH 75 / I-94 Interchange**  
**Alternative A**  
Source: SRF Consulting, Inc.





INTERSTATE 94

CSAH 75

CSAH 75 / I-94 Interchange  
Alternative B  
Source: SRF Consulting, Inc.

## **OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES**

### **Rail Facilities**

There are currently no rail facilities within the community. Until the recent annexation, a Burlington Northern rail line traversed through St. Augusta between the Mississippi River and Interstate 94. However, the line had not been utilized for rail traffic in several years, as all trains now use the tracks on the east side of the river. The right-of-way has been abandoned and sold to adjacent property owners and the tracks have been removed by Burlington Northern.

### **Airports**

Air service is provided to the City via the St. Cloud Municipal Airport and several smaller runways throughout the region. The St. Cloud facility contains two runways, at lengths of 3000 and 5200 feet, although expansion plans are being considered. The airport is primarily used for small corporate and private planes. There are approximately 80,000 flights annually (100 -150 per day), many of which are associated with the on-site flight school. The only commercial airline which utilizes the facility is Messabi, which has 19 seat passenger planes making flights to and from Minneapolis-St. Paul four times per day. Smaller airports and/or runways are located throughout the region in addition to numerous private landing strips which may be available for use.

### **Transit Services**

At present, there is not community wide public transit service in St. Augusta. The St. Cloud Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) does provide community-wide transit services to the Cities of St. Cloud, Waite park, and Sauk Rapids. Currently, the closest St. Cloud MTC's service comes to St. Augusta is the industrial area near the junction of Interstate 94 and County Road 75 in St. Cloud.

St. Cloud MTC's 2000 Comprehensive Plan calls for expanding it's services to the Cities of St. Joseph and Sartell in the near future. The plan also anticipates adding service to St. Augusta in 2009 or 2010. Factors affecting this anticipated service date include both the MTC's ability to provide service and the level of interest from St. Augusta. The MTC feels that the next step to providing transit services to St. Augusta would be to conduct a transit feasibility study. Recently, the St. Cloud MTC worked with the Cities of St. Joseph and Sartell and a transportation consultant on transit feasibility studies for these communities. Eighty percent of the funding for these studies came from the Minnesota Department of Transportation.



Private transit services are available to St. Augusta residents from Tri-County Action Program (Tri-CAP). Tri-CAP operates two types of transit service in St. Augusta. The Heartland Express provides as-needed service along the State Highway 15 corridor on the western side of town. These buses are equipped for riders with disabilities and are able to vary up to one mile from the Highway 15 corridor for pick-up or drop-off of riders. Reservations for the Heartland Express are required at least one day in advance. Tri-Cap also operates the Volunteer Drive Program. This service provides personal transit service to all residents throughout the community. It operates Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Riders must make a reservation at least one day in advance and pay approximately 35 percent of the fare.

## **SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- St. Augusta has one community park located in the northeast portion of the City. This location does not adequately serve the entire City population.
- There is a lack of small parks distributed throughout St. Augusta. In anticipation of future development, the City will need to acquire additional park land holdings. To this end, the City may wish to pursue a comprehensive study of current and future recreational demands, and a park land donation requirement for new subdivisions.
- There are currently few trails in St. Augusta. The City will need to look at ideas from the regional trail plan prepared by the St. Cloud APO and study opportunities for trails to be developed over time as part of the subdivision process or as monies become available.
- Numerous recreational facilities exist within the region which include water management areas, state designated trout streams, state game refuges, and Warner Lake County Park.
- The City of St. Augusta operates a City Hall facility within the St. Augusta hamlet that includes administrative office space, meeting rooms and adjoining maintenance garage. It was, however, mentioned by City personnel that the City Hall is not centrally located within the community and that the facility could in the future serve as a fire hall, whereupon a new centralized facility would be built. Such a facility may be considered for land recently acquired by the City near the intersection of 43rd Avenue and 230th Street.
- Police protection is provided through the Stearns County Sheriff's Department.
- The St. Cloud Township, Rockville, and Kimball Fire Departments provide volunteer fire fighting services to St. Augusta.
- Students in St. Augusta are served by three school districts. Except for some schools in St. Cloud District 742, there is no future expansion anticipated.
- Water and sanitary sewer systems are all currently private. Potential pollution and continued growth pressure are serious enough issues to require immediate attention to establish a public facilities plan. The City is studying two options for providing sanitary sewer service to the St. Augusta and Luxemburg areas, either from St. Cloud, Cold Spring or both.

## **PARKS AND TRAILS**

The City of St. Augusta contains one community park which was donated over the last several years. The following map shows the approved plan of Kiffmeyer Park which encompasses 21.69 acres of land along County Road 7 between County Road 44 and 238th Street. The plan is being constructed in stages as time and money allow with a great amount of help from various volunteer groups. Park amenities which have been implemented to date include the picnic shelter, playground, horseshoe pit, the southernmost parking lot, and the ballfield.

Kiffmeyer Park is located in the northeast portion of the City along County Road 7. This location is not ideal as it is not easily accessible for the entire City population. In addition to the concern over the location of Kiffmeyer Park, there is a lack of smaller parks distributed throughout the City. As a developing community, St. Augusta will need to acquire park land holdings in anticipation of growing development and growing demand. Park land acquisition, through the "park land donation" requirements in the subdivision process, is an approach that will yield an economical method of developing park land for the City.

While park land acquisition has been gauged along with and according to the subdivision development process, St. Augusta will need to begin anticipating future recreational demands. A comprehensive look at current and anticipated park demands and a look at the existing natural features located within St. Augusta is needed to identify future park land development areas. The development of these facilities will need to be considered within the context of the City's administration and maintenance capabilities.

Numerous other recreational related facilities exist throughout the region which include water (boat) access points, locations for camping/fishing, state wildlife management areas, state designated trout streams, several state game refuges, Warner Lake County Park, and historic sites.

The St. Cloud APO has prepared a regional trail plan, which includes corridors in St. Augusta. The trail plan includes primarily on-road, wide shoulder trails. No new off-road trails are proposed within the City limits. The trail corridors are primarily along heavily traveled routes that connect places of residence to places of interest. The City will need to incorporate this plan within the Comprehensive Plan Update and outline strategies for implementing it. The City will also need to study development of a local system of road side or overland trails. These trails may be developed over time as part of the subdivision process or as monies become available.

# KIFFMEYER PARK

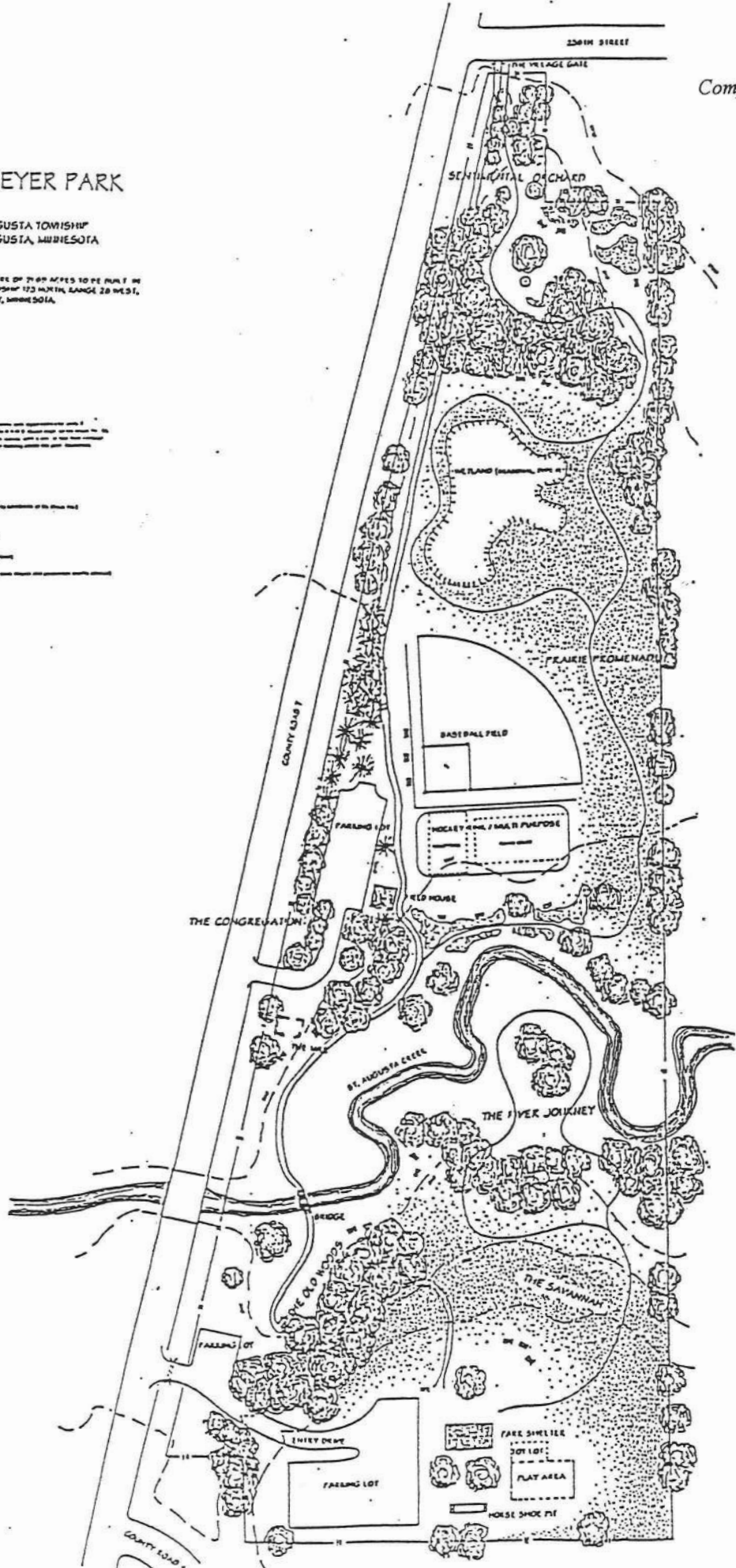
ST. AUGUSTA TOWNSHIP  
ST. AUGUSTA, MINNESOTA

A COMMUNITY PARK OF 71.67 ACRES TO BE PLACED IN  
SECTION 12, TOWNSHIP 123 NORTH, RANGE 28 WEST,  
SIBLEY COUNTY, MINNESOTA.

**NOTES:**

1. The finished ground elevations shown are approximate only.  
The actual elevations should be obtained from a detailed topographic  
survey of the site.

- Existing building
- Proposed building
- Existing road
- Proposed road
- Existing utility line
- Proposed utility line
- Existing fence
- Proposed fence
- Existing tree
- Proposed tree



MASTER PLAN





## **PUBLIC FACILITIES**

### **Governmental Buildings**

The City of St. Augusta maintains a City Hall facility built in 1990 that includes administrative office space, meeting rooms, and an adjoining maintenance garage. The site is located on Lots 1 and 2 of Block 1 in the Kiffmeyer Addition and encompasses two acres. The building is approximately 5,500 square feet in size, with the administrative portion of the facility representing 2,140 square feet, and the remaining 3,360 square feet serving as the maintenance garage. The City has recently remodeled the building, which is expected to serve the City's facility and spatial needs well into future years.

It has long been mentioned by various City personnel that the City Hall is not centrally located within the community and the facility may someday serve as a fire hall, whereupon a new centrally located City building could be constructed. The City recently acquired a parcel of land near the intersection of 43rd Avenue and 230th Street that could be developed as a new municipal center and/or park facilities.

### **Police Protection**

Police protection for the City is currently provided by the Stearns County Sheriff's Department. One patrol car is designated to routinely provide surveillance of the southern portion of Stearns County, which includes the City of St. Augusta, with a back-up car assigned to assist when needed. In case of emergencies, the 911 number provides direct contact with 24-hour on-call officers at the County Sheriff's Department. The need for additional police protection has been cited as a concern by City officials.

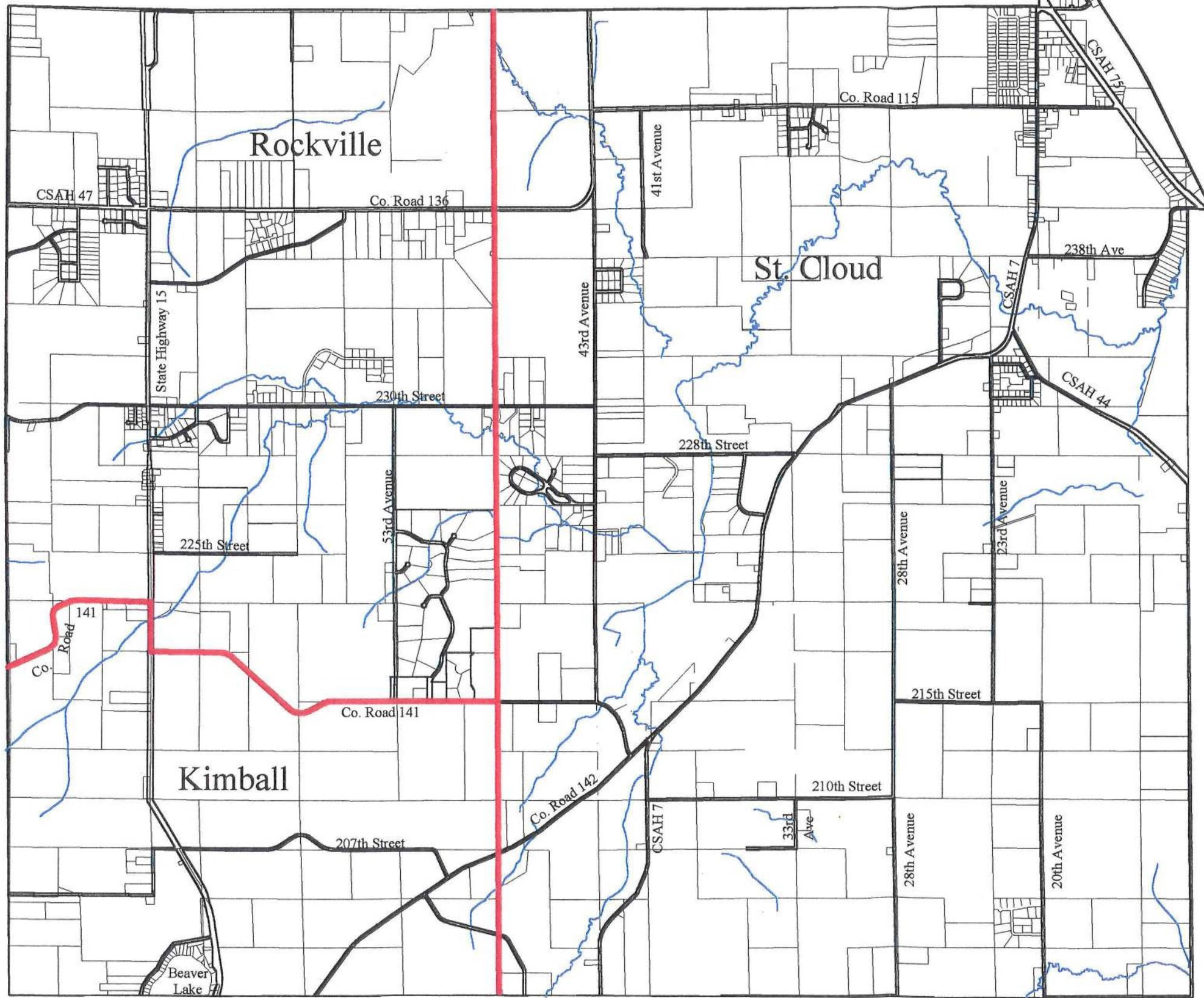
### **Fire Protection**




The City of St. Augusta receives its fire protection from the communities of St. Cloud, Rockville, and Kimball which all have volunteer departments. The following map shows the protection area boundaries. St. Cloud provides fire protection for about 60 percent of the community, but lacks medical rescue capabilities which has to be covered by Gold Cross of St. Cloud. Rockville provides fire and medical rescue to the northwest portion of the City to the north of County Road 141, as does Kimball for the remaining land in the southwest corner of St. Augusta.

All together there are approximately 72 volunteer fire fighters from the three communities which are available to help when dispatched by the County Sheriff's office. The fire chiefs for each area indicated that their equipment and existing number of volunteers is adequate at the present time. The fire ratings for the three communities differ, with St. Cloud rating 9, Kimball rating 7, and Rockville rating 8.



# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update Fire Protection Providers



-  Fire Protection Boundary
-  Stream
-  Water



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Source: Stearns County & Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 January 2001  
 This Map Is For Planning Purposes Only



## **Schools**

The children in St. Augusta are on an open enrollment program and may attend one of three school districts discussed below. A map has been provided which shows the school district boundaries. Each student is designated a school district based on where they live. If a student chooses to attend a school which is outside of the designated district, he/she must provide their own transportation to and from classes.

### St. Cloud School District 742

School District 742 encompasses the majority of St. Augusta. There are nine public schools and nine private schools which are attended by St. Augusta children. All children are bused to the schools which are not located in St. Augusta, and many within the City may also be bused from the outlying areas. A table showing attendance by St. Augusta residents at District 742 schools follows.

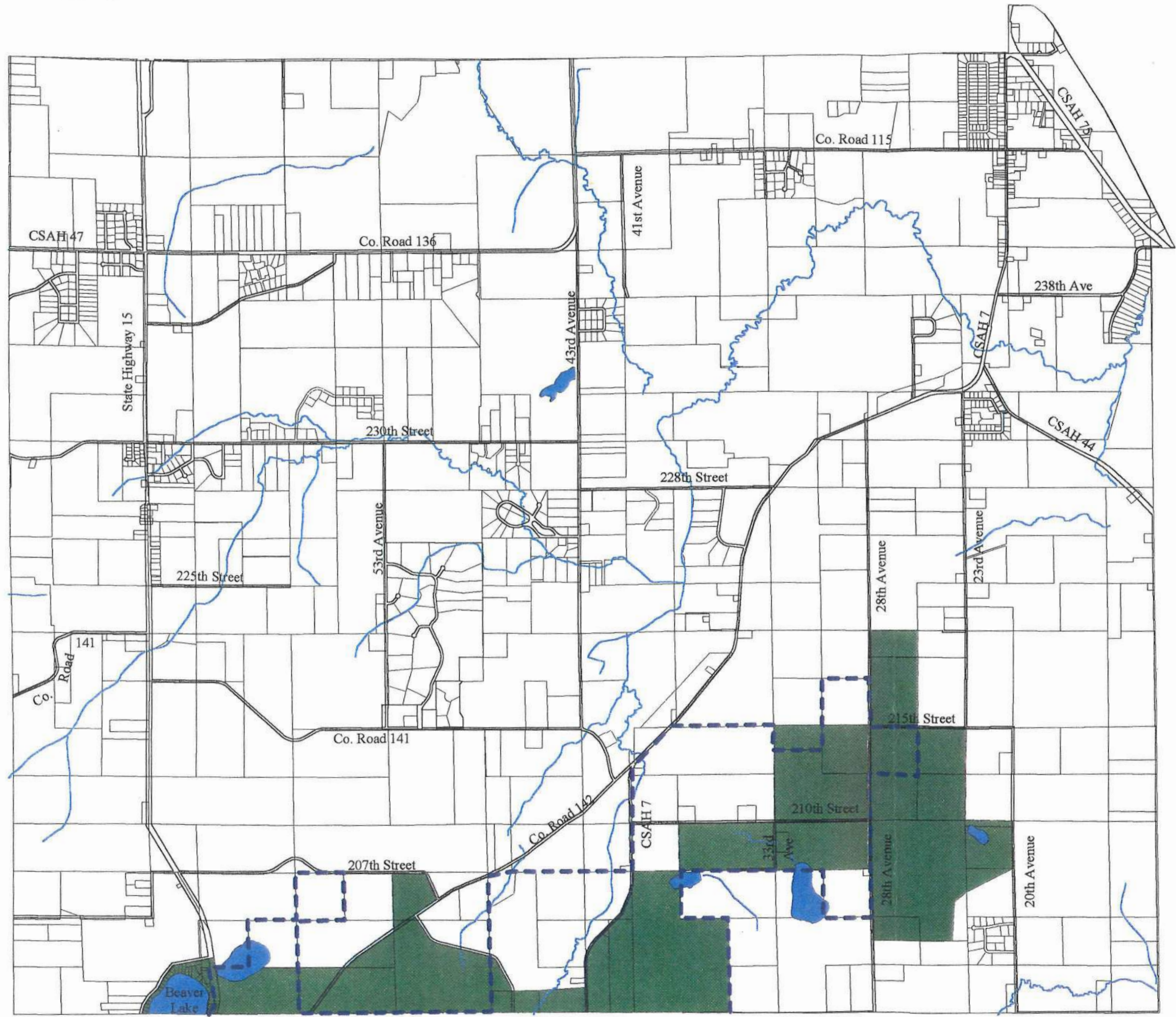
**ST. CLOUD SCHOOL DISTRICT 742  
ENROLLMENT FIGURES FOR 1998-1999**





School Name & Type	St. Augusta Twp. 1998-99 Enrollment	Total 1998-99 Enrollment	Percent of Total	School Capacity Good	Emergency
<b>Public Schools</b>					
Early / Special Education	5	278	1.39	-	-
Clearview Elementary	2	419	0.34	650	750
Jefferson Elementary	1	218			
Lincoln Elementary	2	348	0.50	400	550
Madison Elementary	2	544	0.30	650	750
McKinley Elementary	2	292			
Oak Hill Community	132	918	18.02	825	925
Roosevelt Elementary	1	308			
Talahi Community	1	755			
Westwood Elementary	-	398			
North Junior High (7-8)	-	857	0.10	850	850
South Junior High (7-8)	48	918	9.27	800	800
Apollo Senior (9-12)	1	1,694	0.19	2,200	2,200
Tech Senior (9-12)	227	1,806	10.69	2,000	2,000
<b>Non-Public Schools</b>					
St. Cloud Christian	1	-	-	-	-
Holy Cross (K-6)	-	-	-	-	-
Holy Innocents	1	-	-	-	-
Holy Spirit (K-6)	-	-	-	-	-
St. Augustines	-	-	-	-	-
St. Elizabeth	4	-	-	-	-
St. John's Prep	1	-	-	-	-
St. Joseph (Waite Park)	-	-	-	-	-
St. Mary's (St. Cloud)	6	-	-	-	-
St. Mary H.O.C. (St.	75	149	66.67	182	182
St. Peter Paul & Michael	3	-	-	-	-
St. Wendelin (K-6)	81	102	-	-	-
Cathedral High School /	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Home School</b>	-	-	-	-	-
0-4 Year Olds	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Students in St.</b>	<b>596</b>				

Source: St. Cloud ISD #742



# City of St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan Update School District Boundaries Map



-  St. Cloud Independent School District 742
-  Kimball Independent School District 739
-  Stream
-  Water



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Source: Stearns County & Northwest Associated Consultants.  
 January 2001  
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### Annandale School District 876

Children living in St. Augusta have the option to attend the Annandale School District through open enrollment. District officials indicated that no students from St. Augusta currently attend school at District 876 facilities. This district has seen slight increases in school enrollment in past years and does not anticipate any expansion needs in the near future.

### Kimball School District 739

The Kimball School District 739 encompasses a relatively small portion of St. Augusta and as shown on the School District Boundaries Map, the District 739 limits meander in and out of the City. In 1999, 25 students from St. Augusta attended school within District 739. The district's facilities consist of one elementary school (K-6) and one area high school (7-12).

### Private Schools

Two of the private schools which are within District 742 are located within St. Augusta. These are St. Mary's Help of Christiane and St. Wendelin's. Both of these schools are associated with established churches. St. Mary's current enrollment is approximately 127 students. According to school officials this enrollment level is creating an overcrowding situation and causing many activities to double up on space. However, St. Mary's has no immediate expansion plans. St. Wendelin's current enrollment is approximately 104 students. Their staff feels that current space is adequate to serve their needs and do not anticipate an expansion needs.

## **Water and Sanitary Sewer**

St. Augusta is currently without public sanitary sewer and water service. The sewer and water needs of area residents are currently provided by individual on-site septic systems and private water wells. There is, however, one subdivision in the community (Pineview) which utilizes a shared well system. Land use potential, in terms of the water and sanitary sewer systems needed for development, is controlled through the City's Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances and the Stearns County Health Department. Potential lot sizes must be sufficient enough to facilitate installation of private sewer and water systems.

Failure of five to ten septic systems are typically identified each year as inspections are made for complaints or for mortgage purposes. According to Stearns County staff, most of these failures are the result of new code standards for septic systems. While known problems are fairly limited, the County does not have the staff to inspect all systems annually, thus failing systems may go unnoticed which creates the potential for ground

water contamination. It was noted that the southern half of the Pineview subdivision has had numerous septic system failures. The majority of the soils in the City are coarse textured (sandy) and therefore have rapid permeability which does not allow for proper absorption of septic system effluent. The need for public utilities, while not urgent, should be looked at as a means of reducing pollution problems associated with private sewer and water systems and increasing the potential for higher density development in designated portions of the community. In the interim, the City should consider implementing an inspection program to ensure ongoing maintenance of on-site systems.

The City is currently studying two options for providing sanitary sewer service to areas of St. Augusta. The City Engineer had previously estimated average daily flows of 950,000 gallons per day and 740,000 gallons per day for 20 year saturation development of the St. Augusta and Luxemburg hamlets respectively.

The first option for sanitary sewer service is connection to the facility operated by St. Cloud at Franklin Road and 240th Street, on the east side of I-94. As part of the annexation settlement, St. Cloud agreed to lease St. Augusta capacity from its present facility. The City would also be expected to participate financially in any future expansion connection to the St. Cloud facility and would allow for immediate sewer availability in the St. Augusta hamlet. Service could also be provided to the Luxemburg hamlet via St. Cloud with extension of a force main.

The second option for obtaining municipal sewer service is connection to an expanded Cold Spring facility. Cold Spring is expanding their existing plant and is expecting participation from the Cities of Rockville and Pleasant Lake. St. Augusta would be able to share connections with Pleasant Lake and bring the service to the Luxemburg area of the community. Like the first option, it may be physically possible to extend service from Cold Spring between the two centers.

As noted above, the City is still reviewing its options. Cold Spring requires a decision by the Fall of 2001 in order to build during 2003-2004. Service from St. Cloud is readily available now.

Plans for water service also have not been determined to date. Each hamlet will likely require independent water sources due to the change in topography between the center. However, it may be possible for the St. Augusta area to obtain water service from St. Cloud.

## **Public Works**

The City is responsible for maintaining all streets in the community which are not under the jurisdiction of the State or County. The St. Augusta public works department was built as part of the City Hall facility. This building serves as equipment storage as well as office "headquarters". The City employs one full-time public works employee and two part-time workers. They are responsible for the plowing, mowing, grading, surfacing/resurfacing and street sweeping on an as-needed basis. The Public Works Department is also responsible for maintaining Kiffmeyer Park and any other City land or facilities.

## **Administration**

The City of St. Augusta is governed by a City Council, which was elected in May 2000. The City Council consists of a Mayor and four Councilors who all serve at large. The City also has a seven member Planning Commission and seven member Park Board that serve in advisory roles to the City Council.

The City of St. Augusta is staffed by a full time Administrator-Clerk. The City also employs a Treasurer and a Secretary. City staff is available at City Hall, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to Noon. Additional staff hours may be necessary in the future as community growth continues and service demands increase. The City also employs a full time maintenance supervisor, two part time assistants, and an on-call Animal Control Officer.

Technical administrative services are obtained by the City on a contract basis. Couri and MacArthur Law Office provides legal counsel. Great Northern Building Inspection is utilized to perform on-site inspections and issue building permits. Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc. provides comprehensive planning services. Short, Elliott, Hendrickson provides the City with engineering consulting. During interviews with City officials, it was indicated that code enforcement staff is needed to follow up on residents' complaints.

## **Library Service**

St. Augusta is part of the Great River Regional Library System which serves the Counties of Todd, Morrison, Stearns, Benton, Sherburne, and Wright. The main library is located in the City of St. Cloud, with 29 branch facilities spread throughout the included counties. Nearby branch facilities are located in Waite Park, Cold Spring, Kimball, and Becker. The libraries exist through a Joint Powers Agreement between the six counties and St. Cloud which are governed by a Library Board. Funding comes primarily from state and federal grants as well as county/city tax levies. The Great River Regional Library System is linked with other regional library systems in Minnesota through which a statewide borrowing policy can be utilized.

## **Recycling**

The City sponsors an annual recycling day in May. The third such event was held in 2001. Residents can bring scrap metal, batteries, furniture, bathroom fixtures, carpet, TV's, computers, printers, tires, and other recyclables to City Hall. Many items may be dropped off for free, but some larger items are charged a fee.

## **Utility Service**

Utility services in the form of electric, natural gas, and telephone are all provided to St. Augusta. Stearns Electric Association provides electrical service to the entire community. Natural gas service to the City is provided both by Reliant Energy and Xcel Energy. Local telephone service is provided to the City via U.S. West, while long distance service is provided by select carriers. Cable TV is also available in certain sections of the community.



## **SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC PROFILE**

- St. Augusta's growth is conservatively projected to remain fairly constant through the year 2020.
- The land availability within St. Augusta and the community's proximity to an expanding employment base in St. Cloud Metropolitan Area provide an attractive incentive for continued population and household growth.
- The St. Augusta projections are based on rural/suburban development densities. Many factors could contribute to a more dramatic community growth. Factors including major transportation system improvements, the introduction of a major employer to the area, or the availability of public utilities could result in greater development interest in the community and therefore a faster growth and development rate.
- As a result of the population increases St. Augusta experienced during the 1980s, the City must consider the future retail needs of its population. Commercial land use analysis indicate that enough commercial land exists to satisfy the current and future local commercial demand. Factors which influence these projections include competitive locations, physical barriers, and sales strength. New opportunities for commercial development exist with the planned construction of an interchange at CSAH 75/I-94.
- Future industrial land absorption is dependent upon a number of variables such as the City's efforts to promote the community for economic development, the availability of public sewer and water which governs the size and type of industries which may develop and the City's ability to compete with other nearby communities for economic development.

## **POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS**

### **Background and Methodology**

The nature of St. Augusta's future with respect to residential, commercial, and industrial expansion potentials depends to a great extent on the population growth which takes place in the coming years. As such, the confidence with which future market situations may be assessed is closely related to the quality of the population projections employed.

Future growth in St. Augusta will be influenced by local, regional and national social and economic trends. Growth is locally limited by a community's ability to provide public services. Regional influences, include growth rates and patterns of the Twin Cities and St. Cloud Metropolitan Areas. National trends include mortgage rates and gasoline prices, both of which directly influence residential development and commuter populations.

St. Augusta's population has increased steadily over the past three decades. Through planning and capital improvements, St. Augusta is preparing itself for additional future growth. The City's proximity to the St. Cloud Metropolitan Area, along with regional development patterns, suggest that St. Augusta will continue to offer an attractive small town residential environment for young families.

The population and land absorption projections are intended to outline the service, utility, and land use demands St. Augusta may expect in the future. Using these projections, the City may establish strategies for providing future municipal services. Through proper planning, the City can control and stage improvements in a fiscally responsible manner, insuring environmental quality and financial solvency. The role that population projections play in all of these areas is central. As such, the provision of reliable projections is a primary aim of this report as is support of municipal service policy development.

St. Augusta projections of population and households were developed through an analysis of local and regional trends and policies, and via the application of economic and demographic principles, with emphasis on the detailed profile of the City developed in this planning inventory. Specific data applied to the projections were the rate of residential building permits issued since 1990, trends in average household size, and sub-regional population patterns.

## Local Growth

Local growth is restricted by the current lack of available public sewer and water that would allow for more intense urban land use and densities. Without urban service, residential land uses will continue to develop at rural/suburban densities ranging primarily from one acre lots to five acre lots.

Between 1990 and 1999, 686 building permits were issued, which resulted in 231 new homes, all detached single family units. As illustrated in the table below, St. Augusta development has remained fairly constant, fluctuating only slightly. Residential development has been limited in recent years due to platting moratoriums imposed by County and City planning efforts. Future growth is expected to return to a growth rate similar to that of the 1990-1996 period.

<b>St. Augusta BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED BY YEAR</b>										
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
New Single Family	38	27	27	34	19	25	26	11	12	12
Residential Improvement	34	20	36	40	39	33	51	38	45	41
New Commercial	8	2	4	3	1	6	3	1	6	8
Commercial Improvement	6	2	2	1	5	4	5	1	5	5
<b>TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>66</b>

Source: St. Augusta Building Permit Records

## Projections

A major factor in projecting the population growth in St. Augusta centers on the issue of whether public utility services, primarily sanitary sewer, will be provided. Should such an event take place, the pace of development would be expected to increase even further from the current patterns which have been characteristic of urban development in terms of industry and employment. On a conservative basis, however, an analysis has been conducted which assumes no public utilities. As such, without public utilities, the City will continue to be primarily limited to low density single family development.

<b>POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD TRENDS &amp; PROJECTIONS</b>							
	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000 Est.	2010 Est.	2020 Est.
Population	1,056	1,584	2,169	2,657	2,873	3,562	4,179
Household	234	356	588	785	833	1,113	1,393
Household Size	4.51	4.45	3.69	3.38	3.44	3.20	3.00
Source: U.S. Census Minnesota Planning St. Augusta Building Permit Information Northwest Associated Consultants Inc.							

The population estimates are based on the State Demographer's projections for Stearns County, which indicate that St. Augusta has grown at a faster rate than the region. The past populations of St. Augusta were compared (and projected) as a percentage of the County population which indicated that while St. Augusta is expected to continue to experience an increase in population through the year 2020, the speed at which the growth occurs will decline. It is anticipated that St. Augusta should be able to maintain an annual average minimum development rate of 27 dwelling units or 68 persons per year through the year 2010. This development rate and a slightly declining household size should result in a year 2010 estimated population of approximately 3,562 residents.

It is suspected, however, that a greater increase may occur given the growth trend which has been evidenced by the number of building permits issued since the census was completed in 1990. Additionally, the land availability within St. Augusta and the community's proximity to an expanding employment base in western Twin Cities and St. Cloud metropolitan suburbs provides an attractive incentive for continued population and household growth. It should also be noted that the St. Augusta projections are based on rural/suburban development densities. Many factors could contribute to more dramatic community growth. Factors including availability of public utilities, surge of residential platting, or the introduction of a major employer to the area could result in a faster growth and development rate.

## LAND DEMAND AND ABSORPTION

Population and household projections provide some foundation for projecting land use demand for the next decade. Using the information available, land demand forecasts for each land use category have been formulated.

### Residential

Aside from agricultural land use, residential development is the most predominate land use within the community. This development trend is projected to continue through the next decade. Again, past projections have been based upon concentrated centers developing at rural development, but now potential urban development must also be considered. For the purpose of this study, rural development is assumed to occur at a density of 1.0 units per acre, whereas urban uses will be calculated at 2.0 units per acre. The projections suggest that new residential development within the City may absorb between 280 and 560 acres of land by 2020.

PROJECTED RESIDENTIAL LAND ABSORPTION						
	2005	2010	2015	2020	Total	Total with Overage
New Households	140	140	140	140	560	N/A
Rural Density 1.0 units/acre	140 acres	140 acres	140 acres	140 acres	560 acres	840 acres
Urban Density 2.0 units/acre	70 acres	70 acres	70 acres	70 acres	280 acres	420 acres
Source: Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.						

The table above also shows the calculation of demand with overage. This statistic multiplies the demand by 1.5 to provide some additional bounce in the land absorption projection to anticipate any surge in growth above the household forecasts. In establishing the future land use plan, St. Augusta should use the residential demand with overage assumption when designating the amount and location of residential growth. Based upon these calculations, the City should anticipate developing between 420 acres and 840 acres over the next 20 years, depending on growth rate and availability of services.



## **Commercial**

St. Augusta is in the early stages of urban development that has resulted in a significant increase in population since 1980. In looking to the future, the City must give attention to the commercial retail needs of its residents. This will become even more critical if public sewer and water becomes available and more intense urban development begins. In identifying retail commercial locations and land absorption, a number of criteria must be considered. These criteria give attention to trade area, retail locations, amount of commercial land, and type of commercial uses. The following paragraphs apply these general market criteria to St. Augusta to provide some insight as to anticipated commercial land absorption and potential locations for commercial land use.

A second consideration for encouraging development of commercial uses is tax base expansion. Commercial land uses typically generate a net surplus of property tax revenue above service demand costs. Therefore, commercial uses not only provide retail or business services, but contribute positively to the community's ability to fund resident services.

To expand the commercial development potential within St. Augusta, the local trade area population must be increased. This can either occur through continued local population growth within the City boundaries or by expanding the trade area boundaries. Local population growth is limited by the area's residential market demand and the present lack of municipal utilities which prevents urban densities. Expanding the local trade area would involve attracting customers from outside St. Augusta, either by capturing through traffic commuters or developing destination businesses.

### Trade Area Potential

The trade area is the geographic area from which a commercial use attracts the majority of its customers. The trade area concept assumes that all things being equal, people will travel to the nearest commercial facility. In this light, travel distance is the major parameter determining the trade area. Other factors influencing the size of a trade area include location, size and type of competitive facilities, local travel patterns, physical barriers such as parks, rivers, freeways, etc.

The size of a trade area also depends on the type of goods or services being offered. Convenience goods include day to day items such as food, gas, hardware for which people do not typically comparison price shop. Shopper's goods include items such as clothing and furniture for which people are willing to travel farther to obtain a lower price. A convenience goods trade area is typically characterized as being a one to two mile radius with an urban development setting. In a rural or suburban setting where development and population is less dense, the convenience good trade area is typically expanded to a three to five mile radius. Due to the nature of shopper's goods sales, it must rely on larger trade

area, typically this trade is ten miles or greater depending on the aforementioned trade area limiting factors.

### Competitive Locations

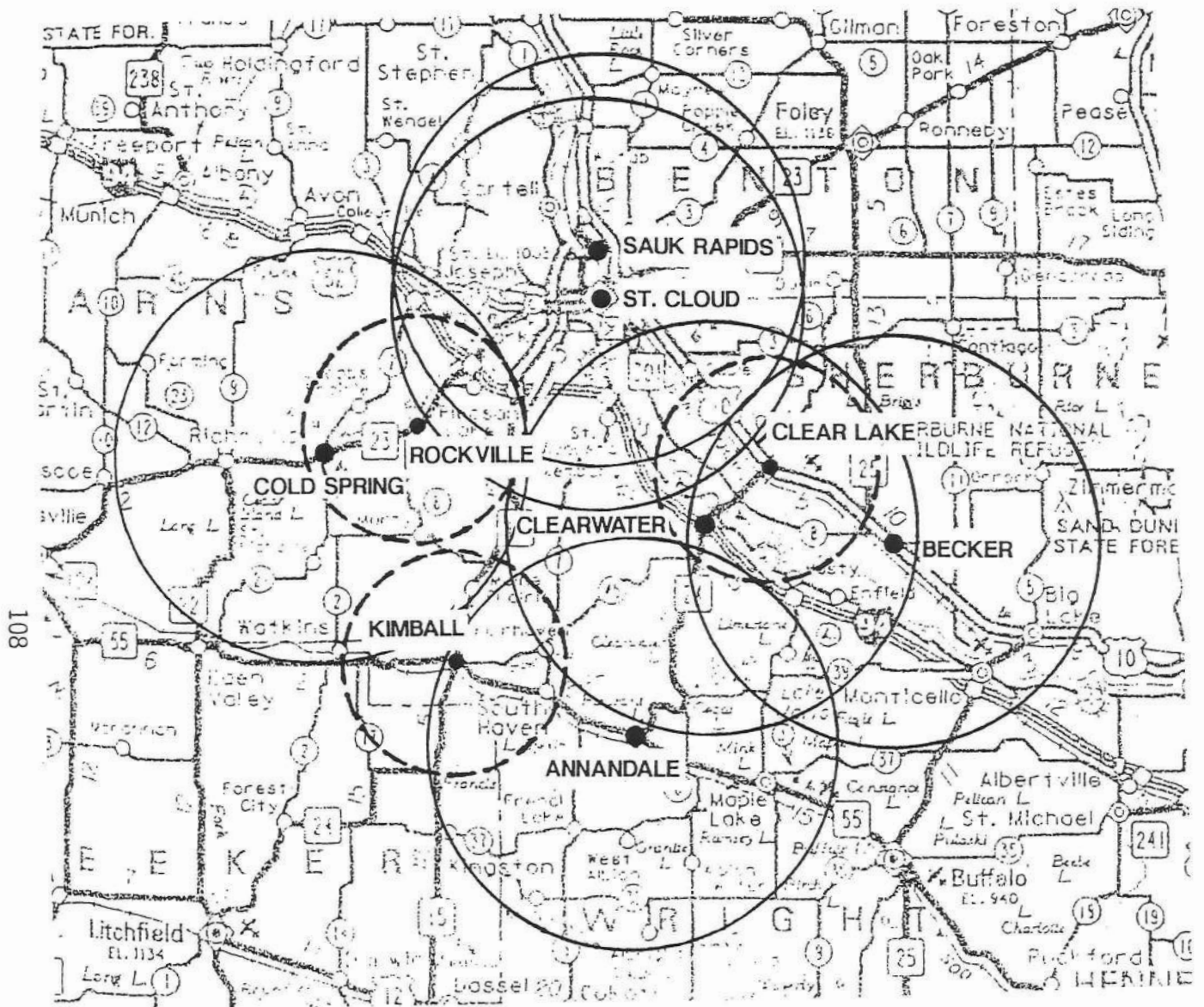
In addition to St. Augusta's local commercial area, the City is also served by retail locations in a number of surrounding communities. The trade area map on the following page illustrates the locations of nearby established retail locations that compete for customers within St. Augusta.

St. Cloud, Rockville, Waite Park, Becker, Annandale, Sauk Rapids, Clear Lake and Clearwater have been identified as shoppers and convenience goods locations which draw from St. Augusta. In addition to these cities, shopping facilities in Annandale, Becker, Sauk Rapids and Cold Spring offer full range consumer goods and services to the region.

These competitive locations have an advantage over St. Augusta in terms of their existing populations and extent of commercial development. These existing commercial centers and St. Augusta's limited population density may serve to discourage development of destination retail locations. As such, future commercial development may be limited to convenience goods uses that serve primarily the local population.



### Physical Barriers

The Mississippi and Interstate 94 are the major physical barriers within the region that influence commercial development. These two barriers restrict access into St. Augusta from the north and east of the City. This restricted access results in other competitive locations having a business interception advantage over St. Augusta's commercial locations. The theory of business interception is that consumers will not travel through a business district to obtain the same product further away. Consumers will travel familiar routes and patronize an easily accessible business location rather than travel to an inconvenient location.



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### Trade Areas Map

- 
 TRADE AREAS FOR CONVENIENCE  
 GOODS AND SERVICES (5 MILE RADIUS)
  
- 
 TRADE AREAS FOR SHOPPERS  
 GOODS AND SERVICES (10 MILE RADIUS)

### Highway Commercial/Service

An uncertain area of commercial land demand is for highway commercial/service activities. Due to Interstate 94, as well as interstate through traffic to and from recreational areas in northern Minnesota, the demand for such services is expected to substantially increase. This will afford St. Augusta an expanding opportunity to capture an increasing amount of retail sales and service income. This potential and the resulting development possibilities needs to be considered and addressed as part of the community's Comprehensive Plan. A major factor influencing the amount of land required to meet this market need will be the quality and standards imposed upon such developments. It is expected that higher standards will serve to somewhat limit demand. This will, however, have to be considered in relationship to community benefit in terms of community quality as well as tax base.

The City of St. Augusta was previously surrounded the I-94/CSAH 75 interchange at the northeastern corner of the City. This area was annexed to the City of St. Cloud as part of the 1999 court order. As such, St. Augusta's nearest boundary is approximately one-half mile south of the interchange. The area still has good visibility fro the interstate and continues to offer commercial development potential. A large scale recreational vehicle sales lot has recently been approved by the City Council for development in this area, north of City Hall.

MnDOT is currently planning construction of a new interchange at I-94 and CSAH 75. To be constructed in 2003, this new interchange may provide opportunities for development of additional highway commercial uses. The area adjacent to the planned interchange is currently undeveloped, except for limited and residential land uses. The City must consider earmarking this area for future commercial use to take advantage of the access and visibility provided by the new interchange.

Finally, there may also be opportunities for some limited commercial use along the T.H. 15 corridor. As noted in the next section, however, City officials anticipate industrial development along this corridor.

## Industrial

Projecting industrial land demand for St. Augusta is difficult from the standpoint that the City is a bedroom community with a limited amount of industrial development existing to date. Most of the industrial development that did exist within the City was annexed to St. Cloud in 2000. Future industrial growth will depend on a number of variables including but not limited to:

1. The City's position and policy on the promotion of the community for economic development.
2. The availability of public sewer and water will serve to dictate the size and type of industries that may be accommodated in St. Augusta.
3. The City's ability to compete for economic development with nearby communities with established industrial parks.

Based on the present physical and economic constraints, industrial growth in St. Augusta will most likely be characterized by smaller dry industries with a small number of employees that are developed or initiated by a developer or resident having a local interest in St. Augusta. Development of this type is typically sporadic and spontaneous. In planning to address future industrial development need, the City may chose to identify future development locations that may serve this purpose. Locations suitable for industrial development should take into account the following elements:

1. The site should be reasonably level and offer a site area that is capable of accommodating industrial buildings and required ancillary activities (i.e., parking, shipping and receiving, outdoor storage, etc.).
2. The site soils should be well drained and capable of bearing heavy loads. Soils must be capable of providing for an on-site sewer system, if sanitary sewer service is not made available.
3. The site should be flood-free.
4. The site should take advantage of available community transportation facilities, such as highways or railroads.
5. The site should be protected from residential encroachment or incompatible industrial neighbors.
6. The industrial area should allow for further future industrial expansion.



The City has preliminarily identified the T.H. 15 corridor south of I-94 as a possible location for future industrial development. This area has excellent access and visibility to I-94 via T.H. 15. The area is also generally level with large contiguous parcels. The interest of area property owners in developing industrial land is not currently known.

Although projections for local industrial development is problematic, regional forecasts may be applicable. As part of the St. Cloud Area Master Plan, Maxfield Research Inc. prepared an industrial market assessment. This market assessment included an inventory of existing industrial development, vacant industrial land and projections for future growth.

The Maxfield Research Inc. study anticipates the majority of new industrial development to occur within platted industrial parks. The primary factors for this type of development will be access and utility infrastructure, local government land use regulation and financial incentives from local government units. The study does note that access to I-94 has not been fully exploited by surrounding communities. This may provide the T.H. 15 corridor in St. Augusta a competitive advantage.

The Maxfield Research Inc. study included the following projections for industrial space growth and land absorption.

<b>PROJECTED INDUSTRIAL GROWTH</b>						
	Estimated Industrial Space Demand (Square Feet)			Estimated Industrial Land Absorption (Acres)		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
1998-2005	1,357,430	1,613,210	1,854,500	295	351	403
2006-2010	1,333,120	1,473,280	1,588,480	290	320	345
2011-2015	1,104,350	1,229,800	1,351,350	201	224	246
2016-2020	1,193,280	1,323,960	1,451,340	217	241	264
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,988,180</b>	<b>5,640,250</b>	<b>6,245,670</b>	<b>1,003</b>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>1,258</b>
Source: Maxfield Research Inc.						

These regional industrial growth projections are based upon employment projections prepared for the St. Cloud Area Master Plan and existing urban industrial densities. The study estimates that the average industrial density in the urban region is 4,600 square feet per acre.

In using this data for local purposes, it is relevant to suggest that there are opportunities for new industrial development. This type of development is critical for the City to expand the local tax base and restore revenues that will be lost with annexation of industrial areas to St. Cloud. The success of these efforts will depend to a great extent on the competition and location factors noted previously.