St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan

Approved November 12, 2024

Acknowledgments

St. Augusta City Council

Mike Zenzen, Mayor
Jeff Schmitz, Council Member
Marlin Hommerding, Council Member
Mary Coleman, Council Member
Justin Backes, Council Member

St. Augusta Planning Commission

Ron Kraemer, Planning Commission Chair
Rick Christen, Planning Commission Member
Brent Genereux, Planning Commission Member
Mark Skaalerud, Planning Commission Member
Lee Meier, Planning Commission Member

St. Augusta City Staff

Bill McCabe, City Administrator

Consultants

Robin Caufman, Senior Community Planner – Bolton & Menk
Dylan Edwards, Community Planner – Bolton & Menk

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1.0 Overview

1.0 Overview

St. Augusta's Comprehensive Plan was last prepared in 2002 and amended in 2005. The plan has shaped the city's growth in the 22 years since. This update aligns with the need to assess the community's growth over the past years and guide the community for the next decade with decisions about the city's investments and development.

St. Augusta's identity, where the country meets community, stems from its 170-year history and still influences how the city has grown and changed over the past few years. Preparing for further changes requires further planning and updates to city guiding documents.

The Comprehensive Plan provides an overview of a community's current environment, conditions, and policies to prepare for future changes. It includes chapters related to existing and forecasted demographics, land use planning and zoning, housing, parks and trails, transportation, economic development, and implementation.

1.1 Planning Process

The planning process is divided into three parts to determine what is and what can be done to set the direction for land use in the community for the future:

Existing Land Use

Existing land describes land used in St. Augusta based on previous development patterns. This is the basis for all plans because it is simply what is already present. Decisions to drive new development or scale back a use come from understanding the impacts of existing land use.

Future Land Use

Future land use is the desired outcome for the types of growth and development we want, where we want it, and how intense we want it to be. This comes from an understanding of the existing land use and takes what we have currently as land uses a step further by asking common-sense questions about what areas need to be preserved in their current state, where the city wants to grow, and how.

Zoning

Zoning is the classification of parcels of land based on how they are being used and the best potential uses for these parcels based on our future land use planning. By dividing areas into zones, development becomes more organized as the types and intensity of uses become similar, creating a sense of place. Zoning establishes allowed, conditional, or interim uses, the approval process, standards for development, and regulations or restrictions based on natural resources such as wetlands or shorelands.

1.2 Engagement

The planning process included ongoing engagement with the public and community stakeholders. The engagement goals were to ensure that the process was inclusive and transparent and that all issues, concerns, and aspirations were consistently collected, understood, and considered. The following means were used to communicate with and engage the public about the Comprehensive Plan.

Website

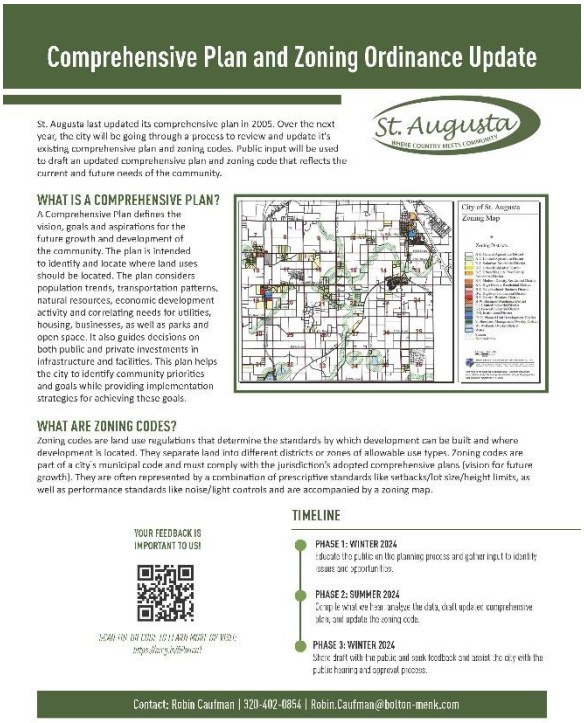
We created a project website that the city added to its home page, encouraging residents, townships, and other stakeholders to link the site to their social media and promote it through their communications. The website included general project information, a survey, and public meeting details. The site was updated on critical points, such as posting meeting materials after the public meetings.

Social Media

The city does not have an active social media presence, but several local community pages promoted the project and engagement opportunities on their page.

Print Materials

A project fact sheet with general information about the project, the process, and how to get involved was created. The fact sheet was turned into a poster with a QR code link to the project website, which was put up in the city office. Table tents were made to inform patrons of the city's restaurants about the project. A comment card was created and made available for people to handwrite comments for public meetings. All materials included the project URL and a QR code to direct people to the website for more information.


Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance Update

St. Augusta last updated its comprehensive plan in 2005. Over the next year, the city will be going through a process to review and update it's existing comprehensive plan and zoning codes. Public input will be used to draft an updated comprehensive plan and zoning code that reflects the current and future needs of the community.

St. Augusta
WHERE COUNTRY MEETS COMMUNITY

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan defines the vision, goals and aspirations for the future growth and development of the community. The plan is intended to identify and locate where land uses should be located. The plan considers population trends, transportation patterns, natural resources, economic development activity and correlating needs for utilities, housing, businesses, as well as parks and open space. It also guides decisions on both public and private investments in infrastructure and facilities. This plan helps the city to identify community priorities and goals while providing implementation strategies for achieving those goals.

City of St. Augusta Zoning Map

WHAT ARE ZONING CODES?

Zoning codes are land use regulations that determine the standards by which development can be built and where development is located. They separate land into different districts or zones of allowable use types. Zoning codes are part of a city's municipal code and must comply with the jurisdiction's adopted comprehensive plans (vision for future growth). They are often represented by a combination of prescriptive standards like setbacks/lot size/height limits, as well as performance standards like noise/light controls and are accompanied by a zoning map.

TIMELINE

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT TO US!

PHASE 1: WINTER 2024
Educate the public on the planning process and gather input to identify issues and opportunities.

PHASE 2: SUMMER 2024
Compile what we have, analyze the data, draft updated comprehensive plan, and update the zoning code.

PHASE 3: WINTER 2024
Share draft with the public and seek feedback and assist the city with the public hearing and approval process.

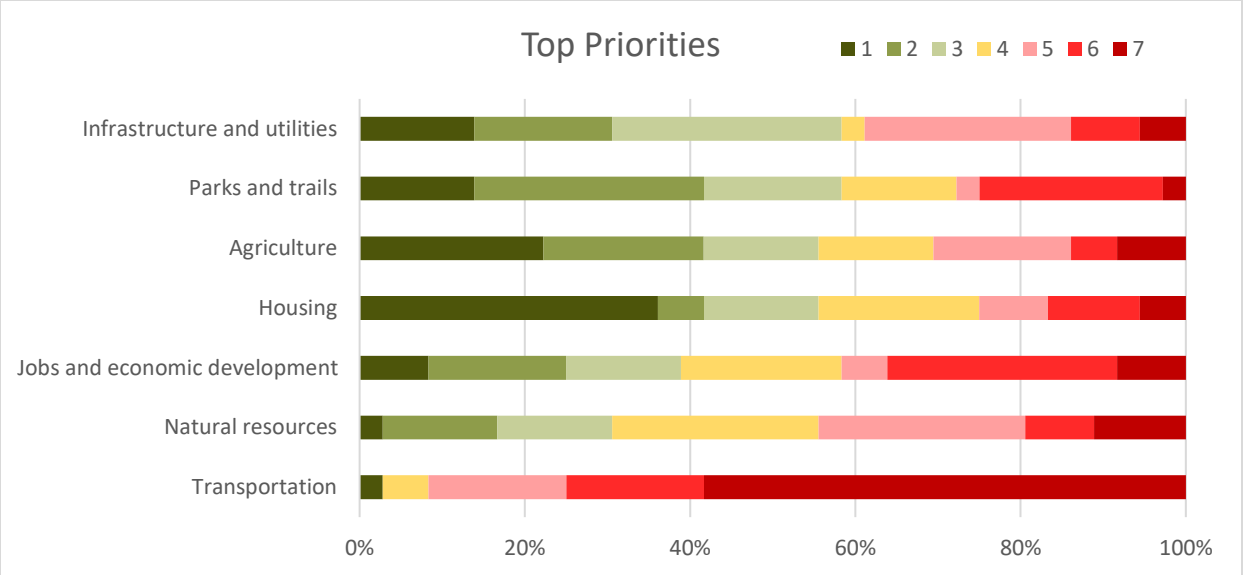
Contact: Robin Caufman | 320-402-0854 | Robin.Caufman@bolton-menk.com

Articles and E-newsletter

Several e-newsletters were written and sent to people who signed up for updates to inform the community of the project's progress. Articles were also sent to those who had signed up for e-mail updates. These articles and newsletters encouraged residents to provide public input.

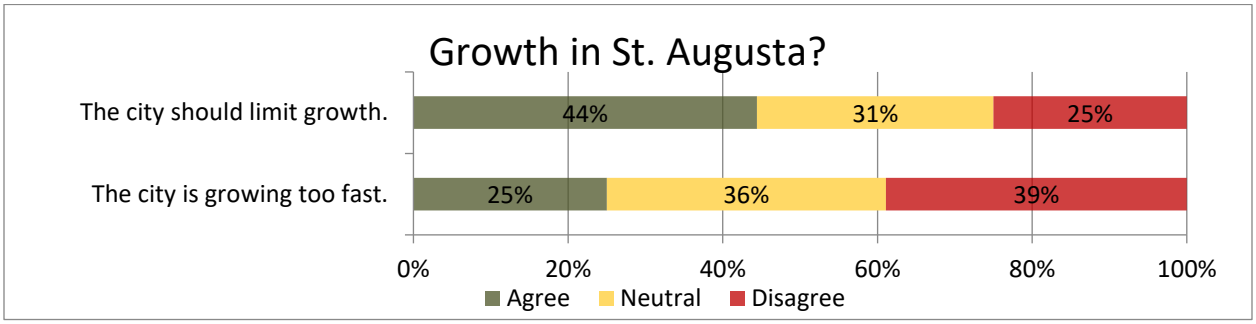
Survey

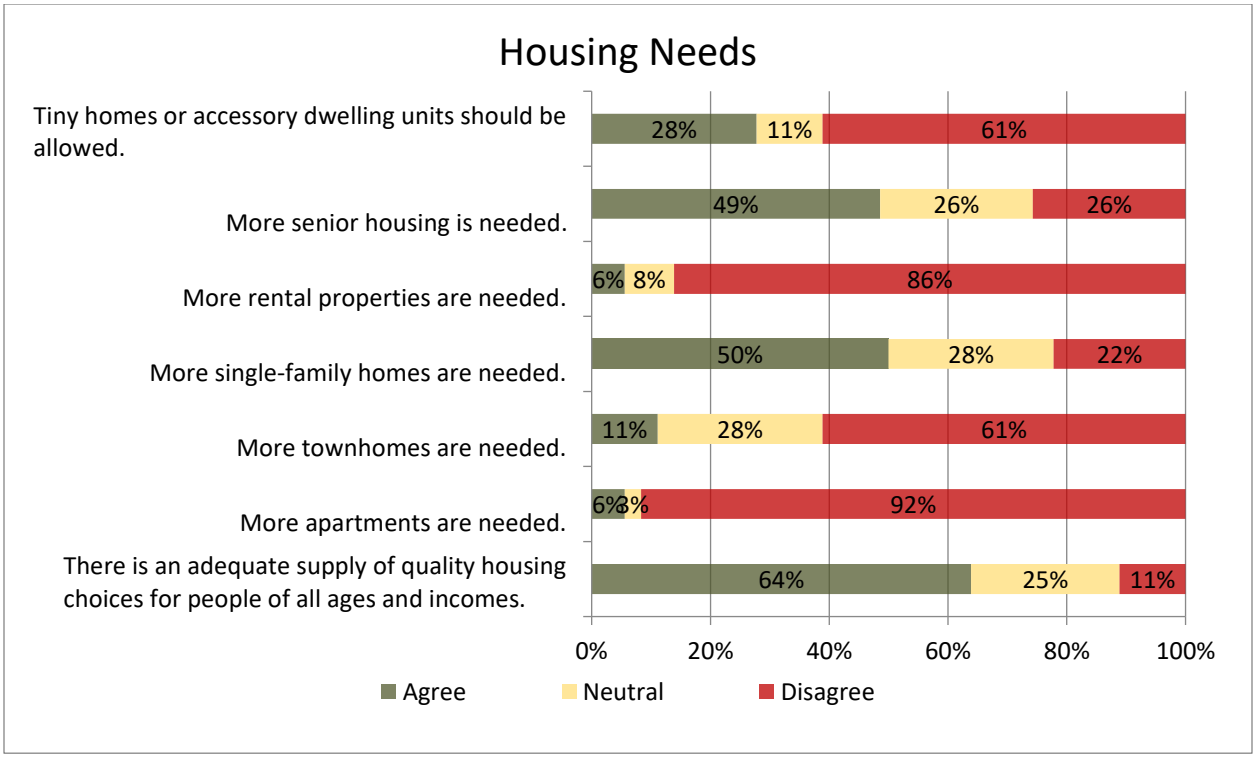
An online survey was set up to gather public input on issues, opportunities, and priorities. The survey was promoted through social media, community newsletters, and QR codes on posters or print materials. During this first phase of engagement, 40 people took the survey. The following is an analysis of what we heard from survey respondents.



Respondents were asked to prioritize seven issues from highest (1) to lowest (7). The highest priority issues were infrastructure and utilities, parks and trails, agriculture, and housing, highlighting the need to balance growth and rural character. This was reflected in the open commentary questions in the survey.

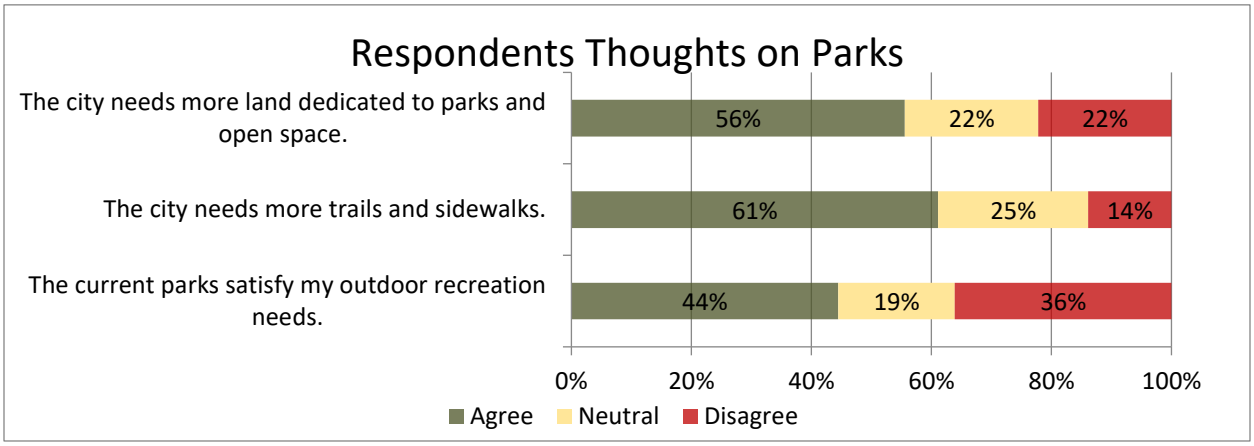
When considering growth, the focus was on the growth rate and whether growth should be limited. The majority of respondents did not think that the city was growing too fast, with 75 percent either neutral or disagreeing. However, 44 percent think that there should be limits to growth.

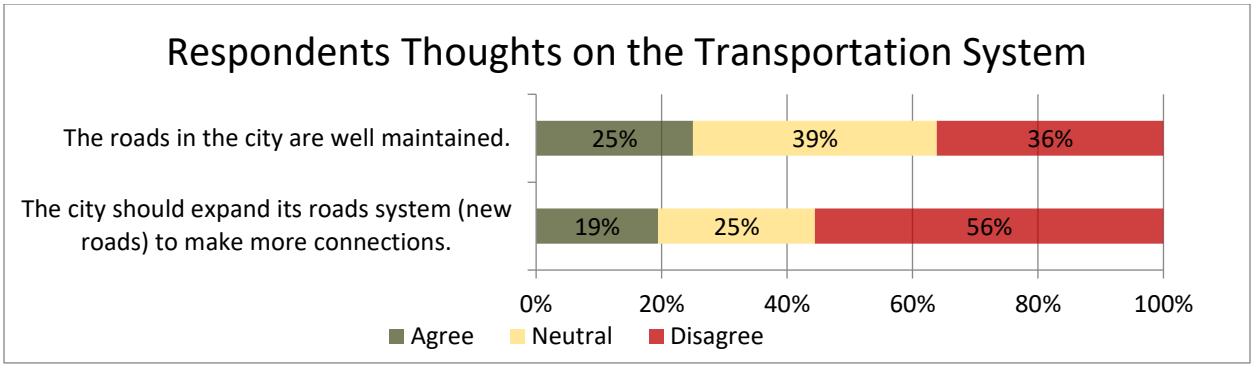




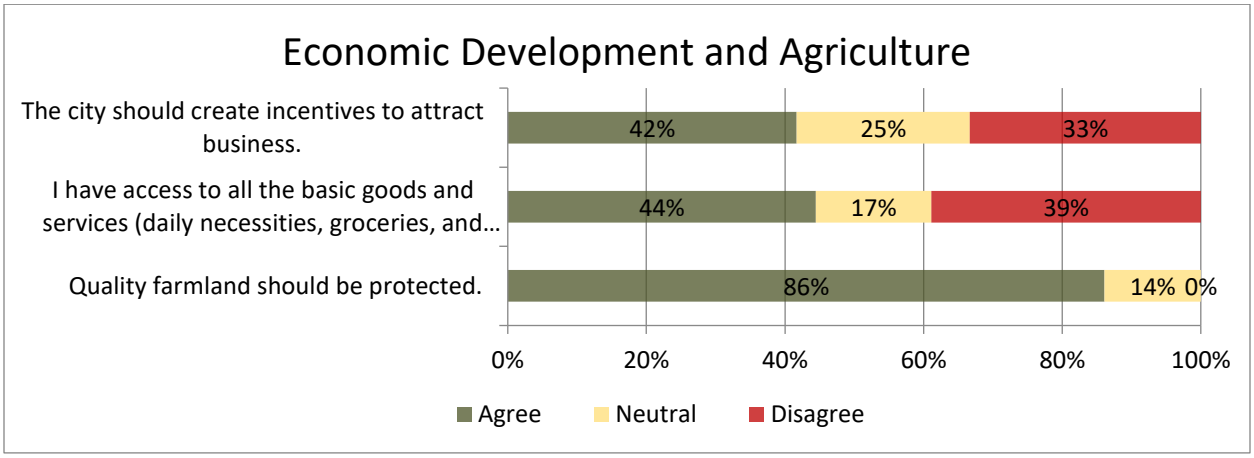
When the questions concerned the city's housing stock, respondents displayed an affinity for single-family housing. Most noted that they believe the community has an adequate housing supply for people of all ages and incomes. The only types of housing where half of the respondents see a need are senior housing and single-family homes.

Responses to questions about park space and recreational opportunities indicate the public's desire for more land dedicated to this purpose and more amenities, such as sidewalks and trails.

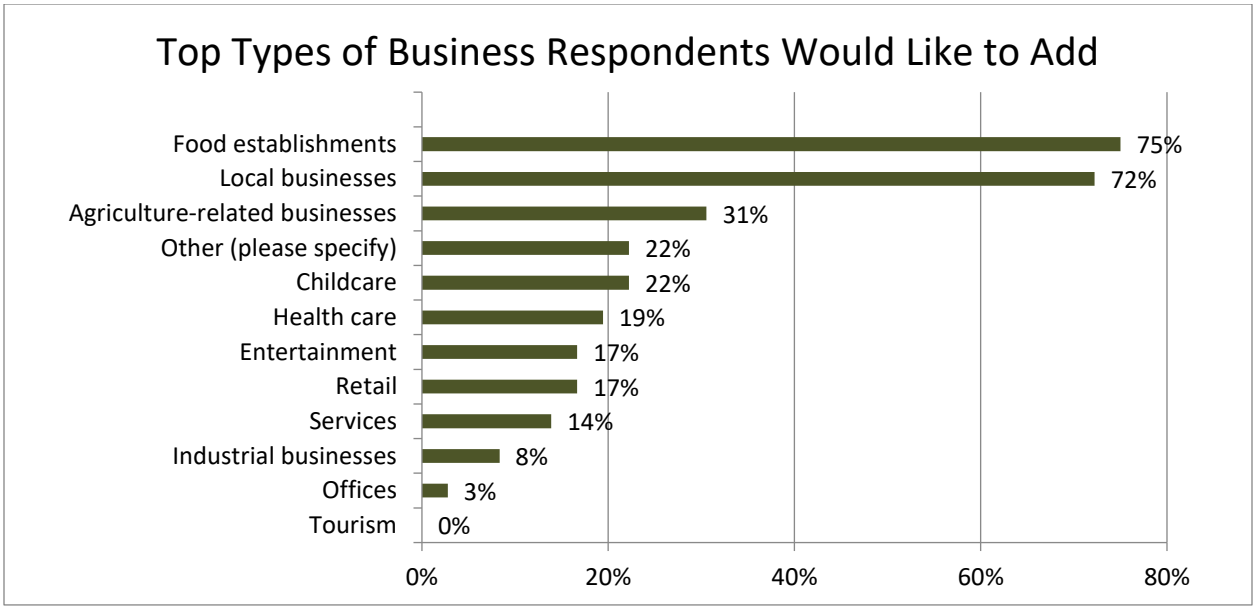




The respondents were generally supportive of the condition of the current transportation system, with 73 percent agreeing or neutral on roads being well maintained. Over half of the respondents indicated that the city should not expand its road network.



When asked about their priorities, the respondents considered agriculture their second highest priority overall, with 86 percent considering farmland in the community should be protected. There is a reverence for the community's agriculture that reflects the city's unifying vision, “where the county meets the community.” Further, the public is split on whether the community needs more commercial activities based on the even split between responses to whether respondents can access all their daily basic goods and services in the community and whether the city should incentivize business.



Respondents desired more food establishments and local businesses to enter the community, with a distant third desire for agricultural businesses. This could indicate an acceptance of agritourism business viability in the community.

Planning Commission/City Council Workshops

In 2024, the planning commissioner and city council held seven joint workshops, which were posted and open to the public, to discuss land use and zoning topics.

- February 26: Kick-off meeting
- March 26: Visioning
- April 22: Goals and policies; land use categories
- June 17: Zoning table and allowed uses
- July 15: Future land use map and zoning district standards
- August 12: Review first drafts, rural residential
- September 16: Review the second draft

Public Review and Comment Period

The draft plan and updated zoning ordinances were posted online on October 1, 2024, and a copy was made available at city hall for people to review.

People could provide comments via an online form, email, or written letters. Comment cards were also available at city hall for people to fill out and leave at the front desk.

On October 28, 2024, at 6 p.m., the city held a public meeting at the St. Augusta American Legion to allow the public to review the draft plan and updated zoning code and provide comments. To review public comments on the plan following the release of a draft to the public.

The public comment period closed on October 31, 2024; one comment was received. The main comments at the public hearing focused on the 4 for 40 density proposed along the path of future water and sewer infrastructure for the city.

2.0 Community Profile

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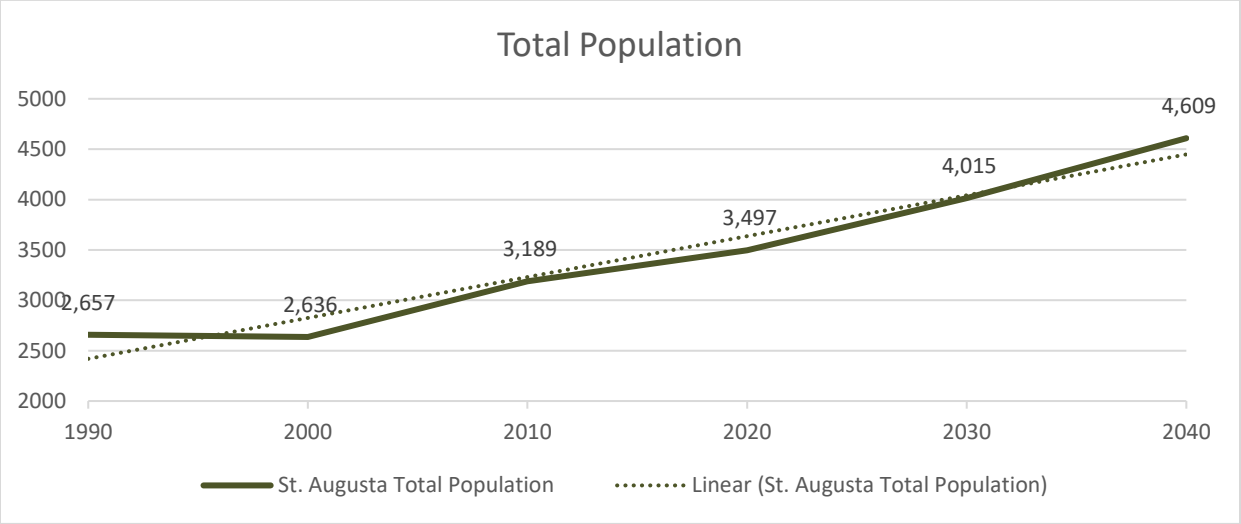
2.1 History of the City of St. Augusta

Settled in 1854 by German Catholics, St. Augusta was named after the holy card for St. Augustine, found near the site of the future parish church. Organized as a township from 1859 until 2000, two hamlets formed in the territory - Luxemburg and St. Augusta. Experiencing rapid growth after the 1970s, the area became an incorporated city to avoid annexation by its neighbor, St. Cloud, MN. Since then, the city has continued to flourish with business growth along Minnesota State Highway 15, Interstate Highway 94/US Highway 52, and County Road 75, which all run through the northeastern part of the city.
St. Augusta is a small, slowly growing community directly south of St. Cloud in central Minnesota. While the city has grown over the past five decades, its demographic makeup has changed with the increase in the number of households and the decrease in the average household size.

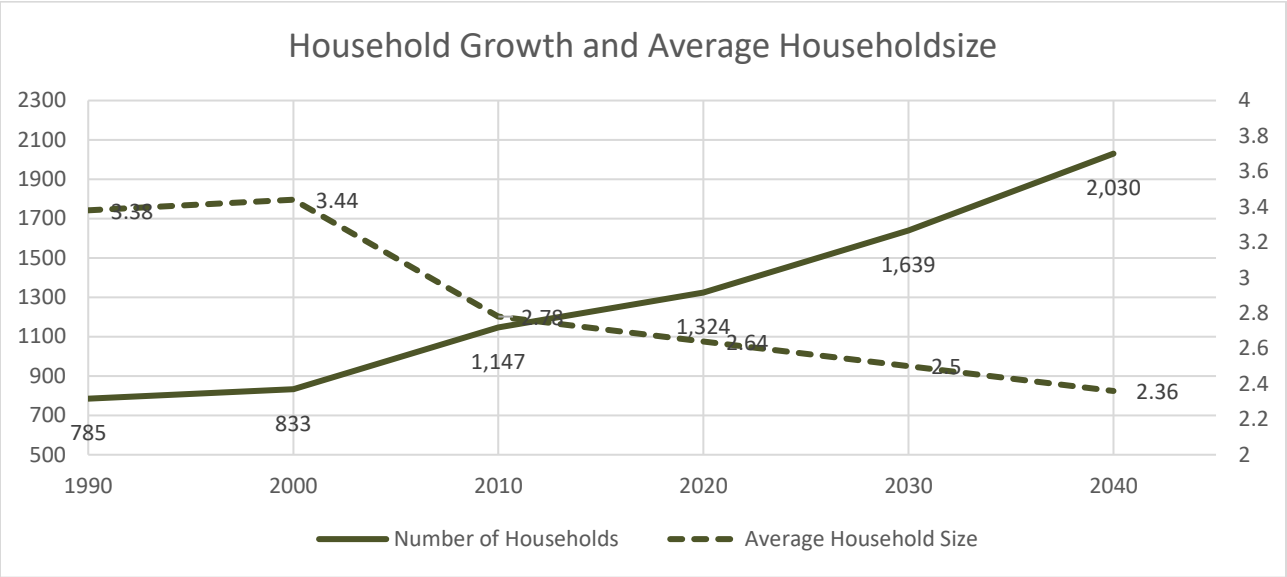
2.2 Population

The City of St. Augusta is the 192nd largest city in Minnesota, with a population of 3,657 residents in 2023.



The population growth rate for the City of St. Augusta is 1.39 percent. This rate, compounded annually, was used to project the city's 2030 and 2040 populations. The city is growing faster than Stearns County, which has a 1.3 percent annual growth rate.

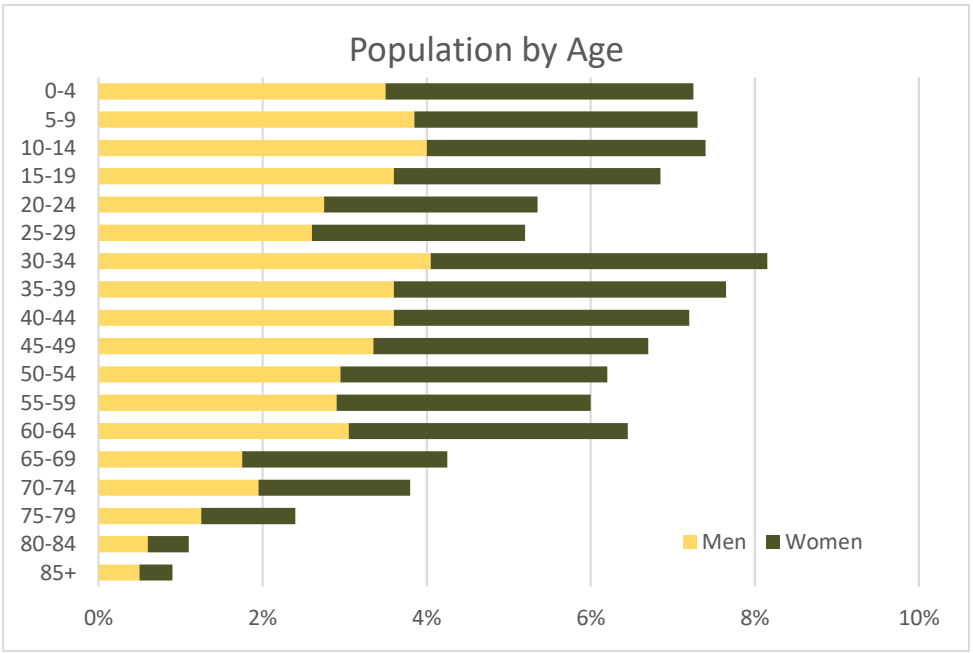
2.3 Households



St. Augusta has an average household size of 2.61 persons per household. The city is experiencing what many rural communities face as the size of households decreases with individuals choosing to have smaller families. Conversely, the number of households in the community is growing at almost the opposite rate; based on these projections, the number of households will grow between now and 2040 to meet the demand in St. Augusta, with a projected 2,030 households in the community by 2040.

2.4 Age

The population's median age is 36.7, approximately three years below Minnesota's median age of 39. The chart with the population breakdown by age shows that young families with school-age children dominate the city. The drop in the number of residents in their 20s suggests that young adults leave their childhood homes and cannot find suitable or affordable housing for young adults.

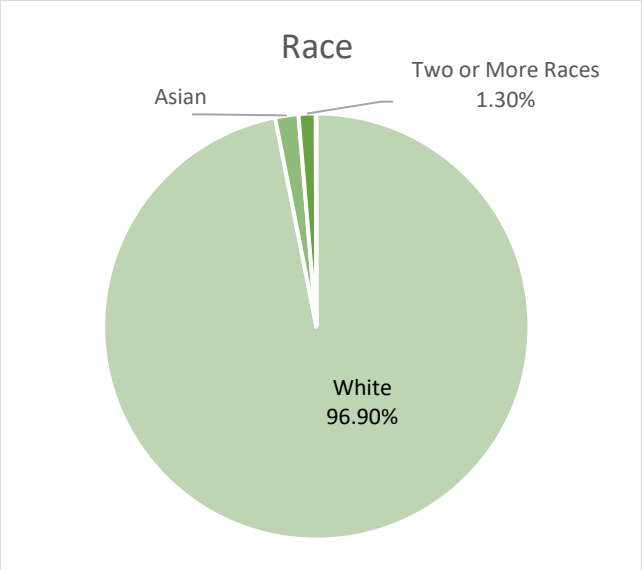


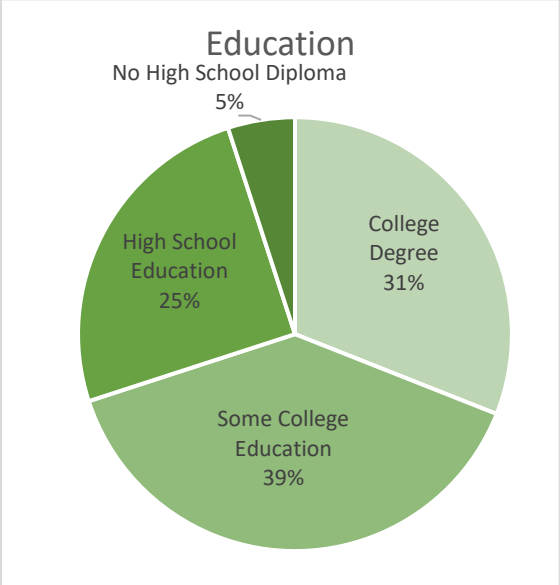
2.5 Race and Ethnicity

The city's population is diversifying, although it is still predominantly white.

2.6 Education

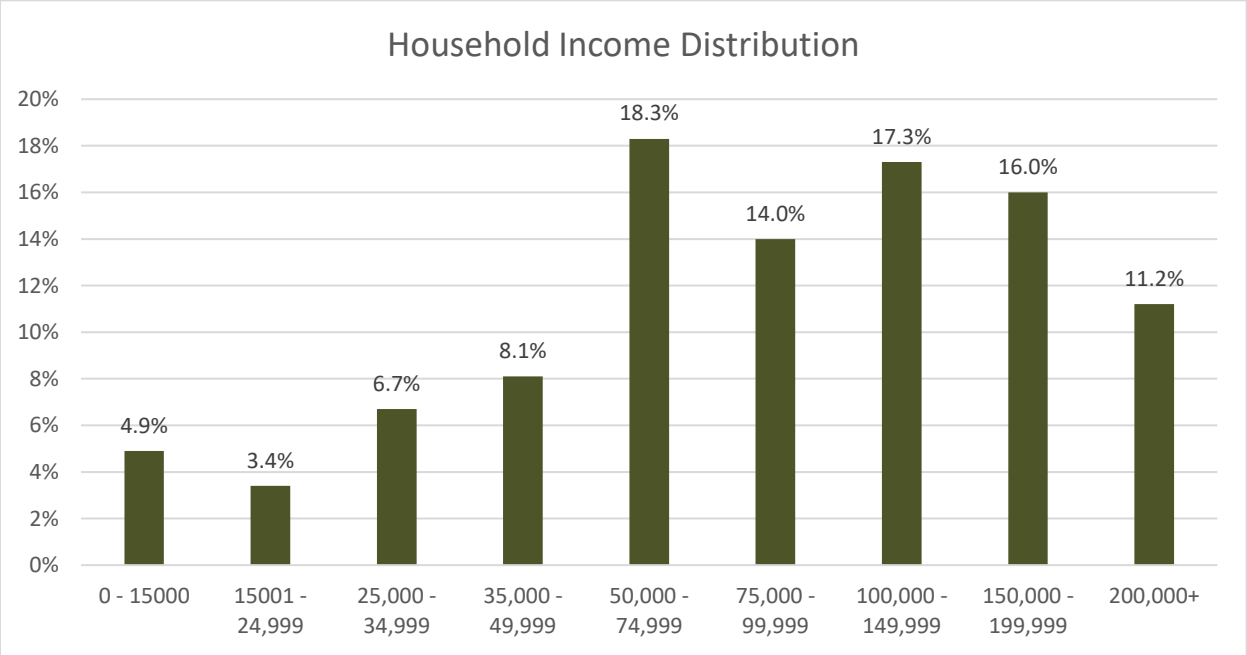
Residents of St. Augusta tend to have higher levels of education, with 70% having some college experience.





2.7 Income and Wealth

The median household income is approximately $88,531, and the median home value is $373,282. The median contract rent is $925/month. However, the city has poverty, with 6% of households below the federal poverty line and 5% utilizing food stamp programming.



3.0 Natural Resources

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The topography within St. Augusta is primarily flat, with some areas of rolling hills. A ridge of steep slopes runs north-south through the city's central area, creating a physical barrier that divides the city. All soils found within St. Augusta are considered suitable for farming purposes. The prevalence of these soils indicates that agricultural activity will remain important in the region. Numerous wetlands, swales, and natural ponding areas exist throughout St. Augusta. These areas are valuable in flood water retention, groundwater 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.

3.1 Goals

Goal 1: Protect the city’s surface and groundwater resources.

- Policy 1: Protect areas of rapidly permeating soils from potential groundwater contamination due to failing septic systems.
- Policy 2: Protect the city's wetlands, lakes, and shoreland areas as valuable recreational and visual amenities.

Goal 2: Preserve the city’s environmentally sensitive areas and unique physical features, including steep slopes, floodplains, forests, and native vegetation.

- Policy 1: Manage stormwater systems to minimize flooding and erosion, preserving and protecting natural wetlands and drainage ways. This will ensure adequate stormwater management with minimal construction of storm sewer pipes.
- Policy 2: Require all new developments to address all on-site stormwater needs and requirements so that no adverse impacts occur in the hydrologic system.

Goal 3: Retain high-quality agricultural land for agricultural purposes.

- Policy 1: Require agricultural land use to observe conservation practices to prevent erosion and preserve natural resources.
- Policy 2: Minimize residential development on land designated for agricultural purposes to maintain rural character and avoid conflicts between land uses.

3.2 Lakes and Rivers

Three streams flow and converge in St. Augusta: Robinson Hill Creek and Luxemburg Creek, each of which meets Johnson Creek, a tributary of the Mississippi River. All three streams are known to be stocked with or support Brown Trout populations. While the Mississippi River flows near the city's eastern border through the City of St. Cloud, the city does not have direct access.

Seven small lakes border or are inside St. Augusta, totaling only .15 square miles of the city's area. The largest lakes are Beaver and Mund, both in the city's southern region on the border with the neighboring jurisdictions of Fairhaven Township. These lakes are both "Recreational Development" lakes as designated by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. In addition to Mund and Beaver, five unnamed waterbodies are designated as "Natural Environment" lakes in the community.

St. Augusta has adopted the Shoreland Management Overlay District Ordinance under the authorization and policies contained in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103A, B, E, F, G, and I, Minnesota Regulations, and the planning and zoning enabling legislation in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 462. The goal is to reduce the effects of overcrowding, prevent water pollution, provide ample space on lots for sanitary facilities, minimize flood damages, maintain property values, and maintain natural characteristics of shorelands and adjacent water areas by controlling lot sizes, placement of structures on lots, and alteration of shoreland areas.

3.3 Wetlands and Drainage Areas

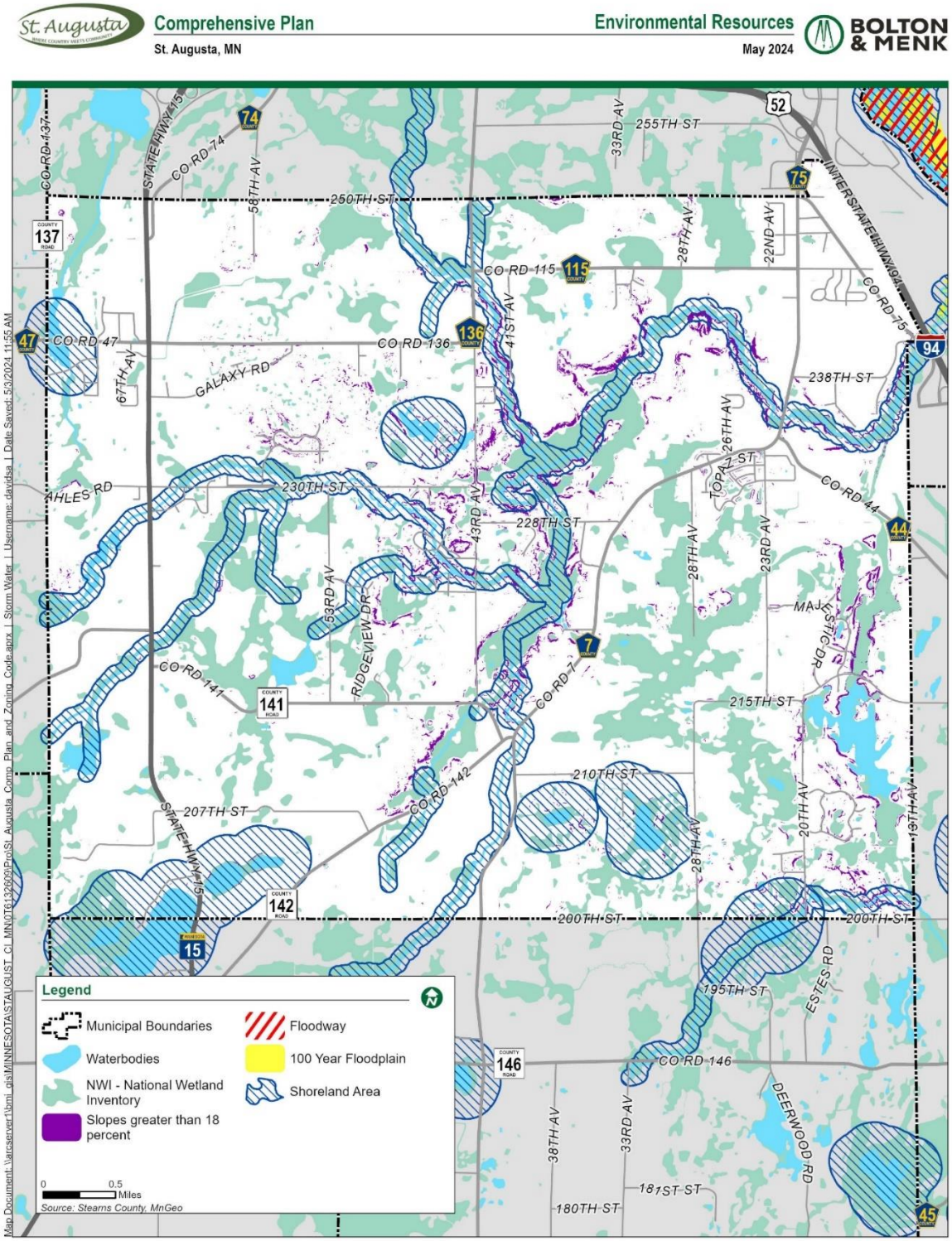
Numerous wetlands, swales, and natural ponding areas exist throughout the city, as shown on the following map. These areas are valuable for their role in groundwater recharge, nutrient assimilation, livestock watering, and aesthetics. In addition, they provide a natural habitat for waterfowl and other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

Both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources protect and regulate the use and alteration of wetland/drainage areas. The waters under each organization's jurisdiction vary according to 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. In contrast, the DNR determines the locations of wetlands by the Ordinary High Water Level (OHWL). The OHWL is the elevation delineating the highest water level maintained for a sufficient period 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 sometimes dry and have been tilled for farming purposes. 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 four types of wetlands in St. Augusta include:

1. Freshwater Emergent Wetland: Areas where plant life grows, emerging from a freshwater body.
2. Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland: Areas upland from the Freshwater Emergent Wetlands covered in trees and shrubbery while still within reach of flooding and the high-water line of a water body.
3. Freshwater Ponds: Areas covered in shallow water, which prevents the formation of deeper water ecosystems.
4. Lakes: Areas covered in water and deep enough to produce an environment suitable for underwater ecosystems.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) completed flood studies of waterways within the city; no area of St. Augusta is designated as a floodplain by FEMA.



3.4 Topography

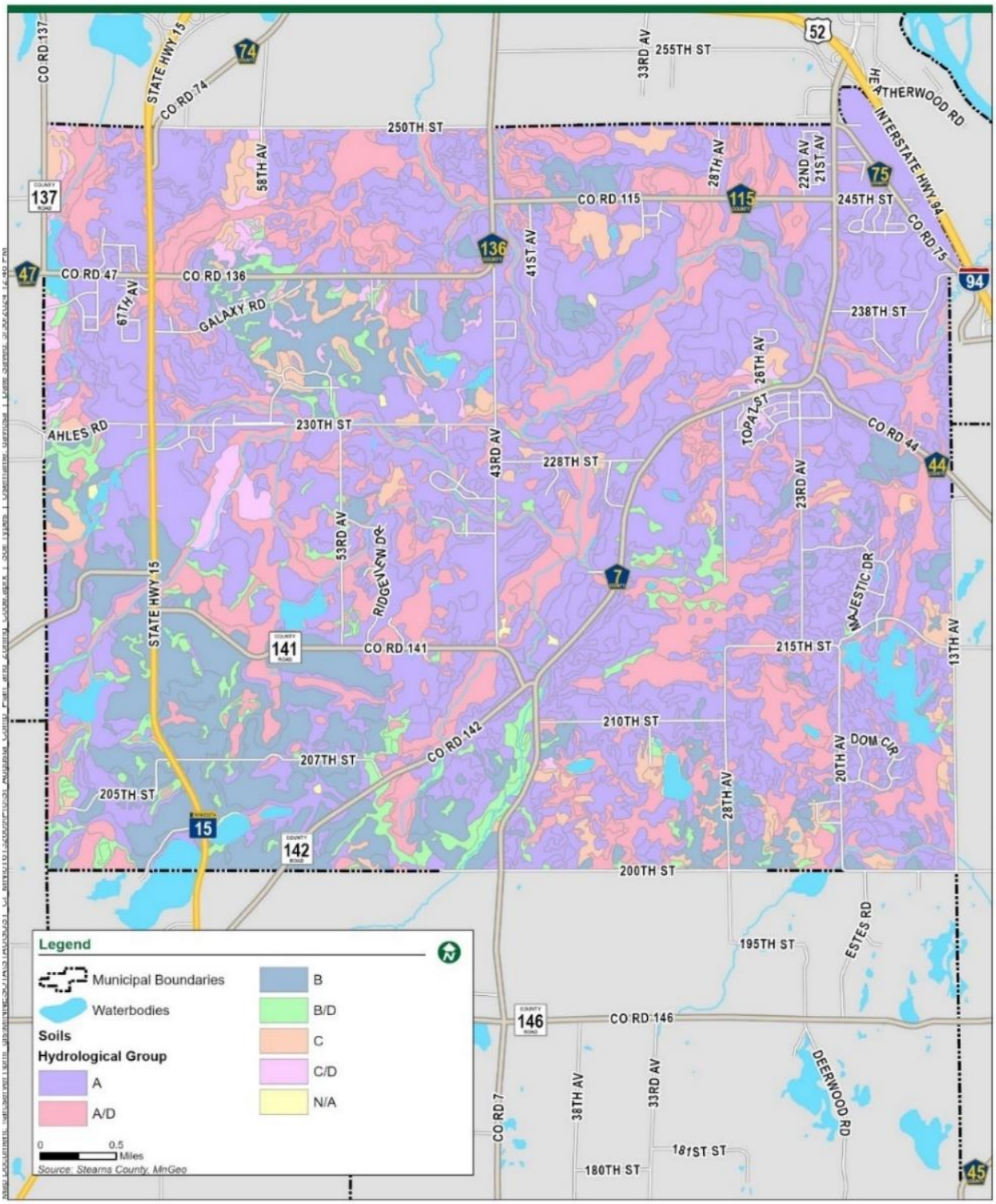
The topography within St. Augusta is flat to rolling hills, with the eastern portion of the community being nearly level and gently increasing in elevation to the city's western boundary. A high point exists northeast of Luxemburg hamlet, creating a land divide in this region. This land divide may complicate extending municipal water and sewer utilities between the existing growth centers. Throughout the community, slopes over 18% can be found along the streams in the center of St. Augusta, providing some of the area's natural beauty.

3.5 Soil

Part of what has made St. Augusta a haven for agriculture for the last 170 years is its soil. All soil classifications for soils within the city are considered excellent for farming corn, small grains, and pastureland for livestock. The community's desire to retain agricultural activities in St. Augusta, paired with the prevalence of these soil types, indicates that agricultural activities will remain an important land use in the city.

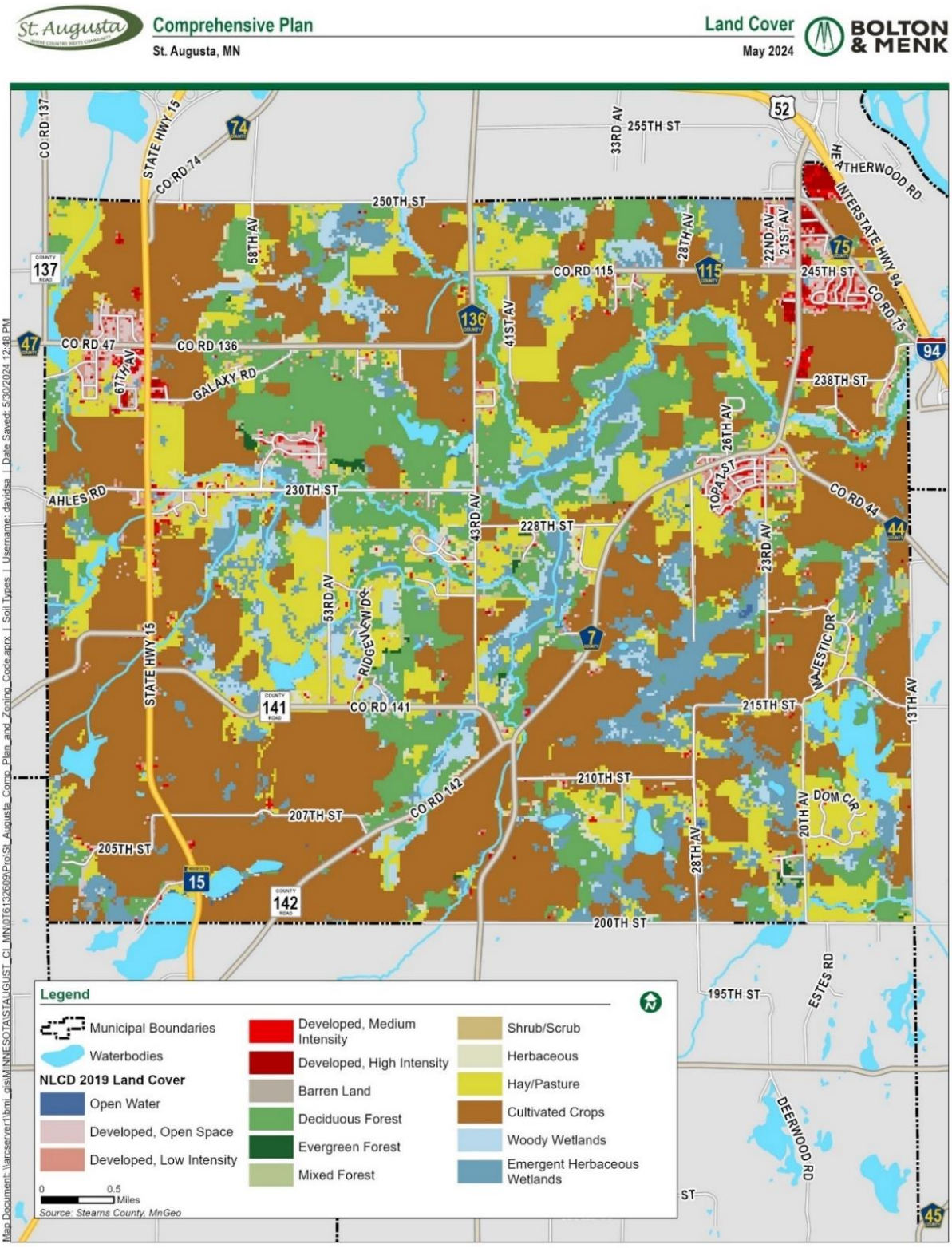
- Group A soils have a high infiltration rate (low runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist mainly of deep, well-drained, excessively drained, or gravelly sands. These soils have a high rate of water transmission.
- Group B soils have a moderate infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of moderately deep or deep, moderately well-drained, or well-drained soils with moderately fine to coarse texture. These soils have a moderate rate of water transmission.
- Group C soils have a slow infiltration rate when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of soils with a layer that impedes the downward movement of water or soils of moderately fine or fine texture. These soils have a slow rate of water transmission.
- Group D soils have a very slow infiltration rate (high runoff potential) when thoroughly wet. These consist chiefly of clays with a high shrink-swell potential, soils with a high water table, soils with a claypan or clay layer at or near the surface, and soils that are shallow over nearly impervious material. These soils have a very slow rate of water transmission.

The map on the following page shows that the predominant soil types are Group A and Group A/D. Group A/D designations suggest that the soils have a high infiltration rate but may not drain quickly because of a high water table. Group A and B soils are ideal for urban development on public sewer and water systems because soil types do not absorb nutrients, which increases the potential for groundwater contamination if there is a high concentration of septic systems. Further, these soils may not be ideal for farming because natural nutrients can leech from the soil, meaning growing crops may require more fertilizer.


CO RD 137
STATE HWY 15
CO RD 74
74
255TH ST
33RD AV
52
HEATHERWOOD RD
INTERSTATE HWY 94
250TH ST
58TH AV
28TH AV
22ND AV
21ST AV
75
137
CO RD 115
115
245TH ST
CO RD 75
136
41ST AV
47
CO RD 47
CO RD 136
67TH AV
GALAXY RD
94
238TH ST
26TH AV
AHLES RD
230TH ST
TOPAZ ST
CO RD 44
43RD AV
228TH ST
44
23RD AV
53RD AV
RIDGEVIEW DR
7
MAJESTIC DR
STATE HWY 15
141
CO RD 141
215TH ST
13TH AV
210TH ST
CO RD 142
DOM CIR
207TH ST
20TH AV
205TH ST
28TH AV
15
142
200TH ST
ESTES RD
195TH ST
Legend
Municipal Boundaries
Waterbodies
Soils
Hydrological Group
A
A/D
B
B/D
C
C/D
N/A
0
0.5
Miles
Source: Stearns County, MnGeo
146
CO RD 146
DEERWOOD RD
CO RD 7
38TH AV
33RD AV
181ST ST
180TH ST
45

3.6 Land Cover

The Land Cover Map below shows that much of the city is hay, pastureland, or cultivated crops. Deciduous forests follow the rivers and streams and the hilly areas of the city.



3.7 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Protecting the city's natural resources is important to the city.

Opportunities

- Retaining the desired rural character requires acting as a steward of the community's environmental resources and preserving the natural qualities that make St. Augusta beautiful.
- Seeking grants to preserve and protect environmental resources.
- Community water bodies provide recreational opportunities and environmental benefits, such as collecting and storing rainwater and snow melt.

Issues

- Overly protective treatment of the city's natural resources could hinder future development when needed to meet the city's needs.
- Aggregate mining provides economic benefits to the city and the region but is aesthetically unattractive, creates noise, air, and visual pollution that negatively impacts nearby residents, and can impact the environment if not properly managed.

Trend 2: Retaining rural character and agricultural activities as the city grows.

Opportunities

- Retaining rural character is one of the community's most important aspects; the environment and wildlife are key to maintaining this aspect of the city's character.
- Agricultural activities are less environmentally intensive and require less public infrastructure than large-scale commercial or industrial development.
- Land no longer suitable for some types of agriculture could be transitioned into public space, agrotourism, or small-scale agricultural purposes.

Issues

- Retaining the rural character and with many rural residential developments on septic systems could impact groundwater quality.
- Balancing economic development with protecting natural resources and maintaining rural character will take thoughtful planning and implementation.
- Agricultural activities can cause environmental degradation; farmers and the city have incentives to continue agricultural activities sustainably and environmentally friendly.

4.0 Land Use

4.0 Land Use

The City of St. Augusta's former comprehensive plan and 2002 zoning codes had 15 districts; however, the most prevalent use is agricultural land. Residential developments are along key transportation corridors such as County Road 75 and State Highway 15. These are where the traditional hamlets of St. Augusta and Luxemburg formed. St. Augusta's northeastern corner, near I-94, includes industrial, warehouse, and commercial uses and higher-density housing options.

A thoughtful land use plan and regulations foster effective, compatible, and efficient development that serves the public interest. This chapter describes the existing land use as the starting point of the planning process. It establishes the Future Land Use Map for geographic areas under St. Augusta's jurisdiction, providing a blueprint for orderly growth within the city and the desired developmental character. Careful attention to the existing uses while determining where to grow next in St. Augusta will allow the city to manifest its vision for the future physically.

4.1 Land Use Versus Zoning

The St. Augusta Comprehensive Plan sets the city's goals and objectives. These goals are accomplished through the revision, implementation, and enforcement of the zoning and subdivision ordinances administered by city staff, the planning commission, and the city council.

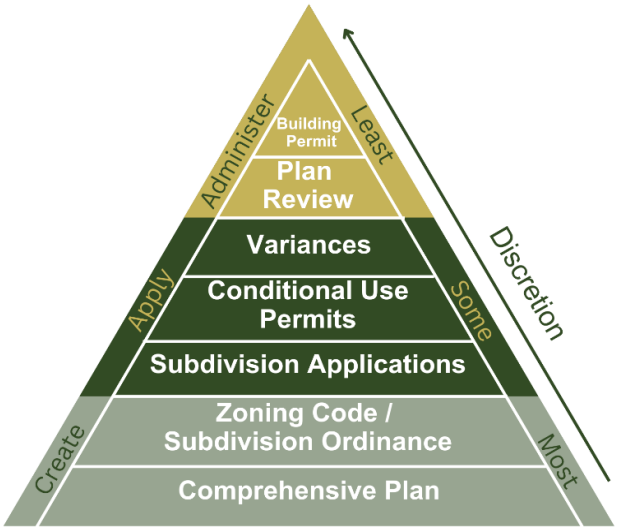


Figure 1 Hierarchy of Land Use Decisions

Future land use categories are general designations based on general functions, such as agriculture, public, residential, commercial, industrial, and public/institutional. Land use designation sets the vision for what development or use is expected for each parcel.

Zoning regulates the specific type and intensity of use within land use categories. The Zoning Map shows where specific land uses are permitted or prohibited, and the codes define development standards such as the types of buildings allowed, their size, heights, placement within a parcel, and the intensity or density of development.

4.2 Goals

Goal 1: Maintain desirable community character, public health and safety, and economic vitality by ensuring that development is premium quality and blends well with the community's natural, rural, and suburban makeup.

- Policy 1: Encourage a creative approach (as opposed to "traditional" subdivision design) to land use and related development.

- Policy 2: Plan for orderly and efficient growth that preserves natural resources and allows continued cultivation on productive agricultural lands.

Goal 2: Plan for growth and economic development on a phased basis, providing a logical extension of urban and public services based on infrastructure capacity.

- Policy 1: Plan land use development not to isolate or create land-locked parcels or neighborhoods; require that all public streets can access development.
- Policy 2: Restrict new development and expansion of existing uses immediately adjacent to drainage ways, wetlands, shorelands, floodplains, and other natural features that perform critical environmental functions in their natural state.
- Policy 3: Cluster-compatible uses and activities in functional and walkable neighborhoods.

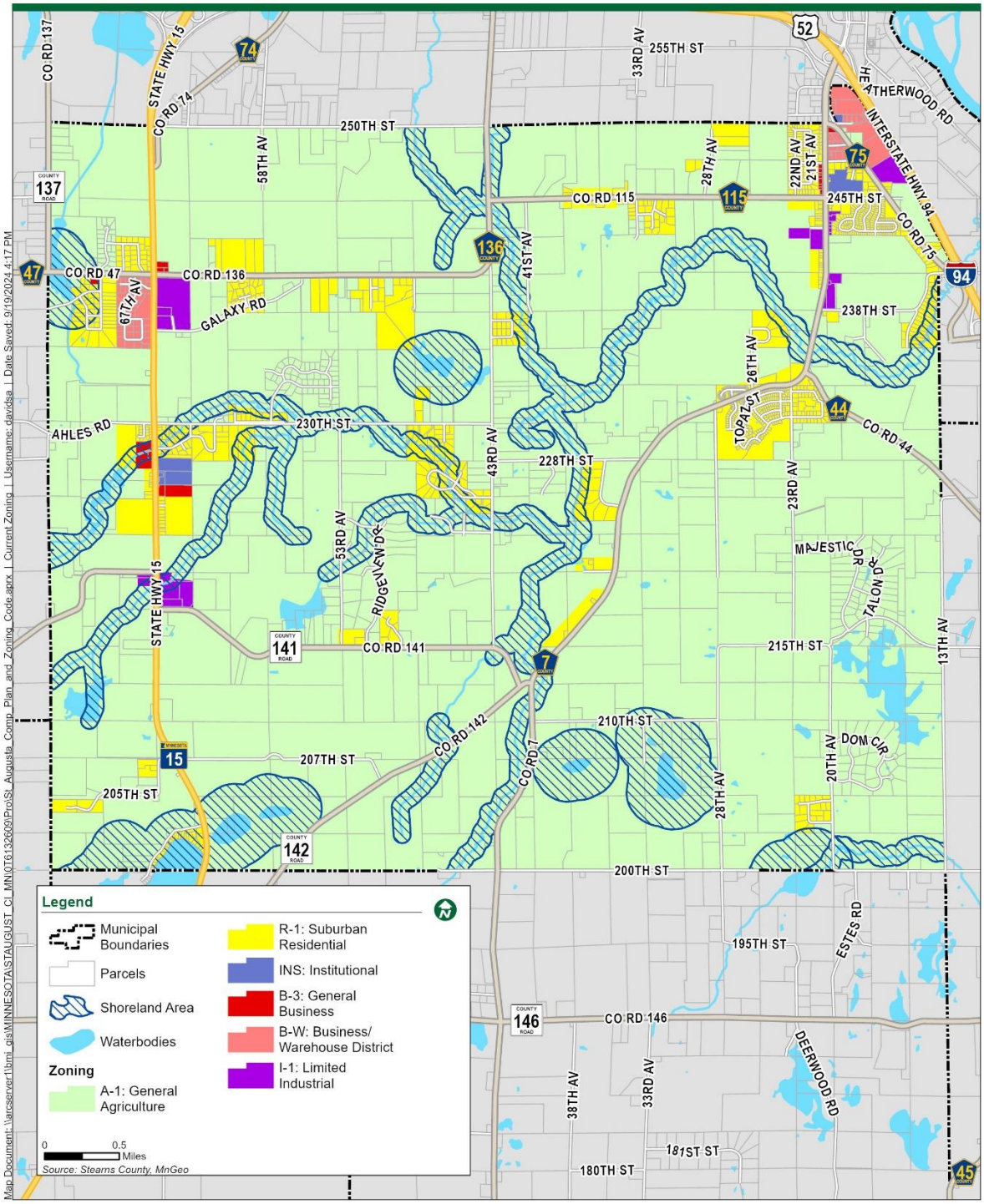
Goal 3: Retain productive agricultural lands for agricultural uses and discourage small-scale, non-farm subdivisions in productive agricultural regions.

- Policy 1: Minimize impacts of development and agricultural operations on each other.
- Policy 2: Regulate the subdivision of farmsteads and small parcels to not create future problems with land division or extension of services (streets and utilities).

4.3 Current Zoning

The 2002 comprehensive plan and associated zoning code included over a dozen districts. With this comprehensive plan update and subsequent zoning code update, the city is simplifying its land use categories and zoning districts. Before updating the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances, the city had a dozen zoning categories, but only six were being used.

- A-1 General Agriculture
- R-1 Suburban Residential
- INS Institutional
- B-3 General Business
- B-W Business/Warehouse
- I-1 Limited Industrial



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4.4 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Balancing growth with retaining community character.

Opportunities

- Combining rural community character into development through aesthetic standards that would allow development to retain the visual impression of the community while pursuing new uses could spur development.
- Pursuing redevelopment opportunities could increase the versatility of land used while retaining the surrounding area's character.
- Using natural barriers to growth expansion can reinforce the balance between development and rural character.

Issues

- Balancing protecting rural character and resistance to growth could result in the community missing opportunities for economic development and increasing its tax base.
- Community character and preferences may change as the population ages and core generations shift; planning only for current needs and tastes may constrain the community's ability to meet future needs.
- Constraining growth and development could increase the tax burden on existing properties, as rates increase with time and inflation; allowing growth provides more tax base to distribute the costs across.

Trend 2: Planning for development and land uses that are orderly and efficient.

Opportunities

- Taking a long-term approach allows the city to locate and stage future development based on natural features and efficiency in extending infrastructure instead of taking a reactionary or haphazard approach.

Issues

- The wastewater, water supply, and transportation infrastructure are coming from different directions, which makes it difficult to plan and stage growth so that all networks can be extended as areas are developed.

Trend 3: Mismatch between areas primed for commercial and industrial growth and areas with infrastructure.

Opportunities

- The city has good access through federal and state transportation investments in I-94 and Highway 15, providing economic development opportunities.

Issues

- The Highway 15 corridor currently lacks access to wastewater and water supply infrastructure, which prevents it from developing at its highest and best business use based on good transportation access. This is suited to the land uses designated for development.
- Residents on the city's west side do not have close access to goods and services.

- The city well site in the southern part of the city will make it expensive to extend the water mains to reach areas developing along Highway 15 and current development in the north and east parts of the city.

4.5 Future Land Use

The city is simplifying its future land use categories to include the following:

- **Agricultural**: The Agricultural land use category exists to preserve, promote, maintain, and enhance land use for commercial agricultural and related purposes in St. Augusta. This land use category prevents scattered urbanization, allows for agricultural activities and related uses, and preserves natural resource areas. These areas are not planned for public infrastructure in the foreseeable future. Due to their lower density of development and population, they should require a minimum level of public services to support health, safety, and welfare.

- **Rural Residential:** Rural Residential allows very low-density, large-lot residential development in areas not planned to be served by public wastewater and water supply infrastructure. This land use classification supports rural character, provides housing options, and maintains natural resources.

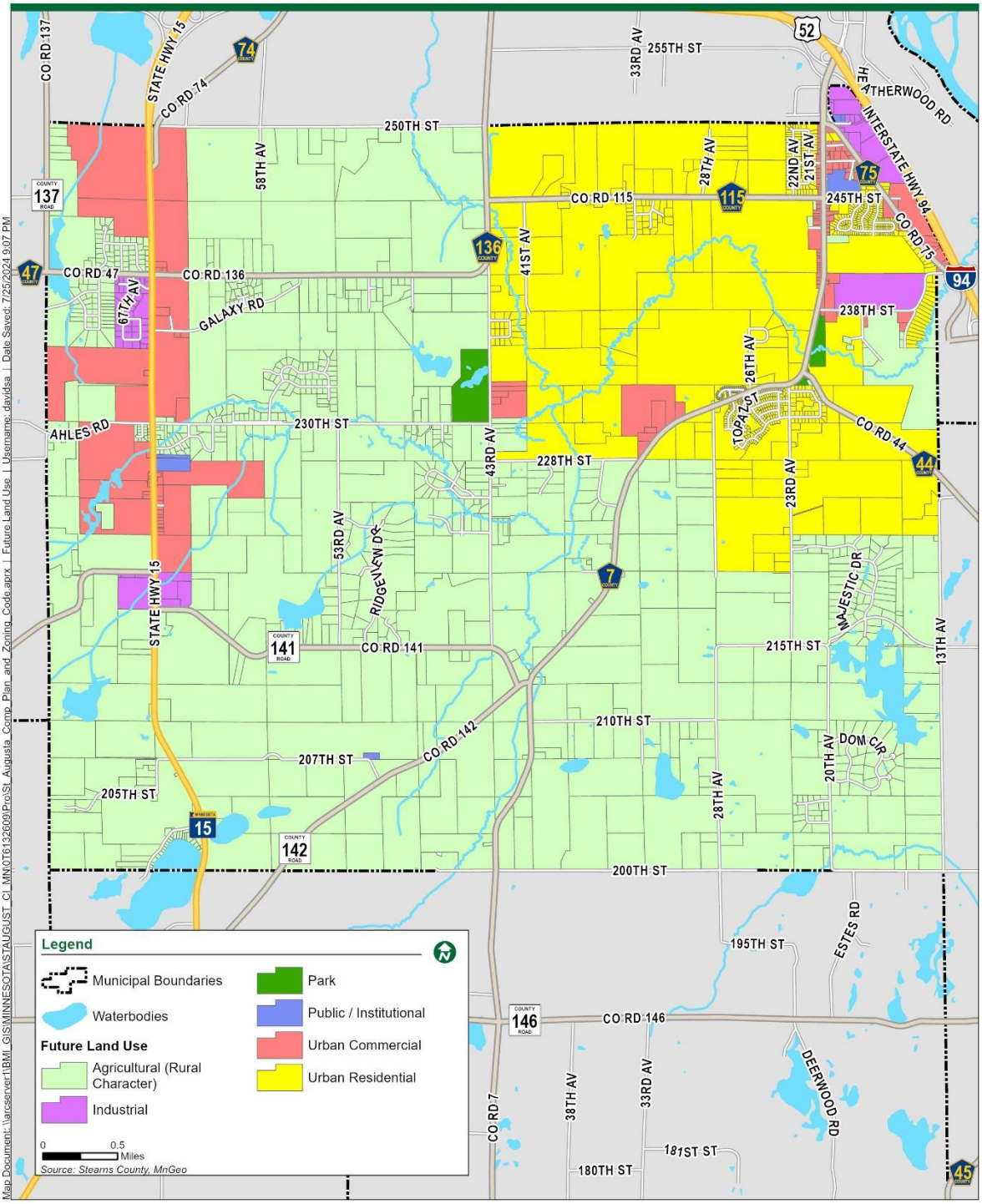
- **Urban Residential**: Urban Residential allows residential development in areas served by public infrastructure, including water, wastewater, and roadways. Two correlated residential zoning districts allow for a range of housing types and densities to meet the needs of a growing community, including single-family homes, twin homes, and townhomes.

- **Commercial**: The Commercial land use category aims to establish neighborhood centers along transportation corridors that provide convenient access to jobs, goods, and services. This land use category also allows for multifamily housing integrated into a mixed-use development. Commercial development is contingent on the availability of water and wastewater services to ensure a density and intensity of use that supports job growth and generates a tax base.

- **Industrial**: Industrial land use provides an area for economic development, industrial uses, trucking, and warehousing. The areas are suitable for general industrial activities, have adequate and convenient access to major roads and highways, and provide effective controls for “nuisance” characteristics.

- **Public/Institutional**: Public/Institutional plans for areas that either currently provide a public or institutional use or are planned for future use. These uses often provide services or resources, frequently on a public or non-profit basis, rather than selling goods or services. Examples of public or institutional uses include, but are not limited to, places of worship, schools, libraries, government facilities, or cemeteries. It is intended that uses would be compatible with adjacent developments.

- **Parks**: Parks identify areas currently used for public and recreational areas.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23RD AV
53RD AV
RIDGEVIEW DR
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MAJESTIC DR
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Legend
Municipal Boundaries
Waterbodies
Future Land Use
Agricultural (Rural Character)
Industrial
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Public / Institutional
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The following table breaks down land use categories by acreage and percentage. The map on the next page shows the locations of land uses.

Future Land Use	Acreage	Percent
Agricultural (Rural Character)	12,554	66.9%
Industrial	327	1.7%
Park	93	0.5%
Public / Institutional	49	0.3%
Urban Commercial	1,345	7.2%
Urban Residential	4,010	21.4%
Parks	387	2.1%
Total	**18,767**	**100.%**

4.6 Future Zoning

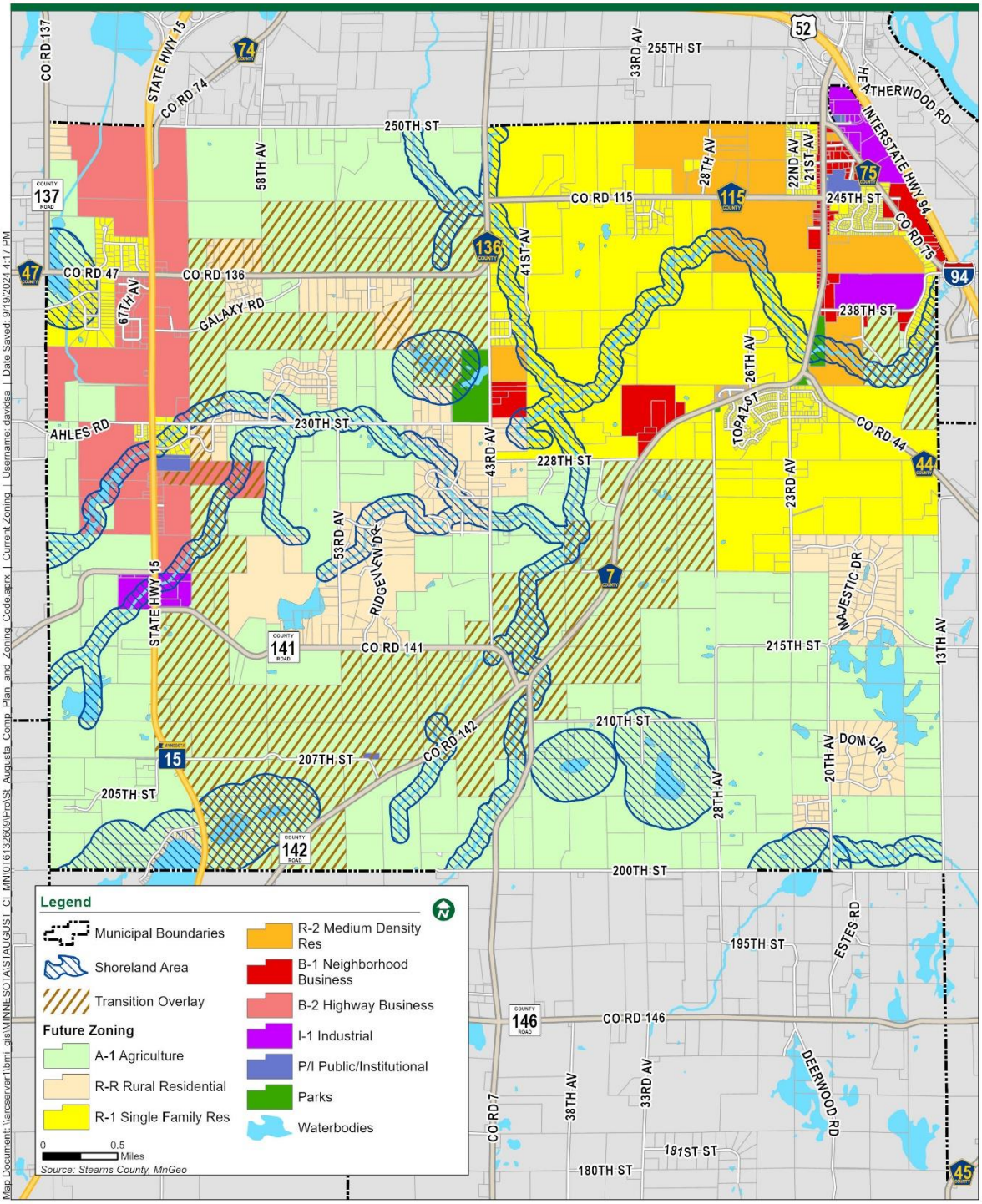
While the Future Land Use Map and its corresponding Zoning Map can indicate an immediate change to the zoning of property in a community, this is not the case for St. Augusta. In this comprehensive planning process, future zoning is being used to signal what the city wants to see as the zoning but is not adopting a new zoning map. Thus, the existing zoning will remain unchanged until a property owner or developer applies for a rezoning amendment. When these requests are made, though, they must be consistent with the city's future land use plans. The 2002 comprehensive plan, updated in 2005, and associated zoning code included over a dozen districts and four overlay districts. In addition to simplifying the land use categories and future land use, the city is simplifying its zoning districts, as shown in the table below:

Zoning	Acreage	Percent
A-1 Agriculture	10,633	56.7%
R-R Rural Residential	1,702	9.1%
R-1 Single Family Res	3,487	18.6%
R-2 Medium Density Res	741	3.9%
B-1 Neighborhood Business	297	1.6%
B-2 Highway Business	1,114	5.9%
I-1 Industrial	262	1.4%
P/I Public/Institutional	49	0.3%
Parks	93	0.5%
Waterbodies	387	2.1%
Total	18,767	100%

The rezoning of all large-lot residential developments into Rural Residential zoned properties will occur as part of adopting a future land use map to ensure proper planning and treatment of the valuable homes in the local housing and redevelopment market.

In addition to the zoning districts listed above, the city has two overlay districts that include additional regulations and standards:

- Shoreland Overlay
- Transitional Overlay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228TH ST
CO RD 44
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23RD AV
53RD AV
RIDGEVIEW DR
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MAJESTIC DR
STATE HWY 15
COUNTY 141 ROAD
CO RD 141
215TH ST
13TH AV
210TH ST
CO RD 142
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207TH ST
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COUNTY 142 ROAD
200TH ST
Legend
Municipal Boundaries
Shoreland Area
Transition Overlay
Future Zoning
A-1 Agriculture
R-R Rural Residential
R-1 Single Family Res
R-2 Medium Density Res
B-1 Neighborhood Business
B-2 Highway Business
I-1 Industrial
P/I Public/Institutional
Parks
Waterbodies
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5.0 Housing

5.0 Housing

Housing is a fundamental human need and pivotal to a community's growth and character. St. Augusta has a younger housing stock spread throughout its jurisdiction. As the community grows, the rising demand for housing conflicts with its rural character, inspiring residents to choose St. Augusta as their home. This plan is meant to balance the need for more housing in St. Augusta with the community's character.

5.1 Goals

Goal 1: Encourage various housing types and options to meet the housing needs of people of various ages, abilities, and income levels.

- Policy 1: Plan land uses that support single-family homes, medium-density townhouses, apartments, and elderly or special-needs housing developments.
- Policy 2: Allow multifamily housing in commercial areas, including apartments for first-floor retail or office space.

Goal 2: Encourage housing styles and development techniques that conserve land and increase efficiency, provided desired densities can be maintained.

- Policy 1: Plan most residential development in areas served by public water and sewers that are easily accessible via existing collector and arterial roads.
- Policy 2: Use cluster development in rural areas where the protection of natural features is essential to the community, enhancing development desirability.

Goal 3: Promote medium and high-density residential development near areas targeted for economic growth to provide ancillary market support without over-concentrating this development in any location.

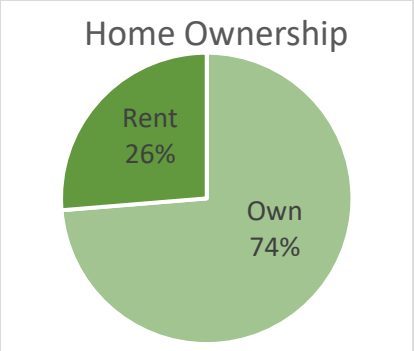
- Policy 1: Encourage design and planning innovations in housing development.
- Policy 2: Avoid over-concentrating medium and high-density development sites in any location.

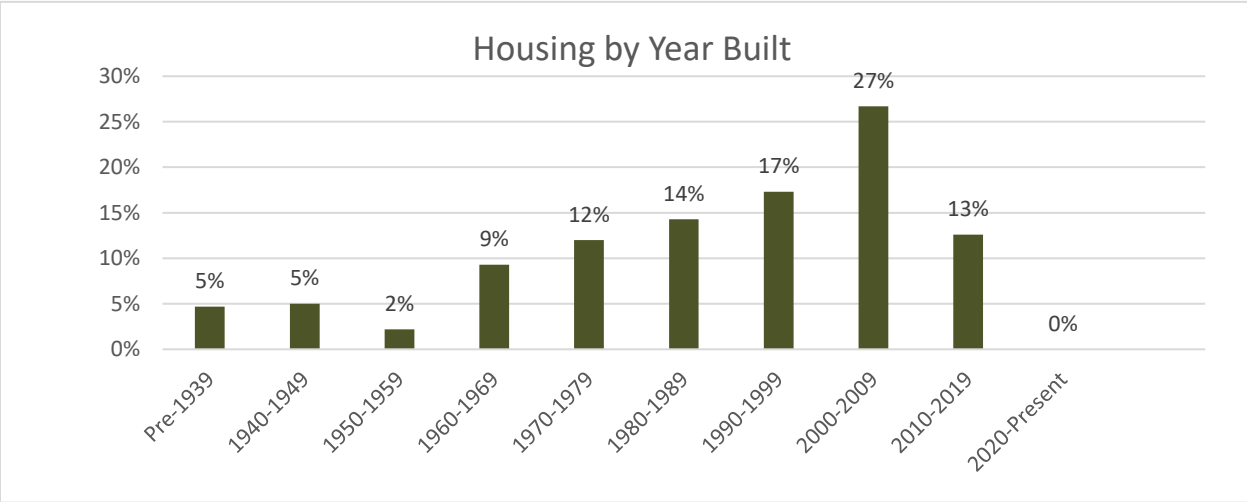
Goal 4: Preserve and maintain existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods.

- Policy 1: Seek opportunities to aid homeowners in maintaining the community's homes built over 40 years ago.

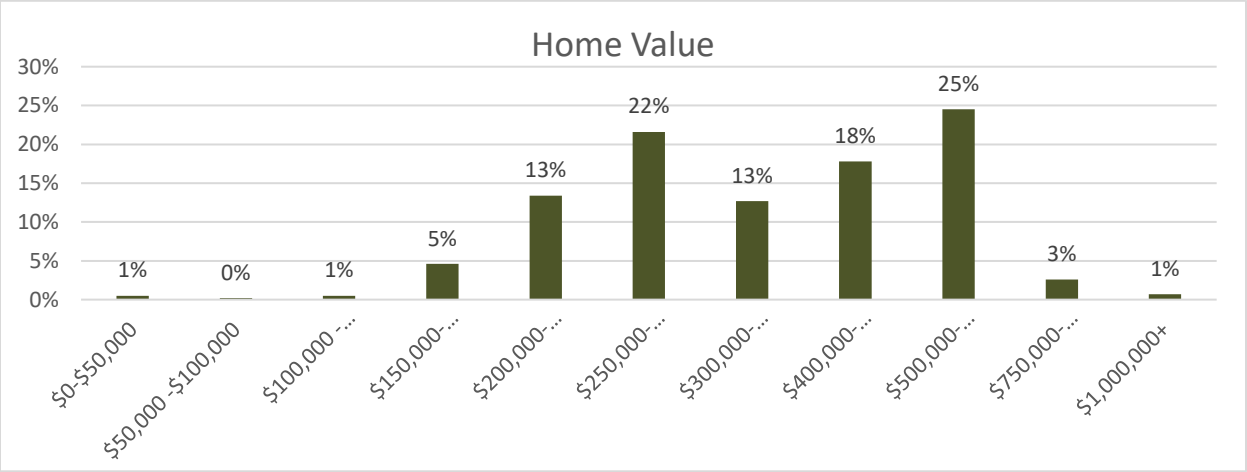
5.2 Existing Housing Conditions

Nearly three-quarters of homes in St. Augusta are owner-occupied. Housing in St. Augusta is relatively new, with over 57 percent constructed after 1990. In 2022, the number of housing units in the city was 1,447. The number of housing units has increased at an average annual rate of 2.3 percent since 2000.





The city's median home value is $373,282, significantly higher than the $280,063 median home in Stearns County. Gross rents average $925.00/month, making residence in the community attainable at the median income. However, the housing market is not an option for the average St. Augusta resident as the median-value home yields a payment for housing costs with related expenses of over 35% of the pretax household median income. This also assumes access to $75,000 in capital for the 20% down payment.



5.3 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: The community has limited senior housing options to accommodate individuals who wish to "age in place" as residents of St. Augusta.

Opportunities

- Senior housing does not always need assisted living or care home facilities. Townhomes, ADA-accessible patio homes, and single-family homes that are single-level with no step-down can meet the basic needs of senior housing.
- Non-seniors can use senior housing if there is no longer a significant future need in the community.

- According to the survey responses, there is more public support for senior housing development than other forms of housing.

Issues

- Development of senior housing facilities generally takes several years due to site selection, financing, permitting, and the construction process. Planning now for senior-style housing would provide housing for the 60—to 64-year-old cohort, which makes up over 6% of the population when needed.
- Given that most senior-style housing consists of townhomes, condominiums, or apartment-style buildings with support facilities, it should be allowed in urban residential or commercial areas with access to water and sewer infrastructure and easy access to services. However, unless intentionally planned for, this may limit the available locations.
- Alternative solutions, such as accessory dwelling units and manufactured housing, would require variances or changes to the current zoning code.

Trend 2: Public emphasis on retaining the community's rural character influences housing discussions.

Opportunities

- Adding design standards aligned with the community's prevailing vision, "Where Country meets Community," may create a more cohesive image for the community.
- Housing development to accommodate most of the growth should be done in areas served by public infrastructure and minimized in agricultural areas with high-quality soil.

Issues

- Survey respondents indicated that they did not want more apartment buildings in St. Augusta, which could exacerbate the community's housing needs in the long term by not providing the housing types and price ranges needed by the community.
- Adopting design standards to preserve rural character to the public could increase build costs.
- Large lot rural residential can have visual impacts that break up the large vistas and open farmland space, reducing the sense of rural character.

Trend 3: Public sentiment that current residents prefer owner-occupied housing instead of adding more rental development in the city.

Opportunities

- High-density development, such as rental townhomes or apartments, gets a higher return on public Infrastructure investments than lower-density housing, which could help get a faster return on water and sewer improvements.

Issues

- Providing rental housing helps retain young people who wish to stay in St. Augusta but move out of their parent's home.
- Rental housing also provides senior housing options for people who want to move out of their existing homes but stay in St. Augusta or move into the city to be close to their adult children who live in single-family homes.

- If demand for rental housing increases but no new rental units are added in the city, it could also increase prices in existing rentals, pushing out existing tenants if they can no longer afford the rent.

Trend 4: There may be interest in new construction methods and designs that could make housing more affordable in agricultural areas but may not be allowed under current standards and ordinances.

Opportunities

- Barn-dominiums or shouses are a way to make large lots of residential living more affordable for prospective residents who want to build but cannot meet their special needs by traditional means.
- The visual appearance of barn-dominium or shouses could be consistent with the rural character aesthetic. They could provide affordable housing options that increase the viability of continuing to protect quality agricultural land.
- Accessory dwelling units such as tiny homes or granny flats allowed in agricultural areas could provide affordable housing for adult children or aging parents without subdividing large tracts of land.

Issues

- Barn-dominiums or shouses are not well suited to construction in urban or suburban environments or may not meet the city's current development standards or community character.
- Barn-dominium or shouses typically won't meet our ordinance, which requires an attached garage to be smaller than the footprint of the main house.

Trend 5: There is community support for more single-family home construction to grow the city.

Opportunities

- Single-family development continues the current trend and allows for incremental growth by adding families.
- New development in the city increases the tax base. Still, it needs to be efficient and orderly not to require a premature extension of utilities or the building of new roads requiring ongoing operations and maintenance.

Issues

- Providing moderate-sized housing makes retaining younger residents easier. It attracts new working families and first-time homeowners by keeping the initial investment low but allowing them to add on or expand.
- Coordinating with the school district is required to ensure that the public school system can accommodate children in nearby schools.
- Requires investment in public parks and trails for active play and recreation.

6.0 Economic Development

6.0 Economic Development

St. Augusta is a rural bedroom community on the edge of the St. Cloud metro area, which provides residents with employment opportunities and access to goods and services. The city is located between the Twin Cities metro and the Fargo-Moorhead area. It has access to several major highways, including I-94, State Highway 15, and County Highway 75, providing economic development opportunities. The city developed from two hamlets that form the core of the two economic districts, St. Augusta and Luxemburg.

6.1 Goals

Goal 1: Ensure safe, convenient, attractive, and accessible commercial development is available to the city's residents.

- Policy 1: Require existing commercial and industrial uses to connect to municipal sanitary sewer and water service when available.
- Policy 2: Provide safe and convenient pedestrian movement within commercial areas to create active, walkable nodes.

Goal 2: Attract, retain, and expand businesses and industry to provide jobs, goods and services, and a diversified tax base.

- Policy 1: Locate commercial development in areas of high accessibility and high visibility.
- Policy 2: Develop commercial areas as cohesive, highly interrelated, and coordinated units with adequate, but not oversupplied, off-street parking and appropriate regulated access points.

Goal 3: Support economic development uses near the County Road 75/7 interchange with Interstate 94 and along Trunk Highway 15.

- Policy 1: Focus commercial development along arterials and collectors for freight and delivery access without impacting residential areas.
- Policy 2: Develop a network of back roads with development on both sides to ensure efficient traffic movement and infrastructure investments.
- Policy 3: Minimize access points onto arterial and collector streets to avoid traffic congestion and minimize accidents.

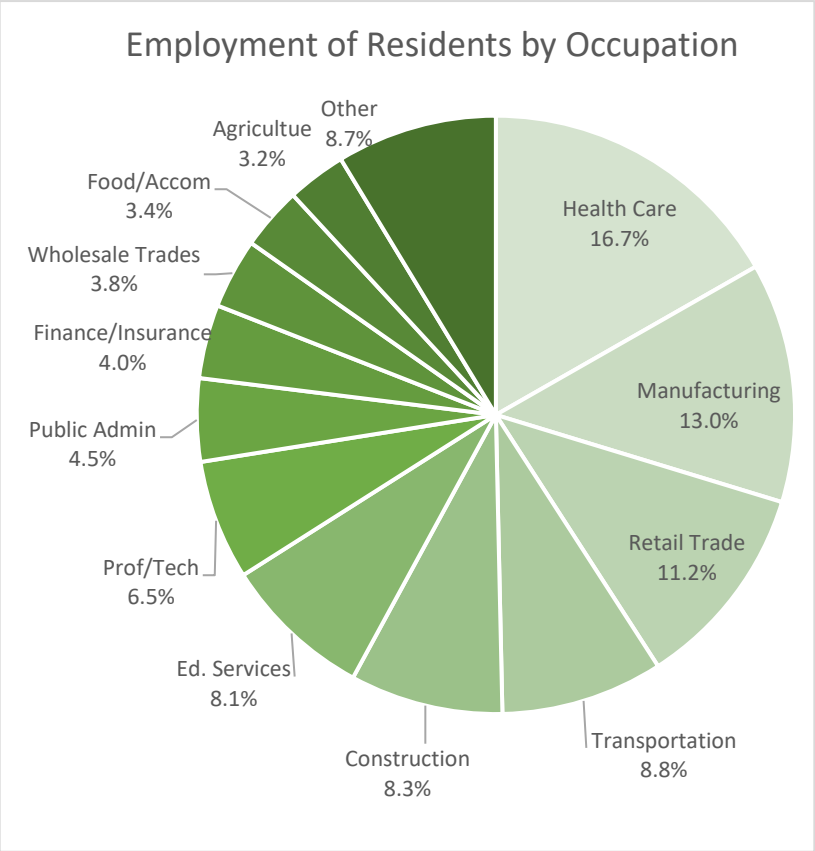
Goal 4: Focus industrial development and operations adjacent to Trunk Highway 15, light industrial uses adjacent to County Road 7, and business/warehousing uses adjacent to County Road 75 or Trunk Highway 15 to minimize impacts on residential land uses.

- Policy 1: Promote low-impact lighting within commercial and industrial development that is reflected downward to prevent glare or light spillage on adjoining rights-of-way, properties, or skyward.
- Policy 2: Screening or landscaping around industrial and warehouse uses is required to minimize visual and other impacts on residential areas and rural character.

6.2 Existing Conditions

St. Augusta residents are largely employed in white-collar fields, at 63 percent, followed by 25 percent blue-collar and 12 percent service industry jobs. St. Augusta has a civilian labor force of 1,107 people, of which 4.6 percent were unemployed in 2023. The city has 117 businesses offering diverse jobs to area residents, many small, locally owned businesses.

Historically, agriculture was the main occupation of the community. Many residents work at jobs in the greater St. Cloud metro area. Given St. Augusta's proximity to St. Cloud and the easy access via Trunk Highway 15 and I-94, 73 percent of workers commute less than 24 minutes to get to their jobs.



The median household income is approximately $88,531. As a higher-income community with a low poverty rate, there is a significant amount of disposable income present.

6.3 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Small local owners' businesses are a priority to the community's economic development and commercial growth.

Opportunities

- Promoting small local businesses increases the quality of life, creates a sense of community, and retains economic resources.
- Small-scale developments allow the community greater control over what businesses go into the commercial space.
- Local businesses often have a greater stake in the community and are likelier to be more involved and engaged at a civic level.

Issues

- It often takes more work and higher risk to incubate small businesses that may fail for reasons outside economic factors or the city's control.
- Small businesses tend to have higher prices that are less affordable due to scale, which is a trade-off for the convenience of the location.

- Jobs resulting from economic development will create housing demand with employees wanting to live close to work; this requires matching job salaries with housing type and cost.

Trend 2: Some survey respondents felt they had access to all the goods and services they needed in St. Augusta, and some did not.

Opportunities

- There is an interest in adding new businesses within the city, which, depending on the type of commercial activity, could generate support for further economic development.
- Small businesses can help fill the gap in access to all goods and services locally, preventing the intrusion of large corporate entities that the community may not want. Residents of the St. Cloud metro area have access to large retail chains within a reasonable driving distance.
- Allowing commercial development provides space for new businesses, which could create complementary goods and services or competition, leading to better-quality goods and services in the local marketplace.

Issues

- Some in the community see no need to actively promote economic development, which can lead to stagnation and make adding new businesses difficult.
- Lack of access to all needs in a community, such as health care, makes it difficult for senior housing to be an effective means of keeping seniors in the community if they still need to leave for services.
- Businesses will come to the community to meet perceived needs for goods and services even if they are not solicited to do so.

Trend 3: Survey respondents expressed interest in adding food establishments to create a sense of community and increase economic activity for visitors.

Opportunities

- Restaurants provide economic benefits and a sense of place in the community.
- Depending on their cooking style, incorporating local ingredients can support other local businesses and farms.
- Restaurants provide a gathering place in the community for people to socialize and meet.
- Allows residents to stay in their community instead of going to restaurants in the greater St. Cloud metro area for dining options.

Issues

- Jobs created by these establishments are not high-paying opportunities.
- Major chain operations could drain local resources out of the community.

Trend 4: Agrotourism is a growing industry that can maintain rural character, draw in customers, and support economic development through direct-to-consumer sales, agricultural education, hospitality, and recreation.

Opportunities

- Agrotourism can diversify the revenue stream of farms and agricultural businesses.

- The four types of agritourism appeal to different consumers and can bolster existing local businesses that benefit from increased customer traffic.
- These ancillary businesses can create a sense of place aligned with the community's vision.

Issues

- Increased customer traffic to areas with limited infrastructure for temporary business activities such as weddings and festivals can strain roads.
- Some agrotourism businesses, such as wineries or distilleries, have an industrial component that may not fit with the adjacent properties or infrastructure.

Trend 5: Transportation corridors in the city provide ample traffic opportunities to support new commercial development.

Opportunities

- New developments with high traffic count nearby will make for desirable commercial space, keep businesses viable, and allow local businesses to flourish.
- Businesses near I-94 benefit from significant exposure to travelers, drawing economic activity into the city.
- Development in the city's eastern side does not require significant infrastructure updates.

Issues

- The infrastructure on MN 15 is insufficient to attract large-scale businesses despite the traffic volumes without the city or developer bearing the infrastructure expansion costs.
- Tying into another municipal utility system in areas where commercial development is best suited, but the infrastructure is not present is not an easily achievable solution.

7.0 Recreation

7.0 Recreation

The City of St. Augusta owns three parks: Kiffmeyer Park, Hidden Lake Park, and a dog park. Kiffmeyer Park is a traditional city park with recreational amenities for all ages, including a playground for children. Hidden Lake Park has a pavilion, playground, and 18-hole disc golf course.

7.1 Goals

Goal 1: Develop parks, trails, and open spaces to take maximum advantage of natural community features.

- Policy 1: Design and maintain parks with proper lighting, landscaping, shelter design, parking, etc., to ensure public and property safety.
- Policy 2: Continue to enhance the value and recreational opportunity afforded by park and trail system components.

Goal 2: Use park, trail, and open space facilities to promote city identity and unify the community.

- Policy 1: Maximize the public's investment in park and trail facilities by maintaining features that meet the city's demonstrated recreational needs.

Goal 3: Provide active and passive parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs of diverse groups within the community, including, but not limited to, persons of differing ages, abilities, incomes, household types, etc.

- Policy 1: Locate neighborhood and community-scale recreational facilities within safe and easy user access.
- Policy 2: Promote economic, health, and practical benefits of park and trail system components.

7.2 Existing Conditions

St. Augusta has two recreational parks, Hidden Lake Park and Kiffmeyer Park, each with unique traits and amenities.

	Hidden Lake Park	Kiffmeyer Park
Size:	71 acres	30 acres
Location:	23215 43rd Ave	23380 County Road 7
Availability:	Both parks have rental periods from May through October.	
Amenities:	• Pavilion for events • 18-hole frisbee golf course • Playground • Walking trail, • Baseball field • Sand volleyball • Lake view platform	• Baseball fields • Walking trails • Pavilion for events • Playground in two locations • Pickleball court • Gaga ball • Volleyball court

The city also has a dog park, which is a fenced-in area with benches southwest of County Road 44 on 28th Avenue.

7.3 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Public interest in more parks and trails within the city, especially as the community grows.

Opportunities

- There is a significant amount of land available in the city that is still in a natural state that is well distributed for parks and trails, and park space is available near most residential developments to consider neighborhood park development.
- Existing semi-public areas, such as the church grounds, provide some of these services to residents, reducing the gap between the city's parks and amenities available to the public.
- The addition of park dedication fees can reduce the difficulty by providing a funding source.

Issues

- Acquiring new parkland and developing it with facilities is a significant investment.
- There may be some resistance to public spending on parks or increases in usage fees, especially for those residents who may not use the park facilities.

Trend 2: Some park facilities need to be updated or updated.

Opportunities

- Renovating and upgrading existing facilities without fully demolishing these parks' infrastructure is less costly while accomplishing the needed improvements.
- Offering programming and activities could increase the use of park facilities, increasing public interest and support for improvements.
- Requiring smaller, accessible neighborhood parks as residential development occurs could reduce the city's upfront cost

Issues

- Improving facilities requires significant capital expenditures that do not address other issues related to the parks, such as their inaccessibility without a vehicle.
- Planning and executing improvements to the existing parks without increasing efforts to utilize these community assets will appear illogical.
- Lack of development near these facilities is unlikely to drive traffic to these parks, limiting the community's exposure to any improvements made.

Trend 3: Current park facilities are not easily accessible without driving; there is a desire for more neighborhood facilities.

Opportunities

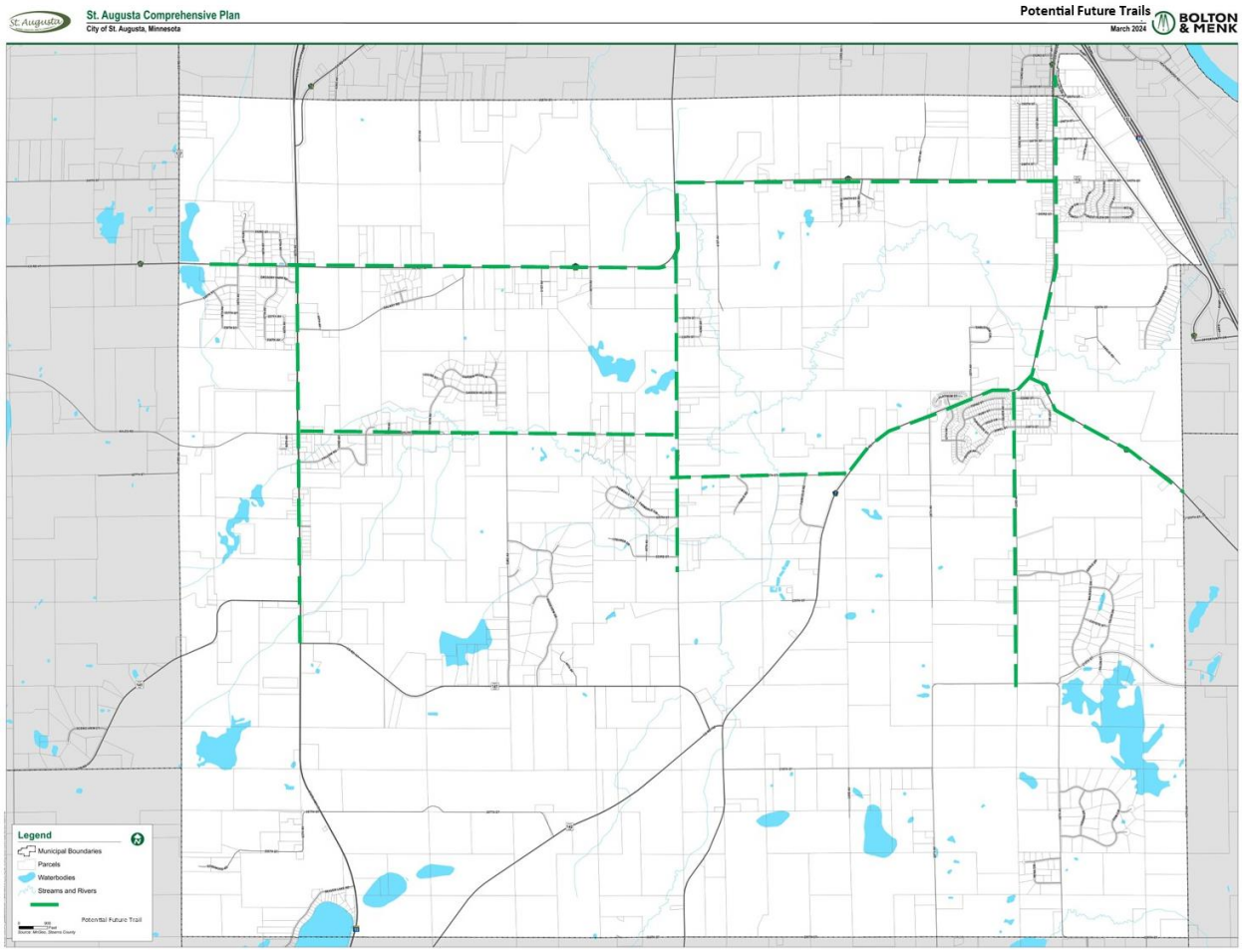
- Increasing the accessibility of park facilities will increase their use and the public's willingness to expend funds on these parks.
- Requiring developers to include neighborhood parks would give residents access to outdoor community play spaces and require them to maintain them.

Issues

- The city cannot build multiple parks at one time without incurring significant cash-out flows for the city.
- Current parks are outdated and need repairs or upgrades.
- Adding new parks and trails would require additional city staff to maintain them.

7.4 Trails

As the City of St. Augusta grows and its public services expand throughout the city, trails will allow pedestrians to get from one location to another without relying solely on cars within the city. Residents would also have increased opportunities for recreation and exercise. The following map shows conceptual locations of trails that could be added as development occurs, road improvements are made, or utilities are installed. The location will be determined based on further planning, design, and engineering.



8.0 Infrastructure & Public Facilities

8.0 Infrastructure and Public Facilities

St. Augusta maintains a government complex in its business district near Interstate 94. This property features the city council chambers and administrative offices, with an attached building housing its public works department. The city also owns a second property, and its fire department is near Hidden Lake Park.

8.1 Goals

Goal 1: Plan and allow intensity of development based on the availability and adequacy of the sanitary sewer system, water supply, stormwater drainage, transportation access, public service, and other public utilities.

- Policy 1: New Rural Residential or Agricultural development must be on individual sewage treatment systems (ISTS) or private standard utility systems. The construction of a new common utility system or expansion of an existing standard utility system must not create barriers to future municipal utility and service extensions, and they will be subject to hookup once sanitary sewer service is available.
- Policy 1: Design and build a municipal sanitary sewer and water service that can be financed by those who receive such service.

Goal 2: Plan and comprehensively design public infrastructure systems, such as storm drainage, future water supply, and future sanitary sewer, along with their private extensions, parks, community centers, and the like, to fully utilize the natural environment and minimize development and ongoing maintenance costs.

- Policy 1: Preserve to the greatest extent possible those areas, places, buildings, structures, and other features with significant architectural, historical, community, or aesthetic interests and values.
- Policy 2: Continue working with neighboring communities and jurisdictions to share necessary utilities and services.
- Policy 3: All new utility services must be installed underground, and when economically feasible, the existing overhead systems must be converted to underground during road improvement projects.

Goal 3: Based on available information and demand projections, the sanitary sewer service district will provide a maximum five-year land supply for urban residential development.

- Policy 1: Establish primary and secondary urban service reserve areas to identify lands for staged expansion of the metropolitan service area.
- Policy 2: Plan the city's utility, service, and street extensions to accommodate long-term growth within the community.

Goal 4: All new development should address stormwater onsite to minimize the potential for flooding and public infrastructure costs.

Policy 1: Require a drainage plan or stormwater management for all new development that utilizes onsite storage or intermediate ponding areas

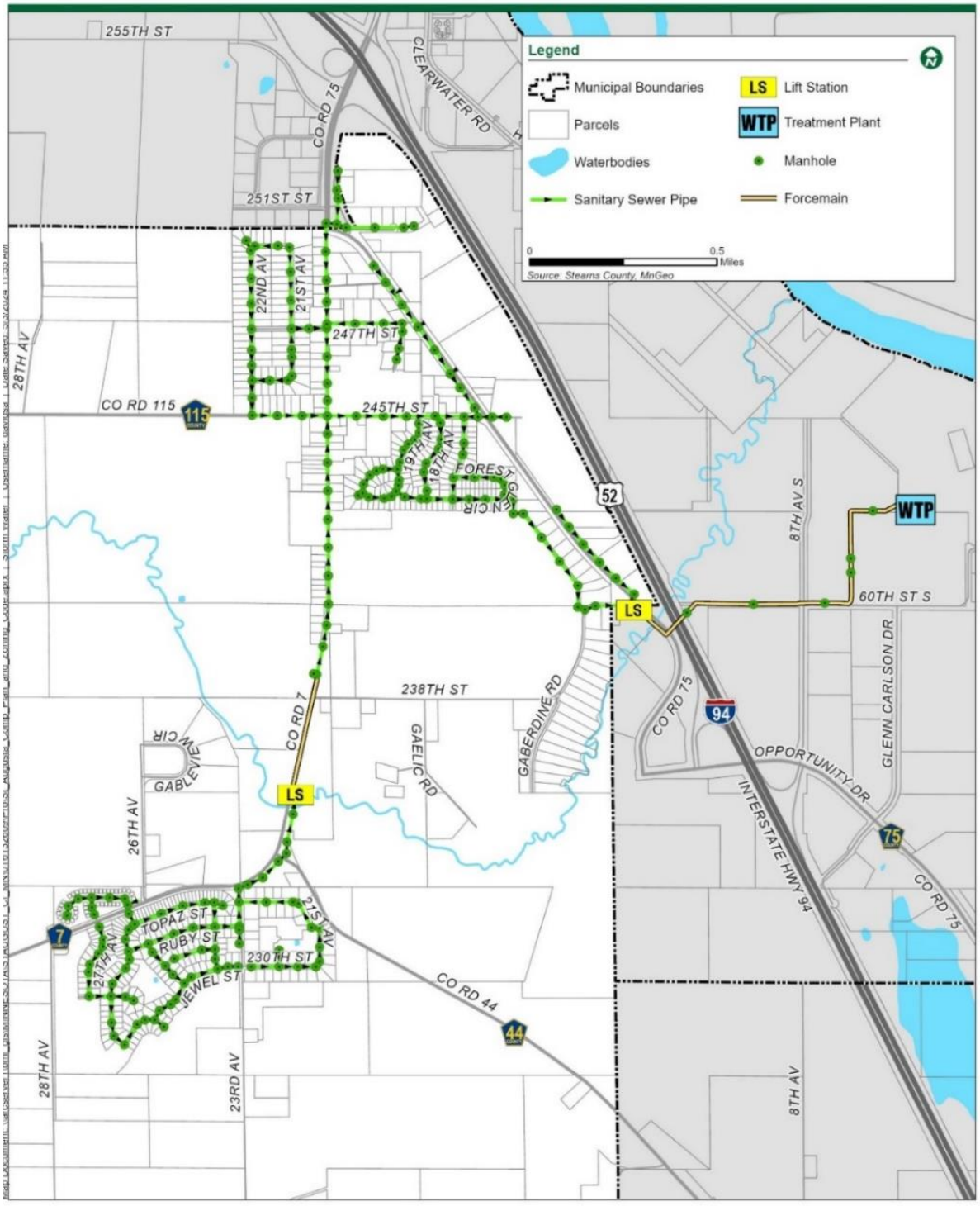
Policy 2: Implement a process for acquiring or dedicating areas to ensure long-term restriction and maintain those areas

Goal 5: Locate all public facilities where the proposed use is compatible with the area's adjacent existing and proposed land uses.

- Policy 1: Locate public facilities and services to offer easy access from the road network and minimal response time for all community areas.
- Policy 2: Develop public facilities upon sites that offer ample land for any necessary expansion.

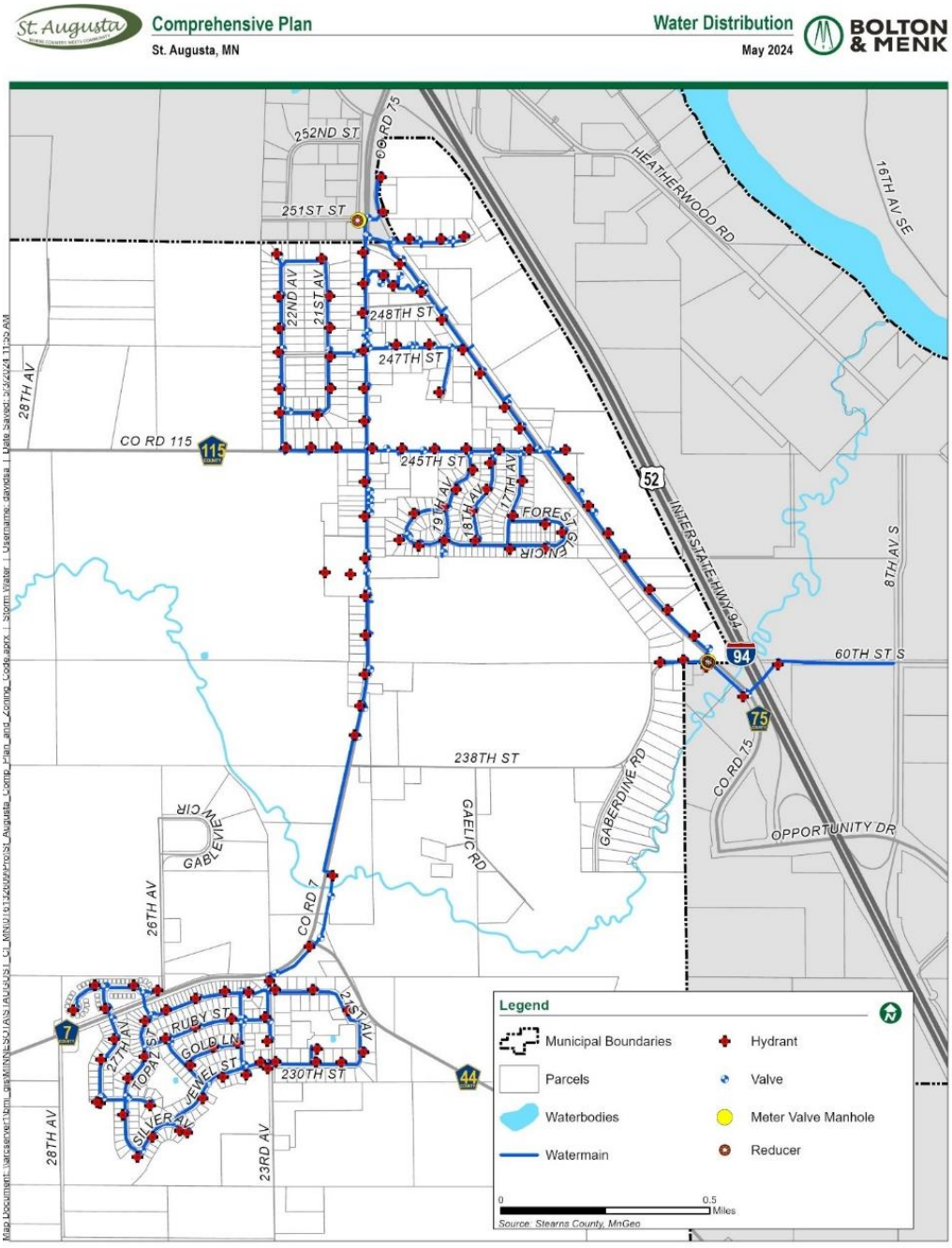
8.2 Existing Sanitary Sewer

St. Augusta's sanitary sewer system covers a portion of the northeast third of the city, and as of this writing in 2024, there are approximately 530 connections. The sewer flows through two lift stations and is ultimately sent to the St. Cloud Area Wastewater Facility for treatment. At that time, the City of St. Cloud and the cities of Sartell, St. Joseph, Sauk Rapids, and Waite Park owned the St. Cloud Area Wastewater Facility. St. Augusta initially leased space in the St. Cloud Area Wastewater Facility from the City of St. Cloud in 2003. In 2010, during the wastewater treatment facility expansion, St. Augusta bought its capacity in the plant. Initially, St. Augusta was allocated a maximum flow of 480,000 gallons per day based on growth projections established between 2005 and 2008. That allocation was initially planned to grow with a proposed 2017 expansion project of up to 880,000 gallons per day. The City of St. Augusta also owned 100,000 gallons per day of pool capacity built into the 2010 expansion. The City of Foley joined the St. Cloud Area Wastewater Facility in 2024, and their capacity came from the pool capacity, including all of St. Augusta's pool capacity. As of this, the City of St. Augusta is sending just over 90,000 gallons of sewer per day to the treatment facility.


Legend
Municipal Boundaries
Parcels
Waterbodies
Sanitary Sewer Pipe
LS Lift Station
WTP Treatment Plant
Manhole
Forcemain
0
0.5
Miles
Source: Stearns County, MnGeo
255TH ST
251ST ST
247TH ST
245TH ST
238TH ST
230TH ST
CO RD 75
CLEARWATER RD
22ND AV
21ST AV
28TH AV
CO RD 115
115
19TH AV
18TH AV
FOREST GLEN CIR
52
8TH AV S
WTP
60TH ST S
LS
GLENN CARLSON DR
CO RD 7
GAELIC RD
GABERDINE RD
94
OPPORTUNITY DR
INTERSTATE HWY 94
75
GABLE VIEW CIR
26TH AV
TOPAZ ST
RUBY ST
JEWEL ST
27TH AV
215TH AV
7
CO RD 44
44
28TH AV
23RD AV
8TH AV

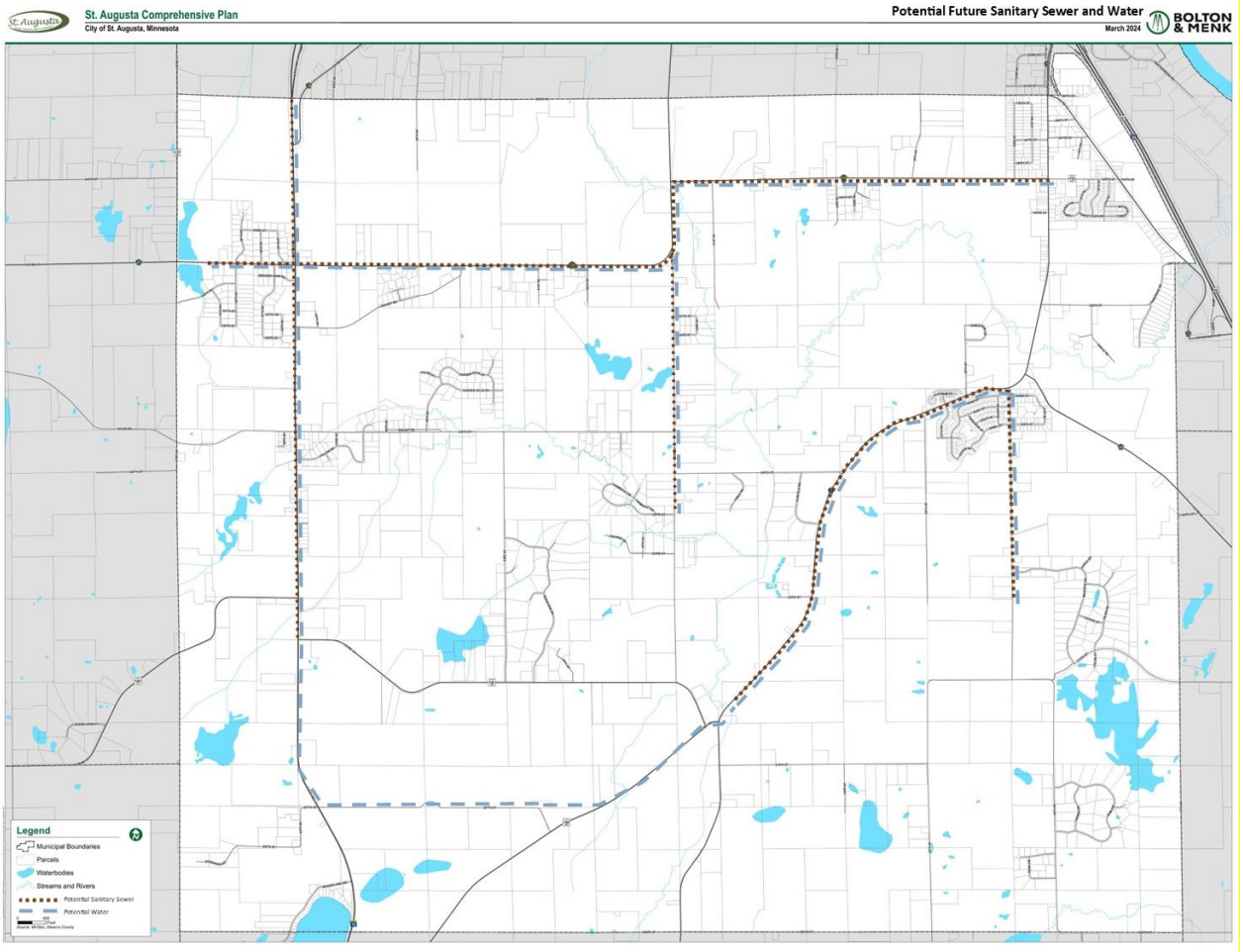
8.3 Existing Drinking Water

St. Augusta's drinking water system covers the same portion of the city's northeast third and has approximately 530 customers. St. Augusta currently purchases its water from the City of St. Cloud. The city has two connections where it gets its water from the City of St. Cloud: the north connection just north of 250th Street on County Road 7/75 and the south connection just off County Road 75 and 240th Street. Like the sewer system, the water system was constructed in 2003 with an agreement with the City of St. Cloud to purchase water for ten years before St. Augusta became independent. That agreement has been extended twice, with the current agreement stating that the city will be independent by the end of December 2026. As of this writing, the City of St. Augusta is purchasing an average of about 85,000 gallons of water daily from the City of St. Cloud.



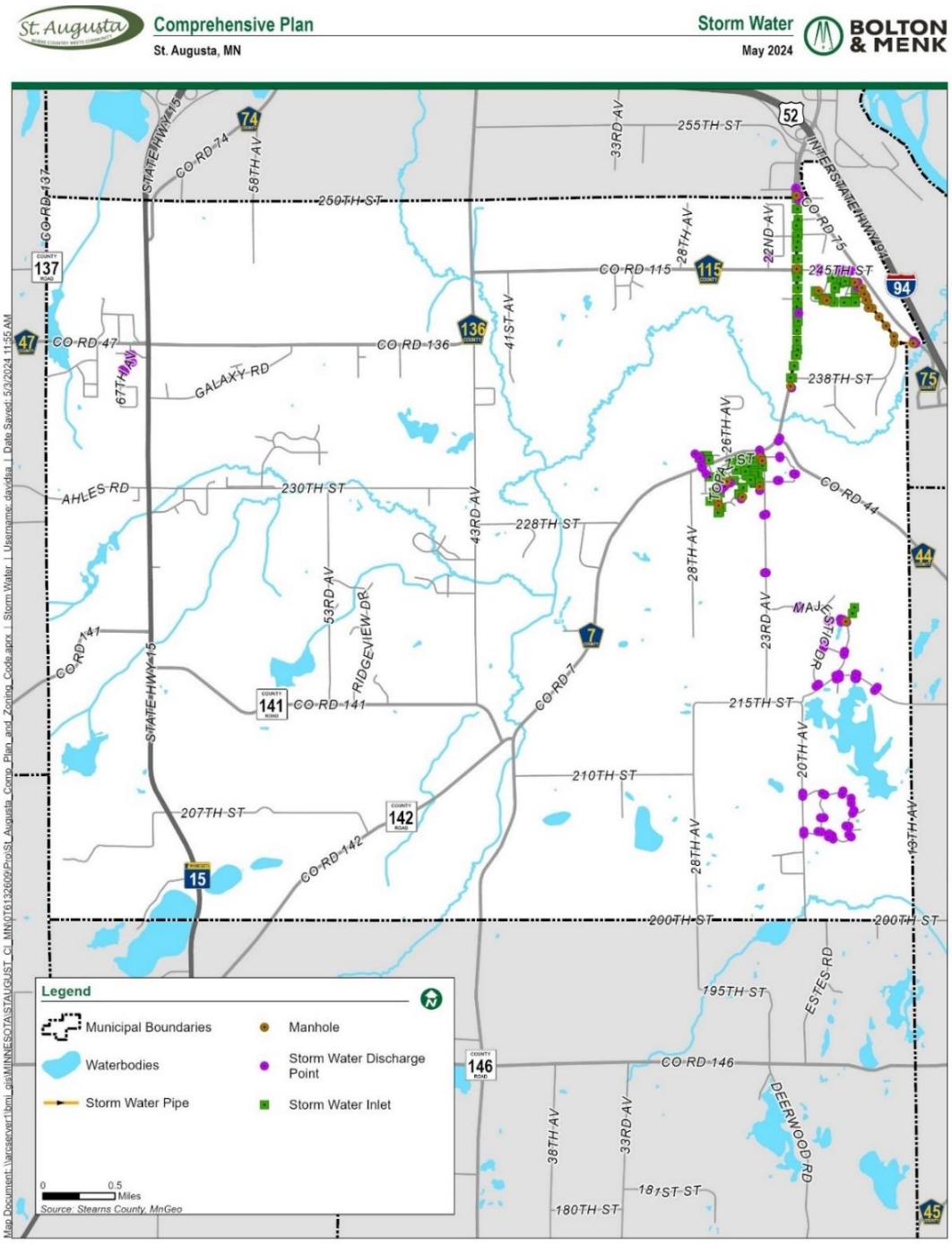
8.4 Future Sanitary Sewer and Drinking Water

The following map shows conceptual locations of sanitary sewer and water lines that would be added as development occurs or road improvements are made. Actual locations will be determined based on further planning, design, and engineering.



8.5 Stormwater Management

Stormwater runoff and flooding are concerns related to new development and older established locations within the city. Stormwater management is a critical design and construction concern because of St. Augusta's streams, wetlands, and topographical challenges. Dense development areas include large impervious surface areas, which prevent the orderly draining of stormwater without infrastructure specifically for this purpose. The city's streamside bluffs facilitate runoff during precipitation events, creating flood hazards despite the city not existing in a floodplain.
Effective stormwater management is important for any development in any location.



The City of St. Augusta implemented a Stormwater Ordinance in 2017, defining the stormwater planning process for developers, although the city has not undertaken any comprehensive stormwater management planning. The current system is mostly present on the city's eastern side, coinciding with the phases of development the city has undergone since its most recent comprehensive planning exercise with an update to the plan in 2005.

8.6 Public Facilities

The City of St. Augusta operates out of a 1914 250th St, St Augusta, MN 56301 facility. Two buildings on this parcel function as the city hall and staff offices; the other is the public works building. The city's volunteer fire department operates out of a separate complex from the city office buildings.

As the city grows, there are plans to build a new city hall adjacent to the existing fire hall. This would create a nice municipal campus with the city's central park, fire hall, and city hall next to each other.

8.7 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: Most of the city's growth will occur on land served by public wastewater service from the city of St. Cloud via infrastructure from the northeast part of the city.

Opportunities

- The city has sufficient capacity through the agreements with the City of St. Cloud to accommodate the forecasted growth of 500 new homes by 2040.

Issues

- There is interest in economic development and growth along Highway 15, but extending the sewer pipes four or more miles and installing a lift station is not cost-effective until there is more urban growth to cover the costs.

Trend 2: Most of the city's growth will occur on land served by public water supply infrastructure via extensions of the current water supply from the City of St. Cloud, from the northeast part of the city.

Opportunities

- The city has purchased a site in the southcentral part of the city for a future well that could provide water supply to the city.

Issues

- There is interest in economic development and growth along Highway 15, but extending the water mains four or more miles is not cost-effective until there is more urban growth to cover the costs.
- Serving the northern part of the city from a well in the southern part is not financially feasible until there is urban development to connect to the system.

Trend 3: Treating stormwater runoff on site will be critical as the city develops.

Opportunities

- The city has many wetlands and wet soils; retaining those areas as natural wetlands will be key to managing stormwater.

Trend 4: Survey respondents expressed interest in a community center and the potential for a local elementary school within the city.

Opportunities

- The city has a site for a future city hall next to the fire hall and Hidden Lake Park, which could be the start of a municipal campus with a community center.
- Most new developments are single-family homes, and the population breakdown by age shows that most households are young. If this trend continues, there may be enough school-age children to warrant looking into a local elementary school within the city.

9.0 Transportation

9.0 Transportation

Travel is integral to the functionality and comfort of any community. St. Augusta is fortunate to have access to two arterials that allow significant traffic volume to enter the community and allow the city and its residents to get the goods it produces to market beyond its borders far more quickly than if this access were not. However, the continued safety and functionality of the transportation network in the city will continue to be important for generations to come.

9.1 Goals

Goal 1: Approach transportation planning comprehensively and provide for safe and convenient movement by all transportation modes.

- Policy 1: Plan and design transportation facilities to function in a manner compatible with adjacent land use.
- Policy 2: Design transportation facilities to conserve natural resources and minimize the need for ongoing public investment.

Goal 2: Define future street system routes and connections in areas planned for urban development to ensure a connected road network.

- Policy 1: Construct new streets and upgrade existing streets in compliance with Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) standard specifications.
- Policy 2: Plan local streets to connect neighborhoods and design all residential streets categorized as low-volume carriers to encourage inter-neighborhood connections and properly direct through traffic to collector or arterial roads.

Goal 3: Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in new road construction or replace existing roads consistent with the safe and convenient circulation needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Policy 1: Require new developments to contribute to rights-of-way and development costs of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Policy 2: Provide facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists in conjunction with street improvement projects where financially feasible.

Goal 4: Coordinate transportation planning and implementation with neighboring and affected jurisdictions, with early and continuing opportunities for public involvement.

- Policy 1: Coordinate planning for the street network with Stearns County, including street improvements, construction of new streets, implementation of a functional classification system, and potential return of existing county roads to the city's jurisdiction.

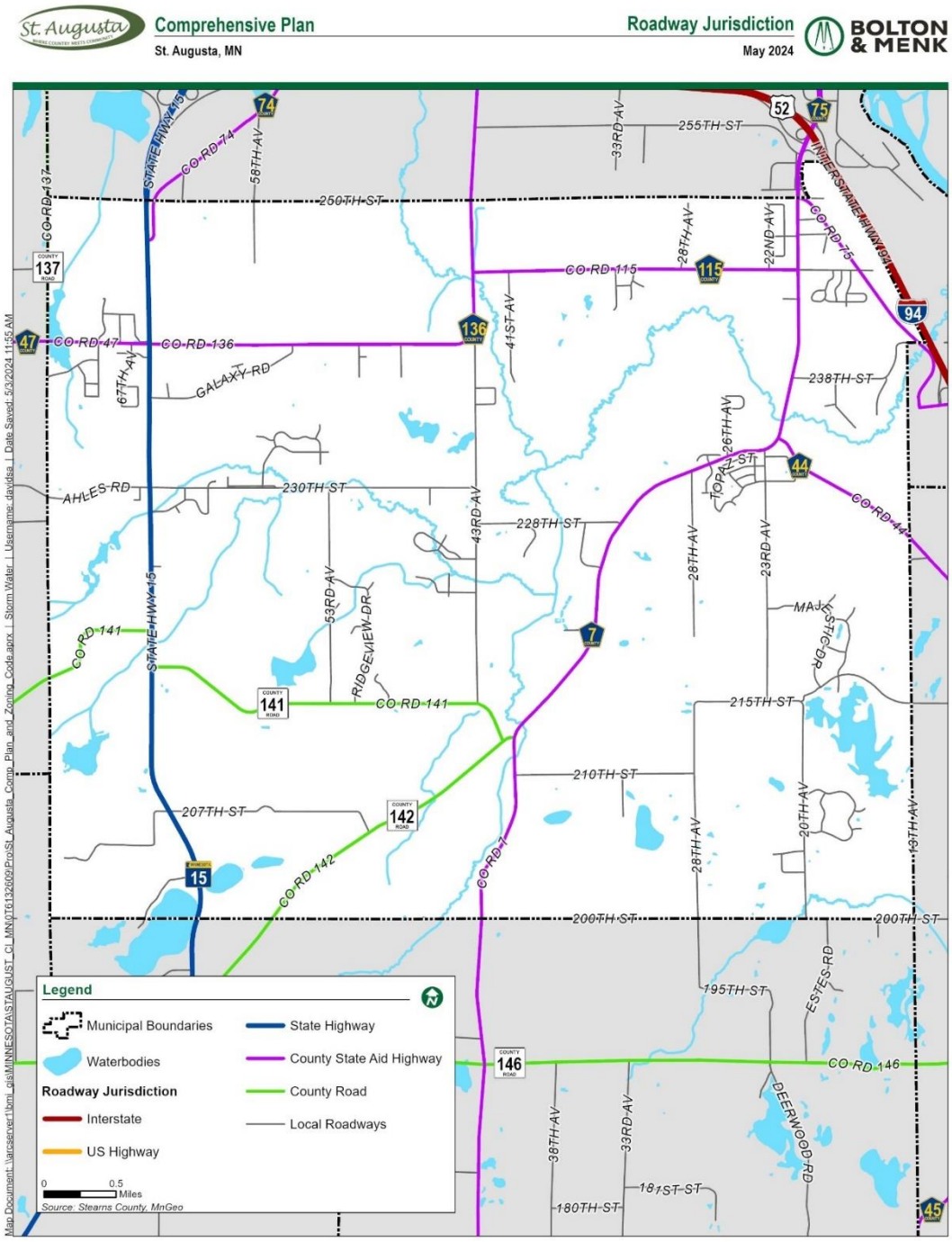
Goal 5: Develop parking facilities that conserve land, promote joint use, and minimize conflicts with vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic.

- Policy 1: Design parking in functional clusters to avoid irregular and inefficient lots.
- Policy 2: Limit access to parking lots from public streets to the functionally necessary number.

Goal 6: Consider transit and para-transit services and facilities to meet the basic transportation needs of persons who cannot use automobile transportation.

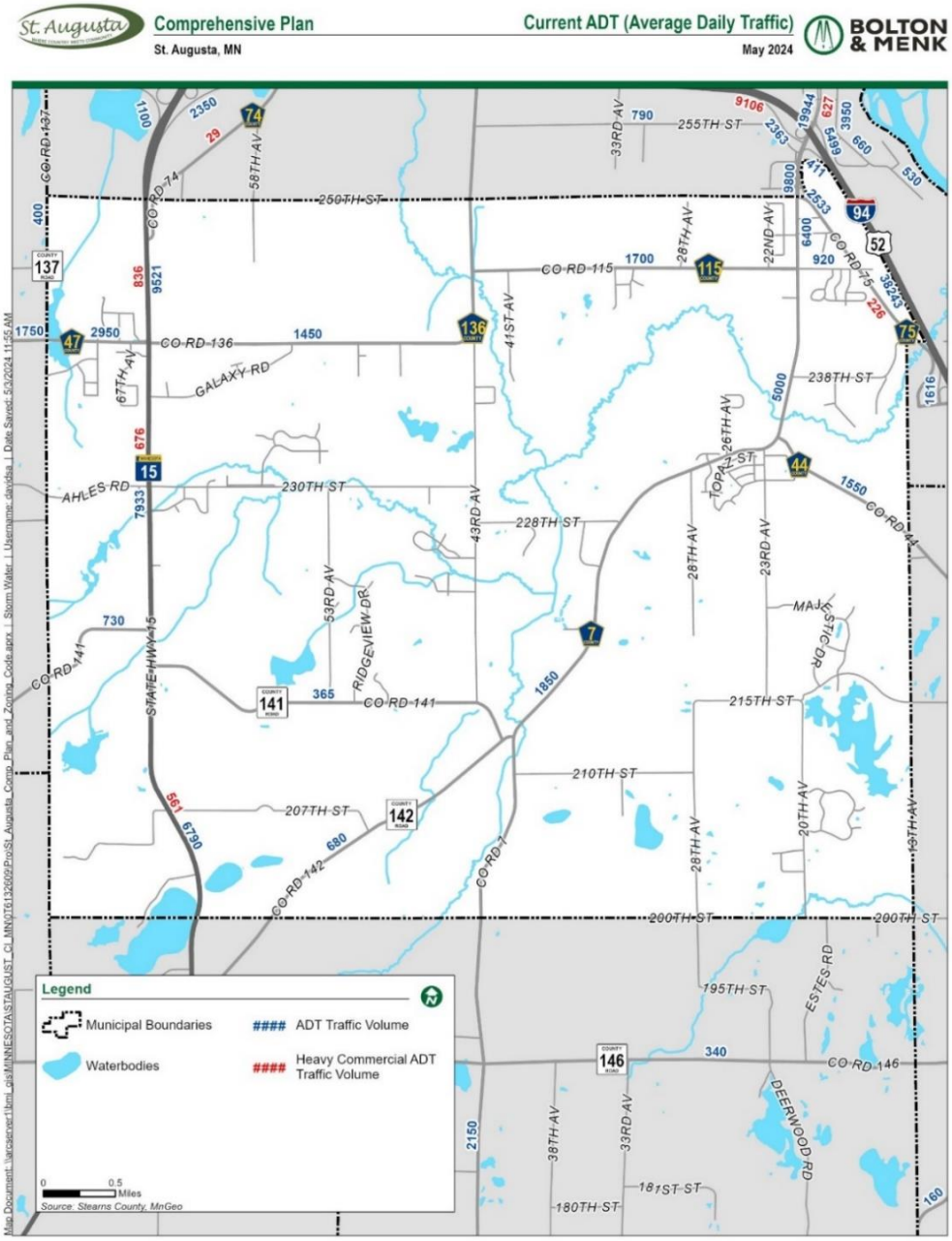
9.2 Jurisdiction

The city's highest-traffic roads are under the jurisdiction of Stearns County and MNDOT, such as County Highways 75, 115, 136, 74, 47, 44, 7, County Roads 141, 142, and US Interstate 94. The remaining local roads are under the jurisdiction and responsibility of St. Augusta for maintenance and improvement.



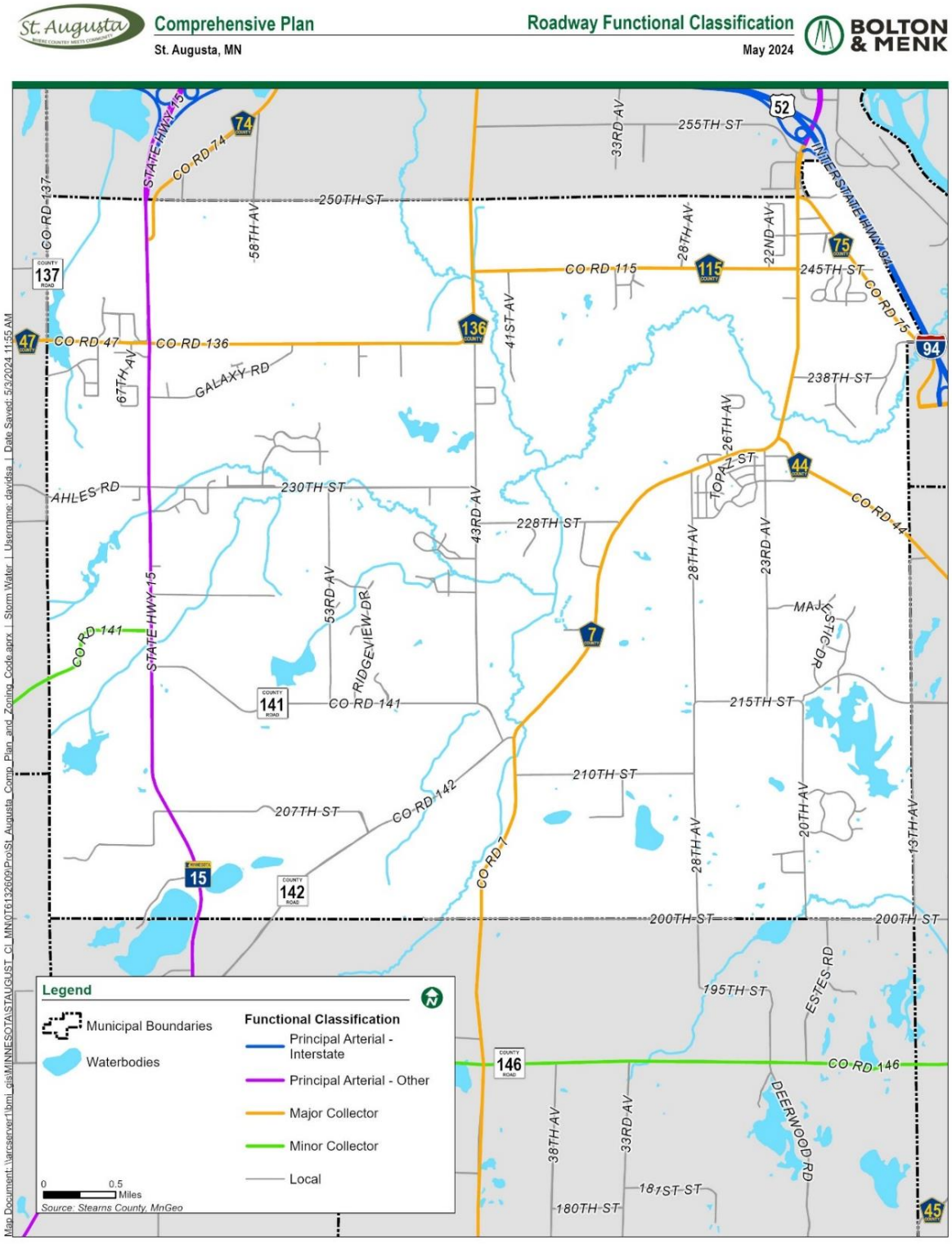
9.3 Traffic Volumes

St. Augusta has significant variation in the ADT counts on the city's transportation networks. On MN 15, running through the Luxemburg hamlet in the north-south direction, the ADT is roughly 9,521 to approximately 6,300 dailies. The lower ADTs come from the southern section of the city. At the same time, about 10% of this traffic volume is commercial trucking. On the opposite side of the city, traffic volumes nearing 20,000 ADT are observed coming into the city. The U.S. 94 route through the city's outskirts has over 38,000 ADT; however, most traffic does not make the trip from the highway into St. Augusta. On the collectors throughout the city, the ADTs will likely not breach 1,000 total. However, truck and commercial transport traffic remains at approximately 10%.



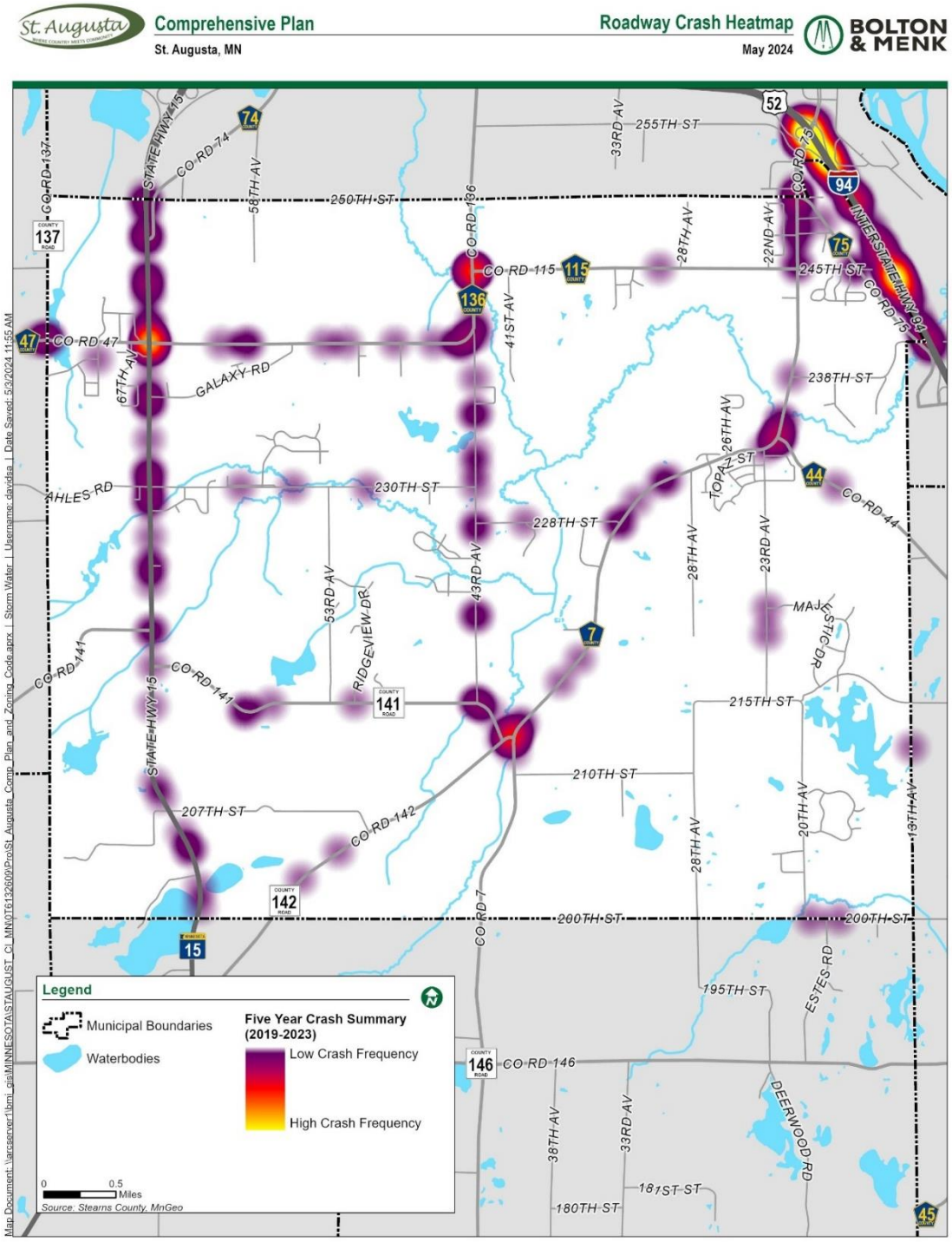
9.4 Functional Classification

There are two principal arterials and seven collectors in St. Augusta. The remaining roads are local. The major collectors, County Highway 7 and MN 115 and 136, are the paths to travel east or west to either of the community's commercial centers.



9.5 Safety

In St. Augusta, most traffic accidents occur on the stretch of I-94 between I-94 and County Highway 75. The city has four other busy intersections with the most frequent car accidents. The most intense of these is the intersection of State Highway 15 and County Road 47, where cars enter the hamlet of Luxemburg at a high rate of speed. The intersections at County Roads 136 and 115 and County Roads 142 and 7 are also relatively high in accident density, creating a hazard that will be monitored in the future.



9.6 Opportunities and Issues

Trend 1: The city has an adequate road network that serves its residents' needs and can accommodate growth.

Opportunities

- Most survey respondents were neutral or agreed that the city's roads are well maintained.

Issues

- Roughly one-third of survey respondents indicated that roads within the city are poorly maintained.

Trend 2: Addressing Safety.

Opportunities

- As development occurs, the city should work with the county and the developer to realign roads and design intersections with safety in mind.

Issues

- There are four intersections of county roads with a significant number of crashes. As growth occurs in these areas, the risk of crashes may increase.

Trend 3: Address access.

Opportunities

- As the city develops, there is the opportunity to work with developers to create a network of local roads instead of disconnected neighborhoods with access points onto the arterial and collector roads.

Issues

- As development occurs along Highway 15, there will be pressure to add driveways and access points. It will be critical to develop standards and ensure that there are not too many access points that could result in safety and congestion issues.

10.0 Implementation

10.0 Implementation

This plan creates a vision for St. Augusta and guides land use, development, and infrastructure improvements so the city can meet the community's future needs. Examples of tools to implement the plan are described in this chapter.

10.1 Official Controls

Official controls help the city achieve its vision and implement this comprehensive plan by providing standards for land development and outlining processes and procedures. Concurrently, the city reviewed and updated its zoning code to be consistent with this plan. The city will review its land use controls regularly, consider amendments to conform to new or revised state and federal regulations, and support changes in overarching community goals.

City zoning codes regulate land use to promote all citizens' health, safety, order, convenience, and general welfare. They regulate the location, size, use, and height of buildings, the arrangement of buildings on lots, and the population density within the city. City controls regulate land uses and subdivisions through an application and approval process. The city's zoning code includes but is not limited to the following:

- Processes and procedures
- Zoning districts and associated development standards
- Planned Unit Development ordinances
- Subdivision Ordinance
- Development features such as fencing, landscaping, parking, and sign regulations
- Structures such as antennae, solar, and wind
- Environmental regulations related to wetlands, floodplains, shorelands, and scenic rivers
- Special uses such as short-term rentals and sexually oriented uses

10.2 Funding Mechanisms

The construction of public improvements and implementation of these plans require funding. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP), grants, and local taxing authority can be used to plan for and fund these improvements.

Capital Improvements Program

Capital improvement projects are significant projects that benefit the city. They include constructing or reconstructing roads, sewers, water and electric utilities, trails, parks, and recreation facilities and purchasing new or replacement equipment and buildings. A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a budgeting plan that lists five years of needed capital improvements, their order of priority, and the means of financing. Projects included in a CIP are intended to meet the city's goals.

Grants

Grants are an essential tool for local governments to fund projects that contribute to the community. A government grant is a financial award given by the federal, state, or local government to an eligible grantee. Government grants are not expected to be repaid but are usually allocated for specific needs and may go through a competitive application process.

10.3 Amending the Plan

Amendments will occasionally be necessary to keep the comprehensive plan current. However, as the foundational document guiding development, most amendments should occur through a comprehensive effort to address changes in the community over time.

10.4 Implementation Plan

Implementing the vision and goals of the comprehensive plan requires an action plan and the coordination and investments of stakeholders. The table below summarizes the goals and specific action steps, organized by chapter, that the city can use in future priority discussions. The Implementation Plan includes:

- Goal: A restatement of the goal
- Policies: Specific action items intended to help meet the goals
- Priority: Indicating whether it is an immediate or long-term action timeline or an order for implementing policies using short, mid, and long term.
- Action Lead: The department or committee within the city that is most responsible for implementing each goal and policy.

Natural Resources

Goal	Policies	Priority	Action Lead
Protect the city's surface and groundwater resources.	Protect areas of rapidly permeating soils from potential groundwater contamination due to failing septic systems.		
	Protect the city's wetlands, lakes, and shoreland areas as valuable recreational and visual amenities.		
Preserve the city's environmentally sensitive areas and unique physical features, including steep slopes, floodplains, forests, and native vegetation.	Manage stormwater systems to minimize flooding and erosion, preserving and protecting natural wetlands and drainage ways. This will ensure adequate stormwater management with minimal construction of storm sewer pipes.		
	Require all new developments to address all on-site stormwater needs and requirements so that no adverse impacts occur in the hydrologic system.		
Retain high-quality agricultural land for agricultural purposes.	Require agricultural land use to observe conservation practices to prevent erosion and preserve natural resources.		
	Minimize residential development on land designated for agricultural purposes to maintain rural character and avoid conflicts between land uses.		

Land Use

Goal	Policies	Priority	Action Lead
Maintain desirable community character, public health and safety, and economic vitality by ensuring that development is premium quality and blends well with the community's natural, rural, and suburban makeup.	Encourage a creative approach (as opposed to "traditional" subdivision design) to land use and related development.		
	Plan for orderly and efficient growth that preserves natural resources and allows continued cultivation on productive agricultural lands.		
Plan for growth and economic development on a phased basis, providing a logical extension of urban and public services based on infrastructure capacity.	Plan land use development not to isolate or create land-locked parcels or neighborhoods; require that all public streets can access development.		
	Restrict new development and expansion of existing uses immediately adjacent to drainage ways, wetlands, shorelands, floodplains, and other natural features that perform critical environmental functions in their natural state.		
	Cluster-compatible uses and activities in functional and walkable neighborhoods.		
Retain productive agricultural lands for agricultural uses and discourage small-scale, non-farm subdivisions in productive agricultural regions.	Minimize impacts of development and agricultural operations on each other.		
	Regulate the subdivision of farmsteads and small parcels so as not to create future problems with land division or extension of services (streets and utilities).		

Housing

Goal	Policies	Priority	Action Lead
Encourage various housing types and options to meet the housing needs of people of various ages, abilities, and income levels.	Plan land uses that support single-family homes, medium-density townhouses, apartments, and elderly or special-needs housing developments.		
	Allow multifamily housing in commercial areas, including apartments for first-floor retail or office space.		
Encourage housing styles and development techniques that conserve land and increase efficiency, provided desired densities can be maintained.	Plan most residential development in areas served by public water and sewers that are easily accessible via existing collector and arterial roads.		
	Use cluster development in rural areas where the protection of natural features is essential to the community, enhancing development desirability.		
Promote medium and high-density residential development near areas targeted for economic growth to provide ancillary market support without over-concentrating this development in any location.	Encourage design and planning innovations in housing development.		
	Avoid over-concentrating medium and high-density development sites in any location.		
Preserve and maintain existing housing stock and residential neighborhoods.	Seek opportunities to aid homeowners in maintaining the community's homes built over 40 years ago.		

Economic Development

Goal	Policies	Priority	Action Lead
Ensure safe, convenient, attractive, and accessible commercial development is available to the city's residents.	When available, require existing commercial and industrial uses to connect to municipal sanitary sewer and water service.		
	Provide safe and convenient pedestrian movement within commercial areas to create active, walkable nodes.		
Attract, retain, and expand businesses and industry to provide jobs, goods and services, and a diversified tax base.	Locate commercial development in areas of high accessibility and high visibility.		
	Develop commercial areas as cohesive, highly interrelated, and coordinated units with adequate, but not oversupplied, off-street parking and appropriate regulated access points.		
Support economic development uses near the County Road 75/7 interchange with Interstate 94 and along Trunk Highway 15.	Focus commercial development along arterials and collectors for freight and delivery access without impacting residential areas.		
	Develop a network of back roads with development on both sides to ensure efficient traffic movement and infrastructure investments.		
	Minimize access points onto arterial and collector streets to avoid traffic congestion and minimize accidents.		
Focus industrial development and operations adjacent to Trunk Highway 15, light industrial uses adjacent to County Road 7, and business/warehousing uses adjacent to County Road 75 or Trunk Highway 1 to minimize impacts on residential land uses.	Promote low-impact lighting that is reflected downward in commercial and industrial development to prevent glare or light spillage on adjoining rights-of-way, properties, or skyward.		
	Screening or landscaping around industrial and warehouse uses is required to minimize visual and other impacts on residential areas and rural character.		

Recreation

Goal	Policies	Priority	Action Lead
Develop parks, trails, and open spaces to take maximum advantage of natural community features.	Design and maintain parks with proper lighting, landscaping, shelter design, parking, etc., to ensure public and property safety.		
	Continue to enhance the value and recreational opportunity afforded by park and trail system components.		
Use park, trail, and open space facilities to promote city identity and unify the community.	Maximize the public's investment in park and trail facilities by maintaining features that meet the city's demonstrated recreational needs.		
Provide active and passive parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs of diverse groups within the community, including, but not limited to, persons with differing ages, abilities, incomes, household type, etc.	Locate neighborhood and community-scale recreational facilities within safe and easy user access.		
	Promote economic, health, and practical benefits of park and trail system components.		

Infrastructure and Public Facilities

Goal	Policies	Priority	Action Lead
Plan and allow intensity of development based on the availability and adequacy of the sanitary sewer system, water supply, stormwater drainage, transportation access, public service, and other public utilities.	New Rural Residential or Agricultural development must be on individual sewage treatment systems (ISTS) or private standard utility systems. The construction of a new common utility system or expansion of an existing standard utility system must not create barriers to future municipal utility and service extensions, and they will be subject to hookup once sanitary sewer service is available.		
Plan and comprehensively design public infrastructure systems, such as storm drainage, future water supply, and future sanitary sewer, along with their private extensions, parks, community centers, and the like, to fully utilize the natural environment and minimize development and ongoing maintenance costs.	Preserve to the greatest extent possible those areas, places, buildings, structures, and other features with significant architectural, historical, community, or aesthetic interests and values.		
	Continue working with neighboring communities and jurisdictions to share necessary utilities and services.		
	All new utility services must be installed underground, and when economically feasible, the existing overhead systems must be converted to underground during road improvement projects.		
Based on available information and demand projections, the sanitary sewer service district will provide a maximum five-year land supply for urban residential development.	Establish primary and secondary urban service reserve areas to identify lands for staged expansion of the metropolitan service area.		
	Plan the city's utility, service, and street extensions to accommodate long-term growth within the community.		
Require a drainage plan or stormwater management for all new developments that utilizes onsite storage or intermediate ponding areas and provides procedures for acquiring or dedicating areas so designated.	Design and build a municipal sanitary sewer and water service that can be financed by those who receive such service.		
Locate all public facilities where the proposed use is compatible with the area's	Locate public facilities and services to offer easy access from the road network and minimal response time for all community areas.		

adjacent existing and proposed land uses.	Develop public facilities upon sites that offer ample land for any necessary expansion.		

Transportation

Goal	Policies	Priority	Action Lead
Approach transportation planning comprehensively and provide for safe and convenient movement by all transportation modes.	Plan and design transportation facilities to function in a manner compatible with adjacent land use.		
	Design transportation facilities to conserve natural resources and minimize the need for ongoing public investment.		
Define future street system routes and connections in areas planned for urban development to ensure a connected road network.	Construct new streets and upgrade existing streets in compliance with Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) standard specifications.		
	Plan local streets to connect neighborhoods and design all residential streets categorized as low-volume carriers to encourage inter-neighborhood connections and properly direct through traffic to collector or arterial roads.		
Include pedestrian and bicycle facilities in new road construction or replace existing roads consistent with the safe and convenient circulation needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.	Require new developments to contribute to rights-of-way and development costs of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.		
	Provide facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists in conjunction with street improvement projects where financially feasible.		
Coordinate transportation planning and implementation with neighboring and affected jurisdictions, with early and continuing opportunities for public involvement.	Coordinate planning for the street network with Stearns County, including street improvements, construction of new streets, implementation of a functional classification system, and potential return of existing county roads to the city's jurisdiction.		
Develop parking facilities that conserve land, promote joint use, and minimize conflicts with vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic.	Design parking in functional clusters to avoid irregular and inefficient lots.		
	Limit access to parking lots from public streets to the functionally necessary number.		
Consider transit and para-transit services and facilities to meet the basic transportation needs of persons who cannot use automobile transportation.			