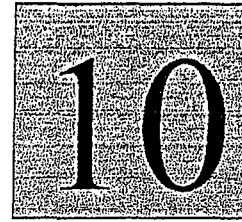




C. GRAZ '97

*Recommendations*

# Recommendations



## INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the recommendations made throughout this Comprehensive Plan Update. These suggestions are based on the results of the various studies conducted in conjunction with this plan and on information collected from residents of St. Marys.

These recommendations, which are organized according to topic, focus attention on potential areas of improvement. The chapter concludes with the identification of five issues believed to be the most critical areas to address.

## POPULATION

**Services and Facilities.** Because St. Marys has experienced significant population growth since 1990 and many young families reside in the city, it must plan to provide necessary services and facilities for its citizens.

**Day-Care Facilities.** The presence of young and single-parent families suggests a potential need for public day-care facilities. However, a study is necessary to determine the actual need for this service within the community.

**Services for Senior Citizens.** The rapid population growth also may result in a larger number of elderly residents in St. Marys. Therefore, the community must ensure that adequate health care is available and that the community is accessible to this segment of the population.

## ECONOMICS

**Market Feasibility Study.** A market feasibility study could be used as a tool to attract appropriate businesses to St. Marys and also to form a working relationship with the leaders of these businesses to create a regional marketing scheme.

**Bed-and-Breakfast Establishments.** The community's location on U.S. Highway 24 and the availability of attractive older homes provides opportunities to establish bed-and-breakfasts in the city.

### Chapter Sections:

- *Introduction*
- *Population*
- *Economics*
- *Land Use*
- *Housing*
- *Visual and Cultural Assets*
- *Downtown Business District*
- *Transportation and Parking*
- *Parks and Recreation*
- *Top Five Concerns*

### Population:

- *Services and facilities*
- *Day-care facilities*
- *Services for senior citizens*

### Economics:

- *Market feasibility study*
- *Bed-and-breakfast establishments*
- *Downtown business association*
- *Job opportunities*

**Downtown Business Association.** An active downtown business association would work to promote the area and attract businesses and shoppers to the district.

**Job Opportunities.** Increasing job opportunities is essential to retain the employable residents of St. Marys. A coordinated effort, led by the community and the Chamber of Commerce, to attract businesses to St. Marys is suggested.

## LAND USE

### *Land Use:*

- *Compact residential development*
- *Limit sites for industrial development*
- *Expand the plan area*
- *Utilize the flood plain for agriculture and recreation*
- *Avoid vulnerable areas*

**Compact Residential Development.** Residential development should be directed toward areas along the periphery of the city and to areas adjacent to existing development. Land to the east and south of the Lakeview addition are two suitable sites. In addition, infill development on vacant lots within the city should be encouraged. Compact, incremental development minimizes the cost of building and maintaining infrastructure, such as roads, sewers, and utilities.

**Limit Sites for Industrial Development.** Limit new industrial development, first, to the existing industrial park and, second, to the areas immediately east and west of St. Marys.

**Utilize the Flood Plain for Agriculture and Recreation.** The flood plain should be limited to agricultural and recreational uses.

**Avoid Vulnerable Areas.** Development of areas in which natural resources are highly vulnerable should be avoided.

## HOUSING

**Increase the Housing Stock.** Rapid population growth has increased demand for housing in St. Marys. Therefore, it is necessary to add dwelling units to the community.

**Variety of Housing Types.** Single-family homes dominate the housing market, but housing for lower-income groups is not as plentiful. Therefore, there is a need for affordable housing of various types.

**Building Regulations.** To ensure the quality of houses being built, the city should issue and enforce strict building regulations and guidelines.

**Adequate Infrastructure.** To accommodate future demands on the city's services and facilities, the municipality should take measures to improve and expand its infrastructure.

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

**Enforce Regulations.** To ensure safety, law enforcement officers should strictly enforce posted speed limits along Bertrand Street, and parking regulations should be regularly enforced to ensure adequate parking for customers of downtown businesses.

**Discourage Employee Parking on Bertrand.** To increase the number of available parking spaces for potential downtown customers, employees should be discouraged from parking along Bertrand Street.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

**Improve Park Distribution.** The city should consider the addition of parks and open spaces in areas of town that are not adequately served by existing parks.

## THE TOP FOUR ISSUES

The following four recommendations are identified by the Kansas State University Planning Team as the most important issues to be addressed by the city. These recommendations are based on information provided by citizens and on the findings of studies discussed throughout this plan.

1. **Revitalize Downtown.** For downtown to remain the heart of St. Marys, attention should be given to the promotion and attraction of businesses and to improving its appearance.
2. **Provide Adequate and Affordable Housing.** Overall, the housing stock is in sound structural condition, but it is dominated by single-family dwelling units. Given the growing population and the number of residents living at or below poverty level, the community must encourage the development of a variety of housing types to meet the needs of all income groups.
3. **Increase Job Opportunities.** The need to attract new jobs to St. Marys is a common issue raised by residents. Recent and projected population growth makes this issue even more important. The community and a strengthened Chamber of Commerce should develop and lead a coordinated effort to attract businesses to St. Marys.

### *The Top Four Issues:*

- *Revitalize downtown*
- *Provide adequate and affordable housing*
- *Increase job opportunities*
- *Develop a community identity*

4. **Develop a Community Identity.** The community should identify a representative theme around which to focus promotions. The city's historic structures, original downtown buildings, history as the site of a Mission, and location along the Oregon Trail suggest that the community should capitalize on its past to improve its future.