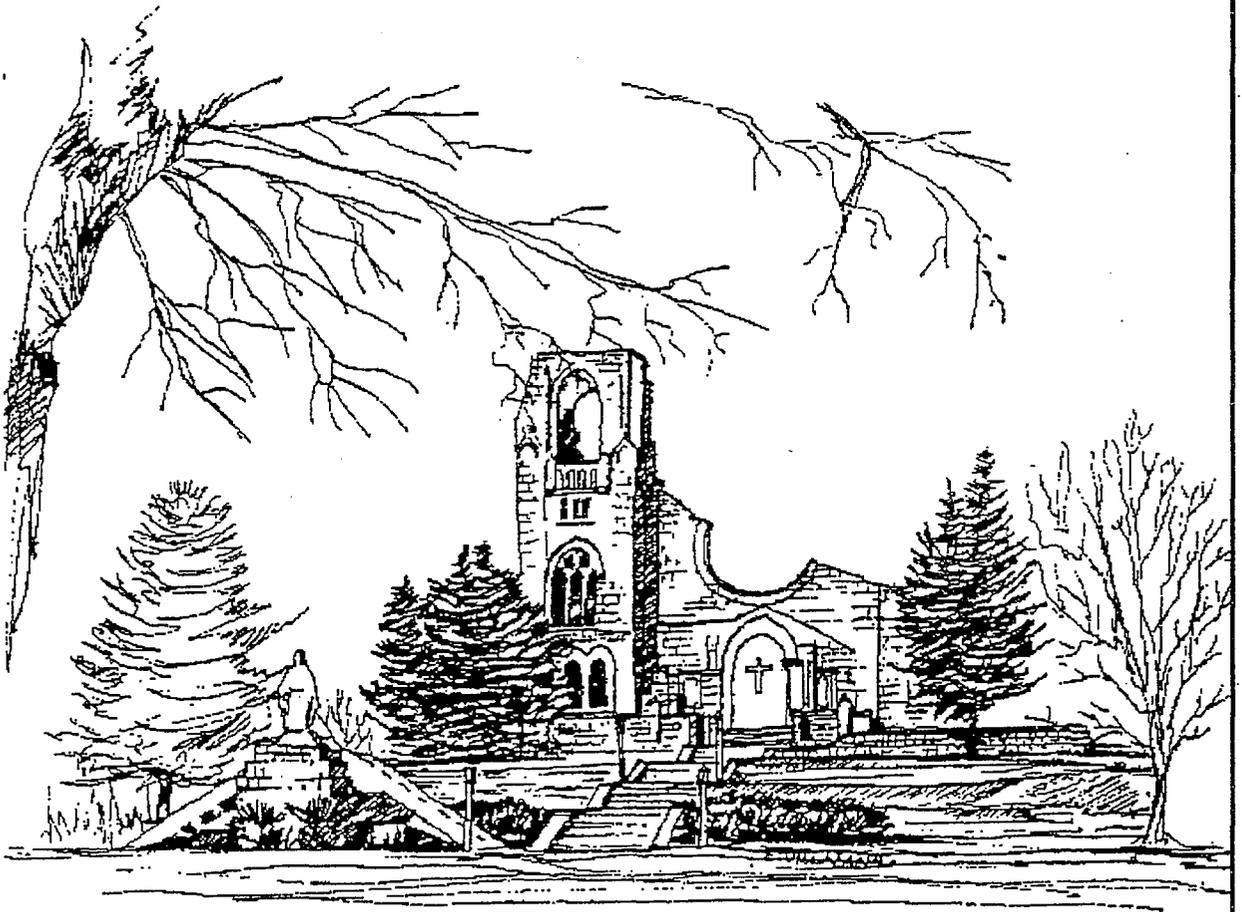


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*Land Use*

Comprehensive Plan  
Chapter Four  
Land Use

Chapter Sections:

- Introduction
- Overview of Land Development in St. Marys
- Existing and Future Land Use Analysis
- Future Land Use Recommendations

**Introduction**

A land use plan is helpful for cities when reviewing, making, or applying land use laws. The plan is intended to help direct the actions of the city to best serve the needs of the community now and in the future. The plan is based on several factors and considerations, including historical land developments, existing land use regulations (zoning), land availability, population projections, and the needs of the community.

The St. Marys Comprehensive Plan is a guide to help the city prepare for future land use needs in the city and Extra Territorial Zone (ETZ). Therefore this discussion of land use is a critical element of the plan. The chapter brings together information contained in other chapters in the Comprehensive Plan along with past and current land use data to help develop recommendations for the future. These recommendations should be considered when making future land-use decisions, including reviewing or changing zoning laws, evaluating subdivision requests, evaluating annexation requests, and issuing special permits.

The chapter begins with a description of the development patterns and needs of St. Mary since the time of its founding. This section is followed by an evaluation of land use in the current zoning districts in St. Marys. The analysis of current land use in the different zoning districts is evaluated with data found in the Population Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan. This information is used to anticipate the most likely growth to occur in the future and will help the city prepare its laws and infrastructure. The chapter concludes with recommendations to improve current land use and prepare for likely future land use needs.

**Overview of Land Development In St. Marys**

Examination of historical land development within St. Marys is discussed in this section and is defined by the most notable distinct growth patterns and causes.

**Settlement and the St. Marys Mission.** In 1857, the United States government purchased 30 square miles along the Kansas River from the Kansas Indian Tribe. The land was given to the Potawatomi Tribe, and a tract from that land was dedicated for the Catholic Manual Labor School and Mission. On that site, the Indian Pay Station, the oldest building in Pottawatomie County, was built. The pay station was constructed by the US government to serve as an Indian Agency where all business between the Pottawatomie people and the government was conducted (City of St. Marys internet homepage, 1997).

**Turn of the Century.** After it was established, the city grew in linear fashion from the mission site westward along the Oregon Trail road and the railroad. Expansion of the town to the south was

restrained by the Kansas River, and the hilly terrain of the landscape limited development to the north and the west. Therefore, most growth since the turn of the century has been directed toward the northwest (Kansas State University 1991).

St Marys was laid out in a grid pattern with small lots, service alleys, and linear streets. This pattern of development was adopted to integrate residential and commercial land uses and connect them to US Highway 40 (now U. S. Highway 24) and Kansas Highway 63 as the city grew during the 1900's.

**1970 to the Present - Industrial, Commercial, Recreational, and Residential Development .** Industrial and Commercial development occurred along U.S. Highway 24 during the 1970's. This development was of relatively high density and did not leave many vacant lots for future expansion. By 1978, the central commercial district was fully developed along U.S. 24, as were residential areas north and south of the commercial district. Commercial and Industrial properties were then developed along U.S. 24 on the edges of St. Marys, primarily on the East side of the city.

The major recreation area is Riverside Park, located to the south of the central commercial district and isolated from the residential areas in the central and northern parts of the city. A smaller park is located just north of Mission St. along Highway 63. An even smaller park is located on the north side of Bertrand between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets.

Several residential developments were constructed during the late 1970s through the 1990s, including Wildwood Terrace, Simecka, Zemek, Terrace-Woods, and Lakeview. Recent developments have been Valley View Vista and Parkside.

Another element that has occurred along with the most recent developments is an increase in the restoration of both the older homes in the residential districts and also the second floors of many downtown commercial buildings in the city. These renovations have been made mainly by young families or investors and have added many residences in the forms of single family homes and apartments.

#### **EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE ANALYSIS**

The current Zoning Map of the city and the ETZ will be used for the following land use analysis. This analysis will give an overview of zoning district percentages within the city, an estimation of vacant lots that can realistically be used in the near future (this data was taken by simply driving through all the streets of St. Marys – which takes about an hour and a half for future reference), and an estimation of future land use needs based on data both from the Population Chapter and from updated population data from the 2010 census.

This overview of the zoning districts, available lots, and future needs should be helpful when evaluating zoning changes, development requests, and other land use laws. This overview may also be helpful when evaluating future infrastructure needs within the city.

While reading this section, refer to the Zoning Map. The Zoning Map illustrates the current Land Uses by showing the Zoning Districts which regulate land use within the City of St. Marys and the ETZ. Below are the evaluations of each Zoning District and recommendations as to the current and/or future need within each district.

**Residential.** Residential Zoning Districts are broken up into R-1, R-2, and R-3. Below is an analysis of each residential district.

**R-1:**

1. Percentage of residential districts. The R-1 district is about 45% of the residential property in the city. These lots are mainly located in the developments that occurred after 1970.
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There are about ten to fifteen R-1 lots that are vacant and are potential building locations in the near future.
3. Future need. Based on population projections and the median age of the population as seen in the population chapter, in the next 5 to 10 years there will most likely be a need for more residences in the City.

**R-2**

1. Percentage of residential districts. The R-2 district is about 50% of the residential property in the city. These lots are mainly located in the developments that occurred before 1970 and are located closer to the downtown area.
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There are only one or two R-2 lots that are vacant and potential building locations.
3. Future need. Based on population projections and the median age of the population, in the next 5 to 10 years there will most likely be a need for more residences in the City. The R-2 district allows for duplexes and can be an effective way for developers to accommodate the need for multiple residences without using multiple lots.

**R-3**

1. Percentage of residential districts. The R-3 district is about 5% of the residential property in the city. These lots are mainly located along Highway 63 closer to the downtown area.
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There is only one R-3 lot that is vacant and a potential building location.
3. Future need. Based on population projections and the median age of the population, in the next 5 to 10 years there will most likely be a need for more residences in the City. The R-3 district allows for multiple family dwellings and can be an effective way for developers to accommodate the need for multiple residences without using multiple lots. Increasing R-3 zoning districts and height limits would allow more residences within the current city limits.

**Commercial.** Commercial Zoning Districts are broken up into C-1, C-2, and C-3. Below is an analysis of each commercial district.

**C-1**

1. Percentage of commercial lots. The C-1 district is about 40% of the commercial property in the city. These lots are located along US Highway 24 in or very close to the downtown area.
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There is one C-1 lot that is empty and a potential building location. Also, there are about three C-1 buildings that are apparently vacant and potentially available for future needs.
3. Future needs. The C-1 district is referred to as the "Downtown Commercial District" and has limited growth potential due to limited number of buildings and buildable lots in the downtown area. Zoning laws allow C-1 activities in all other Commercial (with a few exceptions in the C-2 District) and in all of the Industrial districts. Future commercial needs can be accommodated in the other zoning districts.

**C-2**

1. Percentage of commercial lots. The C-2 district is about 30% of the commercial property in the city. Most of these lots are located along U.S. 24 East of the downtown and the rest are in various locations throughout the city.

2. Available lots that can be built upon. There are no C-2 lots that are empty and are potential building locations. There are no C-2 buildings that are apparently vacant and potentially available for future needs.
3. Future needs. Zoning laws allow C-2 activities in all other Commercial and Industrial districts so future commercial needs can be accommodated in these districts. However, there are a few uses allowed in the C-1 district that are allowed only as a Conditional Use in the C-2 district. These restrictions may need to be lifted in the future if the need arises.

#### C-3

1. Percentage of commercial lots. The C-3 district is about 30% of the commercial property in the city. Most of these lots are located along U.S. 24 near the outside edges of the city.
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There is one C-3 lot that is empty and a potential building location. Also, there are no C-3 buildings that are apparently vacant and potentially available for future needs.
3. Future needs. Zoning laws allow C-3 activities in all other Commercial Districts (with a few exceptions in the C-2 District) and Industrial districts. Future commercial needs should be able to be accommodated in the other zoning districts.

**Industrial.** Industrial Zoning Districts are broken up into I-1, I-2, and I-3. Below is an analysis of each Industrial district.

#### I-1

1. Percentage of Industrial Lots. The I-1 district is about 50% of the Industrial property in the city. Most of these lots are located east of town in the Industrial park. Most of the lots are owned by the Pottawatomie Economic Development Corporation and are un-developed.
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There are about six I-1 lots that are empty, developed, and are potential building locations. Two of these lots are owned by the city west of city hall and the other lots are located in the Industrial Park. There are many lots in the Industrial Park area that are undeveloped. Also, there are three or four I-1 buildings (three being in the Santa Cruz strip-mall) that are apparently vacant and potentially available for future needs.
3. Future needs. The Industrial Park appears to be the main area that is available for I-1 building needs. The Pottawatomie Economic Development Corporation appears to be working towards re-platting the undeveloped lots.

#### I-2

1. Percentage of Industrial Lots. The I-2 district is about 30% of the Industrial property in the city. Most of these lots are located along U.S. 24 just west of the downtown and the other lots are located east of Grand Ave. (Custom Wood Products).
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There are no I-2 lots that are empty and are potential building locations. Also, there is one I-2 building (Bayer Stone) that is vacant and potentially available for future needs.
3. Future needs. The limited availability of I-2 property may require other Industrial or Commercial property to be re-zoned in order to provide for I-2 property uses.

#### I-3

1. Percentage of Industrial Lots. The I-3 district is about 20% of the Industrial property in the city. These lots are located along U.S. 24 on the West edge of the city.
2. Available lots that can be built upon. There are I-3 lots along the railroad west of the city that are empty but are very limited in potential building locations. Also, there are no I-3 buildings that are apparently vacant and potentially available for future needs.
3. Future needs. The limited availability of I-3 property may require other Industrial or Commercial property to be re-zoned in order to provide for I-3 property uses.

**Parks.** Parks are defined as City owned property that is open to the public for recreational use. There are three parks and also a municipal golf course.

**City Owned Property.** The city owns property primarily for operational purposes such as City Hall, the refuse area, the armory, the water tower areas, utility buildings, and similar properties. The city may want to evaluate all of its properties on a regular basis to insure efficient use of the available land and show plans for unused land.

**Extraterritorial Zone.** The Extraterritorial Zone (ETZ) consists of the area around the city limits of which the city has planning jurisdiction. Given that the ETZ is under the planning jurisdiction of the City of St. Marys, the city can annex land from the ETZ. The land in the ETZ is primarily zoned agricultural. Due to the limited space within the city limits, it is possible that some land in the ETZ will either be re-zoned or annexed for development in the future.

## **FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Historical development patterns in St. Marys.** Historical development patterns in St. Marys show small residential developments being built onto the perimeter of the city as the need arises. There are around twenty residential lots and about ten Commercial or Industrial lots that are buildable. As the population of St. Marys will most likely continue to increase, more land will be needed in and around the city to accommodate the growing population.

**Recent and Current Developments.** Parkside subdivision was the most recent development in the city and has only a few developed lots that are vacant. There is more land within this subdivision that is undeveloped (possibly another thirty lots), but, due to recent flood plain map issues, it is not known if these additional lots will be developed.

Our Lady of Guadalupe subdivision is being developed north of St. Marys and appears to be limited to five lots.

**Future land development potential Analysis.** Future developments will likely be needed. Where will they be? Here is a quick analysis of the land surrounding St. Marys and the most likely locations for future developments to occur. The analysis will begin with the area north of the city and will continue around the city starting with the northeast.

North of St. Marys has limited growth potential due to Country Breeze and Our Lady of Guadalupe developments.

Northeast of the city has some development potential, but is limited due to the Lake and waterways.

East of the city is very unlikely to be developed due to St. Marys Academy owning the property and intending to keep it for future needs as the school and parish grow.

Southeast of the city is the Industrial Park which is filling in slowly. Future development of the Industrial Park is up to the Pottawatomie Economic Development Corporation. Residential development in this area is limited due to proximity to the flood areas.

South of the city includes Parkside Subdivision, Riverside Park, the city's refuse area, and farmland. This land is limited due to proximity to the flood areas.

Southwest of the city also has limited growth potential due to proximity to the floodplain.

West of the city has development potential for residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Northwest of the city also has development potential for residential use.

As seen in the above analysis of the land surrounding the city, there is limited area for growth. If historical trends continue, there will be more small developments started as the need arises. The most likely areas for these developments to occur appear to be to the Northeast, the West, and to the Northwest of the city. As developments and land sales are unpredictable, it is difficult to say if or when any development in these areas will occur. Other land development strategies may have to be considered if developable land does not become available.

**Recommendations for the city to prepared for future land use needs.** The city can prepare for this by making sure the laws and procedures for land annexation and development are kept up-to-date and are as streamlined as possible. Also, city infrastructure and services may need to be analyzed in order to better understand what will be needed in the case that future growth occurs.