

INTRODUCTION

This document is the Comprehensive Plan for Sartell, Minnesota. This Plan sets forth the basic guiding principals that have been embraced by Sartell to shape its future. It evolved through the interchange of information, analysis and response between the citizens, community leaders, staff and public officials within the city and surrounding areas through a planning process undertaken from 2002 to 2003. The Plan was then reviewed and updated in the spring of 2009 in light of new information.

While the Table of Contents presents a clear listing of what is contained in this document, the reader will benefit from a brief overview of the organization of the Plan. This **Introduction** presents an abridged summary of the planning process and the framework within which the Plan was developed.

The **Community Goals and Strategies** chapter provides an overview of the visioning process and sets forth the general community goals and strategies.

The **Demographic Characteristics** chapter provides an overview and assessment of demographic trends within the city. An area's overall population characteristics such as age, household size, etc. are critical influences on its future. Population, household and other demographic information helps define existing conditions within the city. This information also provides a basis for future expectations with regard to growth, housing needs, economic development, land use needs and other important components of the Comprehensive Plan.

The subsequent several chapters focus on specific planning **Topic Areas** including:

- Economic Development
- Housing
- Transportation
- Natural Resources, Parks and Environmental Features
- Land Use and Growth

Each of these chapters contains an **Inventory and Analysis** of existing conditions related to the respective topic within and affecting the city of Sartell. Existing conditions and patterns of development in the city and surrounding area have a great influence on its future. Thus, accurate, complete and up-to-date information on existing conditions is essential to a successful comprehensive plan.

Each of these chapters also contains a **Policy Plan**, which includes a set of goals and strategies specific to that chapter's topic.

Some of the topic area chapters also contain a **General Plan**. These outline more specific recommendations and/or geographic representations related to the future growth and development of the city.

Finally, the **Implementation** chapter describes how the city intends to execute this Plan. It includes a description of the tools available to the city to implement the Plan.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

This project required the coordination of many participants and was undertaken through the Healthy Communities Partnership (HCP) program, which is sponsored by the Initiative Foundation. The Initiative Foundation is a nonprofit philanthropic organization that works to strengthen Minnesota communities outside of the Twin Cities metro area.

As part of the HCP program, a group of volunteer citizens, staff, elected officials and other stakeholders was established. Members represented a broad cross section of interests and perspectives throughout the city, as shown below. In addition to completing other functions of the HCP program, this group served as a task force for the development of the Comprehensive Plan. This group reviewed and commented on all work products and focused on preparing and recommending a complete set of goals, strategies and other recommendations for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. The areas of interest represented on the HCP group included:

- City Residents
- Schools
- Students
- Utilities
- Township Residents
- Mortgage Industry
- Environmental Interests
- City Council
- City Staff
- Planning Commission
- Park Commission
- Park Board
- Initiative Foundation

The city secured the services of a professional planning consulting firm, *Dahlgren, Shardlow and Uban, Inc.*, to facilitate the development of this Plan.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process began with a community ***Kickoff Meeting*** on November 19, 2002. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the HCP group and the public about the planning process and the timing and purpose of the Plan; introduce participants to the concept of comprehensive planning, zoning and other land use controls; provide an overview of existing demographic conditions in Sartell; and solicit views on issues, problems and opportunities facing the Sartell area. The project consultants lead participants through several visioning and issue identification and prioritization exercises which were used in developing the Comprehensive Plan goals, strategies and other recommendations. The results of this workshop can be found in the Community Goals and Strategies chapter.

Prior to the Kickoff Meeting, the city conducted a community survey. The results of the survey were presented at the Kickoff Meeting. The results were also used in developing

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the Comprehensive Plan goals, strategies and other recommendations. The survey results are summarized in the Community Goals and Strategies chapter. The full results can be found in Appendix A.

After the Kickoff Meeting, a series of **“Topic Area” Workshops** were held from January through May of 2003, each focusing on one of the topics that make up the main chapters of this Plan. These meetings were open to the general public and HCP group members attended. At each of these meetings, the planning consultants presented background research and analysis and elicited input in the development of goals and supporting strategies and implementation tools related to that meeting’s respective topic.

In May of 2003, the draft Comprehensive Plan was prepared. Township review meetings and an Open House were held in June. The Planning Commission reviewed the Plan in July. On July 14, the City Council held a public hearing on the Plan and adopted it.

PLAN SETTING

Sartell is a community of about 14,259 persons (based on the current State Demographers estimates) covering approximately a 3,776-acre, or approximately a 5.9 square mile, area within both Stearns and Benton Counties. The city is bordered by two townships: LeSauk and Sauk Rapids, as shown in Figure 1-1, *County Context*, below. The Mississippi River flows directly through the city on its journey from northern Minnesota to the Twin Cities and forms the border between Benton County and adjacent Stearns Counties.

Figure 1-1, County Context

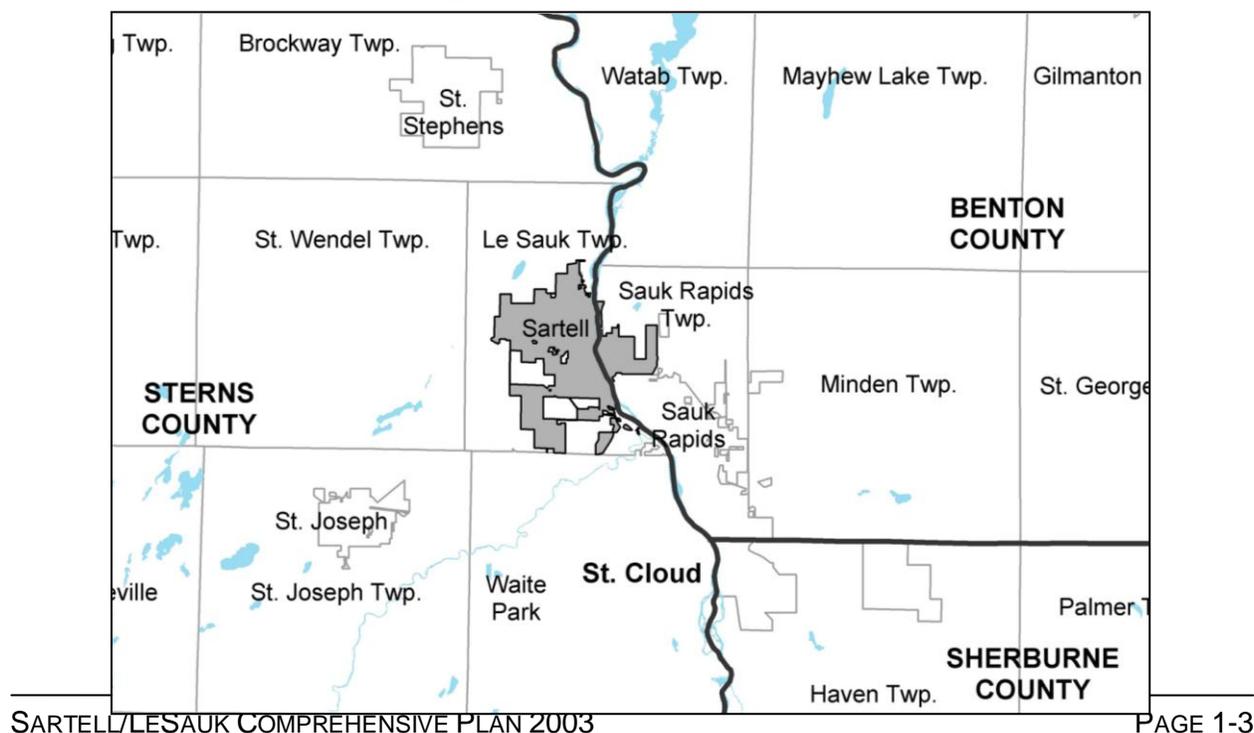
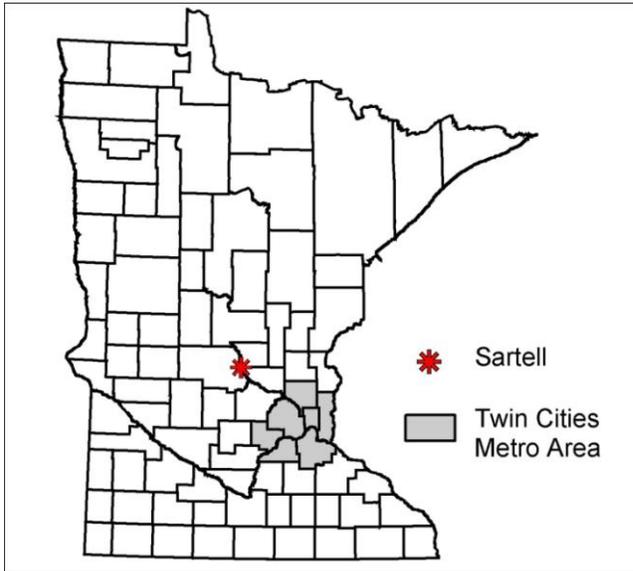


Figure 1-2, Regional Context



Located on Highways 10 and 15, Sartell lies approximately 74 miles northwest of Minneapolis and immediately north of St. Cloud. This is indicated on Figure 1-2, *Regional Context*.