

# IMPLEMENTATION

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In many ways, formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is the first step in the planning process, rather than the last, because it establishes the policy direction for the community, describing its objectives and methods to achieve them. Without continuing action to implement and update the Plan, city efforts will have little lasting impact. Each chapter outlined goals, strategies and other recommendations for each element of the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter outlines further steps to put this Plan into action.

To effectively implement the Comprehensive Plan, Sartell should:

- Review and revise several of its regulatory measures that can enforce the Plan's policies and recommendations, such as the Zoning Ordinance and subdivision regulations;
- Continue to utilize its Capital Improvements Program, implementing the most important public improvements on a priority system, while staying within budgetary constraints;
- Continue to work with the county and affected townships to eventually annex those areas identified as growth areas.
- Actively involve local residents in ongoing planning discussions and decisions;
- Review and update the Plan itself as needed to reflect local aspirations and changing opportunities.

Each of these requirements is briefly discussed below.

## ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is a governmental unit's primary regulatory tool for implementing planning policies. It consists of the official zoning map and the supporting ordinance text. The official map divides the community into a series of zoning districts, and the text describes regulations for the use of land within these districts including permitted uses, lot sizes, setbacks and density standards. It can also include design and property maintenance controls.

### Implementation Steps

- During the Comprehensive Plan implementation, the current zoning map should be compared to the adopted Future Land Use Plan map in order to clearly document valid discrepancies between the two.

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- The second step is to review, update and refine the Zoning Ordinance to implement and enforce the guidelines of the updated Comprehensive Plan. For instance, the Plan identified a need for a new Medical/Professional Business that provides for high quality professional medical office and mixed-use development, including hospitals, retail offices and senior or other medium to high-density housing.

## **SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

The Subdivision Ordinance regulates the development of land and the provision of public facilities within the community. Properly enforced subdivision regulations, coupled with zoning, can ensure proper physical development and adequate public facilities within growth areas. They normally prescribe standards for street improvements, lot setbacks and layouts, and water and sewer facilities. Subdivision regulations can also ensure that the costs of public improvements within growth areas are borne by the developers and the new residents as appropriate rather than by the established community. Sartell's subdivision regulations should be reviewed against the recommendations of the new Comprehensive Plan, and revised and modified where necessary.

### Implementation Steps

- Review and update the subdivision ordinance to implement and enforce the guidelines of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Another potential tool for implementation is the Capital Improvement Program, which establishes schedules and priorities within a five-year period. The city first prepares a list of all public improvements that will be required in the next five years, including transportation and community facilities projects. Once all projects are reviewed, priorities are assigned, cost estimates prepared, and potential funding sources identified. The city can determine which projects should be financed through annual tax receipts, which require public borrowing, and which may be eligible for outside sources of assistance.

The Capital Improvement Program allows the city to provide the most critical public improvements, yet stay within budget constraints. Many of the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan can be articulated in a capital improvements program (CIP). The discussion of transportation, parks, trails and other community facilities in this Plan will be helpful in determining capital priorities.

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### Implementation Steps

- Continue to maintain a Capital Improvements Program that includes elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Priorities may include an adequate transportation system in the growing areas of the community, adequate and up-to-date city buildings, parks and multi-use trail facilities.

## **GROWTH AREAS & ANNEXATION**

The city of Sartell anticipates further residential, commercial and industrial development and, in order to accommodate growth, has designated areas outside of the current city limits as “planned growth areas”. The city wishes to establish land use plans and policies within these areas to prevent premature development so that adequate streets, infrastructure and services can be provided in a cost effective manner. The city wants to work with the county and adjacent townships to ensure that the growth that occurs in these areas is compatible with the city’s policies and can eventually become part of the city and served by a full range of city services.

The city must work with adjacent townships and counties to ensure that when development is imminent in these areas, they are **annexed into the city in accordance with Orderly Annexation Agreements**. These areas should remain very low density until such time as they can be provided with urban services and developed at urban densities consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

The planned growth areas in the Comprehensive Plan encompass the growth areas identified in the District Plan. It also identifies a small portion of the Watab Township around the future extension of County Road 33 and its interchange with Highway 10 as an area where future planning is necessary. This area is currently outside the city’s growth boundary, but may be appropriate for future urban growth and development. The city should work with Watab Township and the St. Cloud Area Joint Planning District Board to modify the District Plan to reflect this additional area if appropriate.

In addition to the eventual annexation of lands outside the city, there are large areas of undeveloped land within the city limits. These areas should also remain very low density until such time as they can be provided with urban services and developed at urban densities consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

### Implementation Steps

- Continue to work with adjacent counties and townships to maintain very low agricultural densities until such time as development is imminent.
- Annex land within the planned growth areas as development is imminent and urban services can be made available.
- When annexed, rezone land within the planned growth areas in conformance with the Future Land Use Plan map.

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- Work with the St. Cloud Area Joint Planning District Board to modify the District Plan to include growth areas within Watab Township.

## **CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT**

This comprehensive planning effort has begun to establish a healthy dialogue among local residents concerning the future of the community. Wide publicity has been given to this Comprehensive Plan with resident involvement in the planning discussions. Because this Plan will affect everyone in the community, everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to its planning decisions.

### Implementation Steps

- Make available copies of this Plan for the public to review and discuss. This may include making copies available for review at City Hall, the County Courthouse and the public library or on an appropriate Internet web site. Individual sections of the Plan may be suitable for dispersal to those interested in moving to or doing business in the city.

## **REVIEW AND REVISION**

Comprehensive planning is a continuous process and thus the Plan should be monitored and updated when necessary. The Planning Commission and City Council should carefully review proposed changes and their implications and actively seek citizen comment on such proposals. If changes are found to be appropriate, they should be formally added to the Plan by legal amendment. In addition, every five years, the entire Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed and modified to ensure that it is an up-to-date expression of community goals and intentions.

### Implementation Steps

- Each year, the city planner will brief the Planning Commission and provide a report to the City Council on the "state of the Comprehensive Plan." This briefing should acquaint the Planning Commission and City Council with the content of the Plan, discuss emerging facts that have a bearing on the accuracy of the Plan projections, discuss land use and development activities within the last year and those on the docket for the upcoming year, and suggest an annual agenda of planning activities to assist in the implementation of the Plan.
- Review the Plan in five years and again in ten years to determine whether the Plan recommendations are still current. Revise those sections that are determined to be in need of an update.