

Heather Hanover
Chair

James Eshelman
Vice-Chair

Commissioners

Scott Dzurka, *Mayor*
Eric Hufnagel, *City Commissioner*
Eric Harger
Mark Holden
Brian Mills
Melvin Renfrow
Vacant



Chad A. Gamble
City Manager

Mindy J. Seavey
City Clerk

Kristina Kinde
City Treasurer

Michael Homier
City Attorney

Christopher Khorey, AICP
Planning Consultant

PLANNING COMMISSION

September 11, 2024

The St. Johns Planning Commission will hold a regular meeting on September 11, 2024 at 5:30 pm in the County Commission Chambers located at the Clinton County Courthouse, 100 E. State Street, St. Johns, MI. (Please use Cass St. Entrance.)

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order (5:30 p.m.)**
2. **Approval of Agenda (5:31 – 5:32 p.m.)**
3. **Approval of Minutes (August 14, 2024 Meeting) (5:33-5:34 p.m.)**
4. **Public comment for non-agenda items (5:35 – 5:45 p.m.)**
5. **Public Hearings: None**
6. **New Business:**
 - a. **Landscaping Amendment (5:46-5:55 p.m.)**
7. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Continued Discussion on height of Accessory Buildings (5:56 – 6:06 p.m.)**
 - b. **Continued Discussion on Corner Lots (6:07– 6:17 p.m.)**
8. **Informational Item: No discussion (6:18 – 6:28 p.m.)**
 - a. **Master Plan Demographics Presentation**
9. **Committee Site Plan Approvals: None**
10. **Commissioner Comments. (6:29 – 6:34 p.m.)**
11. **Adjournment (6:35 p.m.)**

Please note that the Planning Commission will take up the following topics at future meetings, depending on available time:

Future Public Hearings

- ***Noise Ordinance (October)***

Update of the St. Johns Master Plan

- ***October: Community Character Update***
- ***November: Greater Downtown Redevelopment Plan***
- ***December: Mobility Plan***
- ***February: Full Draft Review***
- ***March: Recommendation for Distribution***
- ***June: Public Hearing***

Update of the St. John's Zoning Ordinance

- ***Ordinance 92 vs Chickens Ordinance***

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PLANNING COMMISSION

AUGUST 14, 2024
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the St. Johns Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Hanover at 5:32 p.m.

Members Present: Heather Hanover, Mark Holden, Eric Harger, Scott Dzurka, Eric Hufnagel (left at 5:50 pm), James Eshelman, Brian Mills

Members Absent: Melvin Renfrow

Staff Present: Mindy Seavey, City Clerk; Chris Khorey, McKenna; Ethan Walthorn, McKenna

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Dzurka to approve the agenda as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills

NAY: None

Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JUNE 12, 2024 MEETING

Motion by Commissioner Eshelman seconded by Commissioner Holden to approve the minutes as presented.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Hufnagel, Eshelman, Mills

NAY: None

Motion carried.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS - NONE

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion on Rules for Corner Lots

Chris Khorey, McKenna, discussed: continuation of discussion in June; few proposed policy changes; Ethan Walthorn is here to discuss his survey; flagged potentially inefficient as applicant gets to choose what their front yard will be; proposal to change to the narrower lot frontage; some lots it is not as clear, but is an objective standard; secondary street frontage setbacks; talk about MC (Municipal Center) district; no side setbacks currently in GC (General Commercial).

Commissioner Harger discussed having front yard set by your address.

Ethan Walthorn from McKenna discussed: R-1 district, recommend a 20' setback would be a good compromise; R-2 district, recommend a 10' setback.

There was a discussion of:

- The non-conforming setbacks
- Standard front yard setbacks
- Average setbacks on the block in an older neighborhood
- Setbacks are an issue with older neighborhoods, not new houses.

Eric Hufnagel left at 5:50 p.m.

Ethan Walthorn, McKenna, discussed the MC (Municipal Center) district. This building is one of the only ones in the MC district that meets the setbacks.

Chris Khorey discussed a 10' setback in the MC district and it is consistent with R-3.

There was a discussion of:

- MC to 10'; R-1 to 20'; have not determined best way to decide what is the front yard.
- Share language with EMS?
- For existing properties, where your address is that is your front yard (would not be subjective).
- For new builds, go with the narrowest side.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Continued Discussion on Accessory Buildings

Chris Khorey, McKenna, discussed: building height, change to the highest point of the building possibly; 23 out of 25 did it our way.

There was a discussion of:

- An A-frame house.
- Asymmetrical buildings.
- Storing a motorhome in an accessory structure.
- If changing to height from mean height, raise to 18' or 20'.
 - Take a look at accessory buildings that have recently gone up and what the peak height has been.
- Currently, our setback is 3' from any lot line; increase setback to 5'.
- All accessory buildings on a permanent foundation; that is not defined.
 - Consistent with RV's.
 - Maybe change to all accessory buildings over 200' require a permanent foundation.

B. Continued Discussion on Amending the Noise Ordinance

Chris Khorey, McKenna, said the highlighted sections were those that were changed from last time.

There was a discussion of:

- Changes created more consistency.
- Sunday and construction noises.
- Block party at the Mint Festival.
- Sound meter.
- Examples of sound at each decibel level.

- Set a public hearing for the next meeting.

7. COMMITTEE SITE PLAN APPROVALS - NONE:

8. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Holly Thoms, Director of Capital Area Humane Society Spay and Neuter Clinic, was present. She said they were made aware of the amendment to Chapter 29 that was changed at city council meeting making it unlawful to feed stray cats. She said it did originate from your planning meeting. She discussed: they have the same goal of lowering the number of cats in your community; no one wants stray cats running around unwell; working with this since 2005; worked with Meridian Township on feral cats; four years later we are under 10; trap, neuter and return does work; feed bans don't work, smaller territory they stick around in; if you quit feeding them they don't go away, the cats become more visible looking for scraps.

Mayor Dzurka said our purpose was they are feeding other animals that are coming in such as skunks and raccoons.

Ms. Thoms said somebody on Meadowview got a ticket. She said they have been helping a resident over there and that woman has been ticketed. She said with the trap, neuter, and return they are not welcoming new cats into the community and over time the numbers will go down. They can't assist her with trapping due to the feeding ban.

There was a discussion of:

- Trap and return.
- They socialize cats under 3-4 months old and home them.
- What happens if a person takes a feral cat to a shelter?
 - They don't euthanize healthy, feral cats and the problem is indoor/outdoor cats.
- The TNR (Trap, Neuter, Release) program and if it is a formal agreement with the city?
- Pick up the food up at 8:00 pm., don't leave the food out.
- Follow-up with the city manager and enforcement officer.
- A city partnership that is proactive instead of reactive.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Mills discussed moving public comments for non-agenda items to the top of the agenda; with the noise ordinance, he discussed in June that farmers live around him and after the meeting it was ironic that at 6:00 a.m. the farmer brought out a crop duster.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Dzurka seconded by Commissioner Eshelman that the Planning Commission adjourn the meeting.

YEA: Hanover, Holden, Harger, Dzurka, Eshelman, Mills

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

§ 155.295 INTENT.

(A) The intent of this subchapter is to promote the public health safety and welfare by establishing minimum standards for the design, installation and maintenance of landscaping as buffer zones between zoning districts, along roadways, between adjacent buildings and in parking lots.

(B) The standards of this subchapter are intended to guide and encourage the protection and enhancement of the environment through requirements for site design and the use of landscape materials. Applicants are encouraged to provide landscaping in addition to the minimum requirements of this chapter to improve the function, appearance and value of their property.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.296 APPLICATION.

(A) The requirements set forth in this subchapter shall apply to all lots, sites, and parcels which are developed or expanded following the effective date of this chapter that are subject to ~~local~~ site plan review, as described in Section 155.276. No site plan or land use shall be approved unless said site plan shall show landscaping consistent with the provisions of this subchapter.

(B) The ~~City Commission~~ approving body for a Site Plan Approval as described in Section 155.276 (Zoning Administrator, Site Plan Review Committee, or Planning Commission) may also determine that ~~dimensional-existing~~ conditions ~~unique to~~ of the parcel would prevent development of required buffer zones, ~~off-street parking area~~, landscaping or green belts, without causing negative impacts on neighboring properties. If such a determination is made, the ~~City approving body Commission~~ may grant an exception from the landscaping provisions of this subchapter.

(C) The following are minimum landscape standards and the city may require additional landscaping based on individual circumstances. If applicable this determination will be made during site plan review.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.297 MINIMUM BUFFER ZONES.

(A) Buffering requirements. A buffering zone shall be established within the setback of the subject site, screening it from adjacent sites according to Table 10-1. Walls are prohibited from areas along a public street right-of-way or front yard, ~~unless approved by the City Commission.~~ The height of the wall or berm of the subject site shall be an effective height in relation to the adjacent site. Parking lot screening requirements in Section 155.297 shall be met in all applicable situations, regardless of Zoning District. Plantings shall meet the standards described in Section 155.297.B. Walls shall meet the standards described in § 155.297(~~D~~E), and berms those of § 155.297(~~E~~F). Buffers that utilize a combination of plant materials, berms, and walls shall be encouraged.

TABLE 10-1

		<u>District of Subject Parcel</u>				
		<u>R-1, R-2, R-3, R-MH</u>	<u>CBD, MC, P, T</u>	<u>MU</u>	<u>GC, O</u>	<u>I-1, I-2</u>
<u>District of Adjacent Parcel</u>	<u>R-1, R-2, R-3, R-MH</u>	No Required Buffer Zone.	Buffer Wall (Subsection D)	Buffer Plantings (Subsection B) OR Buffer Wall (Subsection D)	Buffer Plantings (Subsection B) OR Buffer Wall (Subsection D)	Buffer Plantings (Subsection B) AND Buffer Berm (Subsection F) Approving Body may approve Buffer Wall in lieu of Berm.
	<u>MU</u>	No Required Buffer Zone.	Buffer Wall (Subsection D)	Buffer Plantings (Subsection B)	Buffer Plantings (Subsection B) OR	Buffer Plantings (Subsection B) OR

					<u>Buffer Wall (Subsection D)</u>	<u>Buffer Wall (Subsection D)</u>
	<u>CBD, MC, P, T</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>Buffer Plantings (Subsection B) OR Buffer Wall (Subsection D)</u>
	<u>GC, O</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>Buffer Plantings (Subsection B)</u>
	<u>I-1, I-2</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>	<u>No Required Buffer Zone.</u>

Buffering Requirements

Subject Site

Buffering Requirements from Adjacent Sites

Single Family and Duplex Residences

None

Multi-Family, General Commercial and Offices Uses, Central Business District and Municipal Center Uses

Plantings* or a 6 foot wall/berm from all uses

Industrial Uses

Plantings* or an 8 foot wall/berm from all uses

(B) *Buffer Plantings shall consist of two trees, either canopy and/or deciduous, and four ~~large~~ shrubs per each 25 linear feet along the property line.

~~(BC)~~ When an adjacent property is zoned or used as a single family residence, and is across a public street from the subject site, the ~~City Commission~~ Site Plan Approving Body may require additional landscaping to screen parking lots access drives, loading zones, outdoor display areas, storage yards, or accessory structures.

~~(CD)~~ Parking and storage.

~~(1)~~ ~~Parking lot screens will be designed with a hedge, wall, berm or combination thereof forming a continuous screen at least 48 inches in height above parking lot grade. The parking lot screen shall be located in the buffer zone to provide maximum screening of the parking lot. Walls shall be set back a minimum of five feet from the property line.~~

Commented [CK1]: Duplicative with other requirements, creating unrealistically high requirements.

~~(2)~~ All loading and unloading areas which are visible from residential districts or public thoroughfares, shall be screened by a vertical screen consisting of structural or plant materials no less than six feet in height. Screening shall be sufficient to contain blowing debris and screen the loading and unloading areas from adjacent property owners.

~~(3)~~ All storage areas (including areas for storage of refuse) shall be screened on four sides by a fence or wall no less than six feet in height. Three screened sides may be allowed with Planning Commission approval if the applicant can demonstrate just cause. The fence or wall shall not allow light to penetrate through it. The four sides screened shall be those sides where the potential visual impact of the storage areas is greatest for adjacent property owners.

(D) Buffer wall standards. Required walls shall comply with the standards listed below.

(1) Walls shall be located on the lot line except where underground utilities interfere and/or where this chapter requires conformance with yard setback lines.

(2) Walls shall have no openings for vehicular traffic or other purposes, except as otherwise provided in this chapter, unless specifically approved by the City Commission.

(3) Walls shall be constructed of decorative concrete block, brick, pressure treated wood, or comparable nonporous materials on the exterior sides facing an affected district.

(4) Walls shall be durable, weather resistant, rustproof and easily maintainable. Wood or wood products shall be high quality durable materials as approved by the Building Inspector. Wood fences shall be sight obscuring sufficient to shield light and block blowing debris. Masonry walls may be constructed with openings which do not in any square section (height and width) exceed 20% of the surface. Where walls are so pierced, the openings shall be so spaced as to maintain the obscuring character required and shall not reduce minimum height requirement.

(5) Walls must be maintained in good condition by the property owner.

(6) Curbing, bollards, or plant material shall be required where parking is adjacent to walls. Bumper blocks shall not be permitted.

~~(EF)~~ Buffer Berm standards. Required berms shall be constructed as landscaped earth mounds with a crest area at least four feet in width. The exterior face of the berm shall be

constructed as an earthen slope. The interior face of the berm may be constructed as a earthen slope or retained by means of a wall, terrace or other means acceptable to the Building Department. Whenever an earthen slope is provided, it shall be constructed with a slope not to exceed one foot of vertical rise to three feet of horizontal distance (1:3) (see illustration). Free form naturalistic contouring and berm shaping is encouraged.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.298 REQUIRED PARKING LOT TREES AND PARKING LOT ISLANDS.

~~(A) The following standards apply to Parking lots developments which that exceed 16 spaces shall be landscaped with one tree per 8 spaces, subject to the requirements of this section.~~

TABLE 10-3 Parking Lot Trees

ZONING DISTRICT

Number of parking spaces

Multiple Family, Commercial and Industrial

1 canopy tree per 8 spaces

~~(A)~~ Tree location.

(1) All of the required parking lot trees shall be placed within an area including the parking surface and extending 15 feet from the surface edge. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the required trees shall be dispersed throughout the interior of the parking area. Tree requirements may be adjusted based on review by the Planning Commission.

(2) Parking lot tree calculations and interior parking lot tree requirements shall be rounded up.

~~(B)~~ Tree base. Each tree shall be surrounded by an area of grass or living ground cover at least 150 square feet in size and a minimum of eight feet wide to provide for adequate resources of air and water. Tree plantings shall also be protected from automobiles with curbing or other suitable device.

~~(C) Required parking lot trees. Required parking lot trees shall not be credited towards required green belt or buffer trees.~~

(D) Design of parking lot islands.

Commented [CK2]: Removing this to allow flexibility when necessary.

(1) All parking lot islands shall contain decorative material and be curbed. Islands shall be at least 150 feet in area. Each island shall be at least ten feet wide, with a depth two feet shorter than the depth of the adjacent parking space.

(2) Islands shall have a minimum of ten feet radius at the ends facing main aisles. A minimum radius shall be two foot where island is not adjacent to main traffic aisle.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.299 ~~GREEN BELTS REQUIRED ALONG AND WITHIN RIGHT OF WAY, STREET FRONTAGE LANDSCAPING.~~

The intent of ~~the green belt~~ street frontage landscaping is to provide a consistent buffer along vehicular corridors. A green belt shall be planted within or adjacent to the right of way of any public street. If planting in the right of way is not permitted by the road agency with jurisdiction in the right-of-way, or is not acceptable to a utility company, the green belt plantings shall be planted within the required setback. The ~~City Commission~~ approving body may allow such planting to be placed anywhere within the front yard if there is no front yard parking. The green belt shall meet the following standards.

(A) The green belt shall include only living materials and planting beds, except for approved sidewalks, signs, driveways and essential services.

(B) Green belts ~~within multi-family and industrial districts~~ shall include one deciduous canopy tree per 30 linear feet of the frontage including any openings for driveways, sidewalks, or easements. The approving body may waive this requirement for roadways where City streetscape has been installed.

(C) Greenbelt trees should be arranged to simulate a natural setting such as massing or staggered rows, except where a more formal arrangement is determined to be more consistent with the existing character of the city.

(D) Landscaping materials arrangement shall insure adequate site visibility for motorists, adequate clearance for pedestrians and vehicles and accessibility to fire hydrants. Refer to the visibility controls section in §§ 155.180 through 155.197.

(E) Green belts shall be a minimum of eight foot wide. Trees shall not be planted closer than four feet from pavement, curb or other structures.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.300 PLANT MATERIAL SPECIFICATIONS.

All plant material shall be free of disease and insects at time of planting, and conform to the American Standard for Nursery Stock of the American Association of Nurserymen ANZI Z60.1.

(A) Minimum plant material planting size.

- (1) Evergreen trees shall be a minimum of five feet in height.
- (2) Narrow evergreens shall be a minimum of three feet in height.
- (3) Ornamental trees shall be a minimum of ten feet in height or 1 3/4" caliper.
- (4) Large deciduous shrubs shall be a minimum of four feet in height.
- (5) Deciduous canopy trees shall be a minimum of 15 feet in height or 2" caliper.
- (6) Small evergreen or deciduous ornamental shrubs shall be a minimum of 18" - 24" spread.

(B) Plant material spacing.

- (1) Plant materials shall not be placed closer than four feet from the fence line or property line.
- (2) Where plant materials are placed in two or more rows, plantings shall be staggered in rows and/or grouped informally to create a naturalistic appearance.
- (3) Evergreen trees shall be planted not more than 15 feet on center.
- (4) Narrow evergreens shall be planted not more than six feet on center.
- (5) Deciduous canopy trees shall be planted not more than 25 feet on center.
- (6) Ornamental trees shall be planted not more than ten feet on center.
- (7) Large deciduous shrubs shall be planted not more than four feet on center.

(C) Plant material and design variety. The overall landscape plan shall demonstrate a variety of plant material with not more than 50% of any one species utilized throughout the design.

(D) Suggested (not required) plant materials.

- (1) Evergreen trees.
- (2) Juniper.
- (3) Hemlock.
- (4) Fir.
- (5) Pine. (Dwarf, Globe, Pendulous, species/Cultivars are not permitted.)
- (6) Spruce.
- (7) Douglas-Fir.

(E) Narrow Evergreens. (Dwarf, Globe, Pendulous, species/Cultivars are not permitted.)

- (1) Column Hinoki Cypress.
- (2) Blue Columnar Chinese Juniper.
- (3) Pyramidal Red-Cedar.
- (4) Swiss Stone Pine.
- (5) Pyramidal White Pine.
- (6) Irish Yew.
- (7) Douglas Arbor-Vitae.
- (8) Columnar Giant Arbor-Vitae.

(F) Ornamental trees.

- (1) Flowering crabs.
- (2) Service Berry.
- (3) Dogwood.
- (4) Redbud.
- (5) Hornbeam.
- (6) Hawthorn.
- (7) Magnolia.

(G) Large deciduous shrubs.

- (1) Honeysuckle.
- (2) Viburnum.
- (3) Mock-Orange.
- (4) Forsythia.
- (5) Lilac.
- (6) Ninebark.
- (7) Cotoneaster.
- (8) Hazelnuts.
- (9) Euonymus.
- (10) Privet.
- (11) Buckthorn.

(12) Sumac.

(H) Deciduous canopy trees.

(1) Oaks.

(2) Hard Maples.

(3) Hackberry.

(4) Birch.

(5) Beech.

(6) Ginkgo (male species only).

(7) Honeylocust (thornless and seedless cultivars only).

(8) Hop Hornbeam.

(9) Linden.

(I) Trees not permitted (as credit for site plan review/landscaping requirements).

(1) Box Elder.

(2) Soft Maples (Silver).

(3) Elms.

(4) Poplars.

(5) Willows.

(6) Horse Chestnut (Nut Bearing).

(7) Tree of Heaven.

(8) Catalpa.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.301 EXISTING TREE PRESERVATION INCENTIVES.

(A) The standards outlined below are intended to encourage the preservation of quality and mature trees by providing credits, at City Commission approval, toward the required trees for green belts, buffer zones and within parking lots.

(B) All trees over eight inches caliper shall be identified on the site plan with notations of trees to be preserved and trees to be removed.

(C) Trees intended to be preserved shall be noted with a unique symbol on the site plan and be protected during construction through the use of construction fencing at or beyond the dripline of the tree or trees to be preserved.

~~(D) Trees to be preserved shall be considered for credit only if they are located on the developed portion of the site as determined by the City Commission.~~ The City Commission ~~approving body~~ pursuant to site plan approval may allow credit for such plant material preservation if it will maintain and encourage the intent of the chapter. To obtain credit consideration the preserved trees shall be of a high quality and at least two inches caliper.

~~(E) Credit consideration for preserved trees shall be:~~

~~TABLE 10-4~~

~~Preserved Tree Credit~~

~~Preserved Tree Caliper* (Inches)~~

~~Number of Trees to be Credited~~

~~12 inches and over~~

~~3~~

~~8 inches to 11.99 inches~~

~~2~~

~~2 1/2 inches to 7.99~~

~~1~~

~~*Caliper is the diameter of a tree trunk and shall be measured at a height six inches above the existing grade up to and including four inch caliper size and 12 inches above the existing grade for larger sizes.~~

~~(F)~~ To protect and encourage the continued health and vitality of the preserved trees, the ground within the dripline of the trees shall be maintained in the existing natural state. Storage of soils or other materials during or after construction within the tree dripline is prohibited.

~~(G)~~ If preserved trees die within three years after construction the property owner shall replace with the number of trees that would have been required had the tree preservation credit not been provided. Said trees shall be replaced within 30 days of written notice from the city or within an extended time period as specified in said notice.

~~(H) The minimum number of required trees shall not be reduced by less than 50% through the use of approved tree credits. However, the City Commission during site plan~~

Commented [CK3]: Remove this and allow any trees over 2 inches caliper to count towards requirements.

Commented [CK4]: Remove this and allow as many trees as qualify to count towards requirements.

~~review, may determine existing landscaping or screening intended to be preserved would provide comparable required landscaping, buffering or screening.~~

(1G) After a site plan is approved, special permission by the City Planning Commission will be required for the removal of trees proposed to be preserved on the site plan. The City Commission may condition their removal on their being replaced with the number of trees that would have been required had the tree preservation credit not been provided prior to site plan approval.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.302 LANDSCAPE STANDARDS FOR PRINCIPAL STRUCTURES.

These standards apply only to development which requires the site plan review process. Required principal structure landscaping shall be provided adjacent to or within close proximity to the perimeter of the principal structure. Landscape design is encouraged to face or be visible from public thoroughfares and principal structures on public accessways. The area of required landscape shall be based on the total ground floor square footage of the proposed principal structure:

TABLE 10-5
Landscaping Around Principle Structures

Principal Structure

% Area of Required Landscape Based on Total Ground Floor Square Footage of Proposed Principal Structure

<u>District of Subject Parcel</u>						
<u>R-1, R-2, R-MH</u>	<u>R-3</u>	<u>CBD</u>	<u>MC, P, T</u>	<u>MU</u>	<u>GC, O</u>	<u>I-1, I-2</u>
<u>0%</u>	<u>Buildings with More than 4 Dwelling Units: 15%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>10%</u>	<u>5%</u>
	<u>Buildings with 4 or Fewer Dwelling Units: 0%</u>					

Multi-Family

15%

Commercial

10%

Industrial

5%

(A) Plant material and planting design is encouraged to be ornamental in character and based on minimum ANSI standards for plant material type and spacing.

(B) Deciduous canopy trees and large evergreens will not be counted towards principal structure landscape requirements.

(C) Shredded hardwood, bark mulch, stone mulch, or vegetative ground covers shall be utilized within required landscape bed areas. Grass, lawn or sod will not be permitted.

(D) Area calculations shall be based on the limits of landscape beds. Applicants shall demonstrate that 2/3 of the bed will be occupied by mature plant material.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

§ 155.303 MINIMUM STANDARD FOR INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE.

(A) Installation . Landscaping shall be installed in a sound workmanlike manner and conform to the American Standard for Nursery Stock ANSI Z60.1. If building or paving construction is completed during a planting season, then no certificate of occupancy will be issued unless the landscaping meets the requirements herein provided. If building or paving construction is completed in an off planting season, the certificate of occupancy will be issued only after the owner provides a performance bond to ensure installation of required landscaping in the next planting season.

(B) Material removal . Tree stakes, guy wires and tree wrap are to be removed after one year.

(C) Maintenance. Greenbelt areas and plant materials required by this chapter shall be kept free from refuse and debris. Plant materials shall be maintained in a healthy growing condition, neat and orderly in appearance. If any plant material required by this chapter dies or becomes diseased, they shall be replaced within 30 days of written notice from the city or within an extended time period as specified in said notice.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)

~~§ 155.304 COMPLIANCE FOR PRE-EXISTING SITES;~~

~~—In any case where the building and/or parking area is being increased by at least 25% over the originally approved site plan or the use is being changed to a more intense use, as determined by the City Commission, the site shall be brought into full compliance with the landscape standards herein. In situations where the increase in building and/or parking area is less than 25% over the original site plan, the requirement of new landscaping shall be equal to 4% of compliance for every 1% of increase in building or parking footprint. (example: a building or parking area increase of 10% requires a 40% compliance with the landscape standards. If any development or principal use requiring a certificate of occupancy is destroyed by any means beyond 50% of the appraised replacement value, the site shall be brought into full compliance with the landscape standards herein.~~

~~(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013)~~

Commented [CK5]: Remove this and replace with more flexibility for approving body.



Memorandum

TO: City of St. Johns Planning Commission
FROM: Jeff Keesler, Associate Planner
SUBJECT: **Accessory Building Height Requirement Amendments**
DATE: September 4, 2024

The St. Johns Planning Commission should discuss the method for measuring a building's height and determine if action to change the method of measurement is warranted.

Currently, the St. Johns Zoning Ordinance outlines maximum allowable accessory building height and the method for measuring a building's height in **Section 155.189(N)(2) Accessory Buildings and Structures – Regulations** and included below.

(2) Accessory buildings shall not exceed 16 feet in height and shall be located at least six feet from any other separate structure on the same lot and shall not be closer than three feet to any lot line, or five feet from an alley right-of-way line. Structures closer than ten feet to another structure on the same or adjacent lots must be constructed of fire-rated materials as required by the Building Code.

The current maximum height is 16 feet, as measured to the halfway point between the peak and the eaves. A proposed change to the Zoning Ordinance's method for measuring the height of a building has been brought to the Planning Commission. The proposed change would require individuals to measure the height of a building from the peak height, which in some cases, could increase the maximum allowable height beyond 16 feet.

McKenna staff have reviewed the height of all approved accessory structures in St. Johns for the past 5 years. Data shows that the overwhelming majority of accessory structures measure 16 feet in height, with only 2 approved accessory structures that were constructed to be taller than 16 feet in height.

There has been a total of 62 approved accessory buildings over a 5-year period in St. Johns.

- 56 under 16 feet to the peak
- 4 exactly 16 feet to the peak
- 1 at 19.5 feet
- 1 at 21 feet

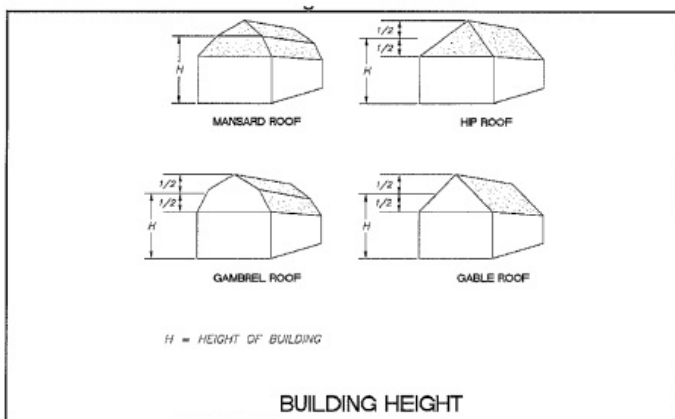
The Planning Commission should discuss whether or not the proposed method of measuring accessory building height from the peak height should be adopted and used to measure accessory building height going forward.

We look forward to discussing this topic on September 11.

BUILDING, HEIGHT OF. The vertical distance measured from the mean elevation of the finished grade line of the ground about the front of the building to the highest point of flat roofs, to the deck line of mansard roofs, or to the mean height between eaves and ridge for gable, hip, and gambrel roofs. (See Figure 3-2.)

Commented [CK1]: Should this be changed to measure to the peak of the roof in all instances? That is uncommon, but simpler.

Figure 3 - 2



§ 155.189 ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES - REGULATIONS.

(A) In a front yard. No accessory building shall project into any front yard.

(B) In a side or rear yard. The exterior wall line of a fire-resistant construction of an accessory structure shall not be constructed closer than ~~five~~^{three} feet to any lot line and the roof water runoff of the accessory building shall not be directed to any adjacent property.

Commented [CK2]: Buildings that are less than 10 feet apart require fire rated walls under the building code. Should this setback be increased to 5 feet?

(C) On a corner lot. No accessory building shall be closer to the side street lot line than the side yard setback of the principal building on the lot.

Commented [CK3]: As discussed, this is different from how chicken coops are handled, but the same as how RVs are handled. Should this be changed? Or should chicken coops be changed?

(D) Entrance. In no case shall the entrance of a garage be less than 20 feet from a street line.

(E) Distance to principal building. No accessory building shall be nearer than ten feet to a principal building. ~~For the purpose of determining lot coverage and setback, an accessory structure located within ten feet of a main building shall be considered "attached."~~

Commented [CK4]: Recommend removing this sentence, which seems to contradict the sentence before it.

~~(F) For purposes of this chapter the regulations applicable to accessory buildings shall also apply to any off street parking space on a residential lot.~~

Commented [CK5]: This is confusing and has not been well enforced. Remove it?

(G) All accessory buildings over 200 square feet in area shall be on a permanent foundation.

Commented [CK6]: What is the definition of "permanent foundation"?

~~(G) Accessory buildings may be erected as a part of or connected to the principal building, but in either case accessory buildings are considered a part of the principal building, and all yard and lot coverage requirements for a principal building will be complied with.~~

(HG) Accessory building setbacks in non-residential districts.

(1) Any part of a detached accessory building shall be at least 60 feet from any front lot line when ~~the any~~ adjoining lot, ~~including lots across the street~~, is located in a residential district.

Commented [CK7]: Proposed clarifying language.

~~(2) Accessory buildings may be erected as a part of or connected to the principal building, but in either case accessory buildings are considered a part of the principal building, and all yard requirements for a principal building will be complied with.~~

Commented [CK8]: Move this above, because it applies to all districts, not just non-residential.

(I) Principal building required. Accessory structures or buildings may only be constructed on a lot that contains a principal building. No accessory structure or building may be constructed on a lot that does not have a principal building.

(J) Appearance. The exterior facade materials and architectural design of all accessory structures ~~in residential districts~~ shall have a residential character. The overall appearance of the structure shall be in accordance with the purpose of the district where it is located.

Commented [CK9]: What does "residential character" mean?

(K) ~~Detached and temporary~~ Temporary accessory structures. ~~Detached and temporary~~ Temporary accessory structures that do not require permanent attachment to the ground but have similar characteristics as an accessory structure such as movable carports and playsets shall comply with the requirements for detached accessory buildings.

Commented [CK10]: Removing the word "detached" because it's confusing.

~~(L) Lot coverage and setback. Where the accessory structure is attached to a main building, it shall be considered a part of the main building and shall be subject to the area, lot coverage, and setback regulations of this chapter applicable to main buildings. See § 155.170.~~

Commented [CK11]: Suggest removing as this is redundant with another section.

(M) Height. ~~Unless specifically noted herein otherwise, the maximum height for attached accessory structures in Non-Residential Districts?~~ shall be the maximum height permitted in the zoning district or the height of the principal structure, whichever is less.

Commented [CK12]: Comfortable with this? Changing the definition above changes the meaning of this section.

(N) Accessory buildings and structures in residential districts.

(1) Accessory buildings shall be erected ~~only in the rear yard area~~.

Commented [CK13]: What about side yards?

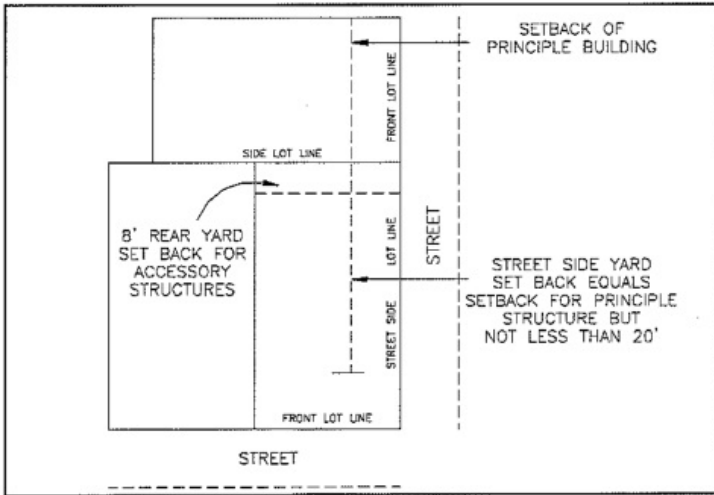
(2) Accessory buildings shall not exceed ~~16~~ 18 feet in height and shall be located at least six feet from any other separate structure on the same lot and shall not be closer than ~~three~~ five feet to any lot line, ~~or five feet from an alley right-of-way line~~. Structures closer than ten feet to another structure on the same or adjacent lots must be constructed of fire rated materials as required by the Building Code.

Commented [CK14]: Comfortable with this? Comfortable with how it relates to Section M and the definition of height?

(3) When the rear line of a corner lot abuts the side line of an adjoining lot in a residential district, no accessory building shall be within eight feet of such abutting lot line nor closer to the side street lot line than the front yard setback of the principal building on the adjoining lot, but in no case shall the setback be less than 20 feet. (See Figure 5-1).

Commented [CK15]: Confusing, but good policy. We can update the wording if preferred.

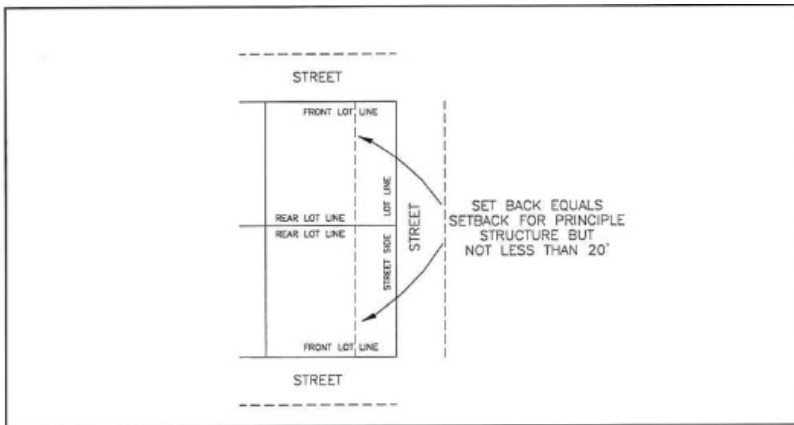
Figure 5 - 1



(4) When the rear line of a corner lot abuts the rear line of any other lot or is directly across an alley therefrom, no accessory building shall be closer to the side street lot line of a corner lot than the side street yard setback of the principal building on the corner lot, but in no case shall the setback be less than 20 feet. (See Figure 5-2.)

Commented [CK16]: Similarly, confusing language but good policy.

Figure 5 - 2



(5) Porches, decks, and patios.

Commented [CK17]: Any concerns about patio/deck language?

(a) Patios or decks constructed "at-grade" may be built within front, side and rear yard setbacks. An at-grade patio shall mean any patio, deck or concrete slab which is constructed at the approved grade level or which is elevated to a height of not more than 18 inches above the approved grade level.

(b) The surface of any attached deck that extends more than eight feet from the face of the building to which it is attached may not be higher than the first floor elevation of the principal structure.

(c) Unenclosed and/or uncovered front porches and stoops may encroach into a required front yard setback area, but in no case may be located closer than 15 feet from the front property line in the R-1 district or closer than ten feet in the R-2/R-3 district. For the purposes of this provision, unenclosed shall mean having no windows or screens.

(d) Porches, decks, patios covered or partially covered by permanent construction shall not project into any perimeter setbacks.

(e) Handicapped access ramps may encroach into the required perimeter setbacks.

(f) Decks and raised patios may be allowed to project not more than 15 feet into the required rear yard setbacks or five feet into the side yard setback, provided that the following conditions are met:

1. The deck or raised patio does not encroach into any easement.
2. The deck or raised patio is not located facing any street, except when located in the rear yard of a double frontage lot.
3. The deck or raised patio is located not less than five feet from any detached accessory building.
4. Any additional structure attached to the deck or raised patio, such as a gazebo, shall be located at least ten feet from the principal residential structure.
5. The deck or raised patio and all other appurtenant facilities shall conform to any applicable codes and ordinances.

(g) All deck hand railings and/or screening shall not be higher than 42 inches above the surface of the deck (excluding support structures for a roofed porch) without approval from the Planning Commission.

(Ord. 616, passed 9-23-2013; Am. Ord. 642, passed 4-23-2018)



Memorandum

TO: City of St. Johns Planning Commission

FROM: Christopher Khorey, AICP, Vice President
Jeff Keesler, Associate Planner

SUBJECT: **Proposed Zoning Amendments for Corner Lots**

DATE: September 4, 2024

As discussed with the Planning Commission previously, the treatment of corner lots in the St. Johns Zoning Ordinance is inconsistent and confusing. To reduce that confusion, McKenna is proposing to update the definition of “Front Yard” as follows.

YARD, FRONT. A yard extending across the front of a lot between the side lot lines and being the minimum horizontal distance between the street line and the main building or any projection thereof, other than certain specified building projections. In the case of a corner lot or other lot bounded by more than one street, the front yard will be the address for the existing property. For new construction, the narrowest street frontage applies for the parcel address, unless the ZBA approves a different street frontage and address. All other road frontages shall be considered “secondary street frontages.”

In the chart below, we have proposed additional amendments that will ensure consistency through the Ordinance, based on this rule. To test the amendments, we are providing a memo under separate cover analyzing a number of lots throughout the City.

If the Planning Commission decides to move forward with some or all of these amendments, we will update the actual ordinance text to reflect the necessary changes.

Ordinance Section	Topic	Regulations for Front Yard	Regulations for Secondary Street Frontage
155.004	General Definition	-	-
155.125	I-1 Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	35 feet	20 feet
155.135	I-2 Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	35 feet	20 feet



Ordinance Section	Topic	Regulations for Front Yard	Regulations for Secondary Street Frontage
155.170	R-1 Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	<u>20 feet</u>	20 feet
155.170	R-2 Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	25 feet	20 feet
155.170	R-3 Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	10 feet	10 feet
155.170	MC Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	<u>10 feet</u>	<u>10 feet</u>
155.170	GC Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	25 feet	25 feet
155.170	CBD Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	No Required Setback	No Required Setback
155.170	MU Minimum Principal Building Setbacks	10 feet	10 feet
155.189	Accessory Buildings	Not Permitted in Front Yard	Cannot be closer than principal building to lot line.
155.200	Chicken Coops	Not Permitted in Front Yard	Not permitted in Secondary Street frontage.
155.213	Front Yard Setback Reduction	Can be reduced to average of setbacks on block	Can be reduced to average of setbacks on block
155.214	Yard Encroachments	Overhangs, steps, terraces, etc can extend into setback.	Overhangs, steps, terraces, etc can extend into setback.
155.299	Landscaping	8 Foot-wide Greenbelt 1 Tree Per 30 Feet	8 Foot-wide Greenbelt 1 Tree Per 30 Feet



Ordinance Section	Topic	Regulations for Front Yard	Regulations for Secondary Street Frontage
		PC can allow trees to be planted outside of Greenbelt	PC can allow trees to be planted outside of Greenbelt
155.341	Residential Parking	All parking must be on paved driveway. Driveway must lead to a garage.	All parking must be on paved driveway. Driveway must lead to a garage.
155.341	RV Parking	No RV Parking	No RV Parking
155.443	Cluster Developments	35 foot minimum setback	35 foot minimum setback

We look forward to discussing this topic on September 11.

07.

Supporting Analysis: Demographics





Population

Table 1 shows the relative populations of St. Johns and the comparison communities.

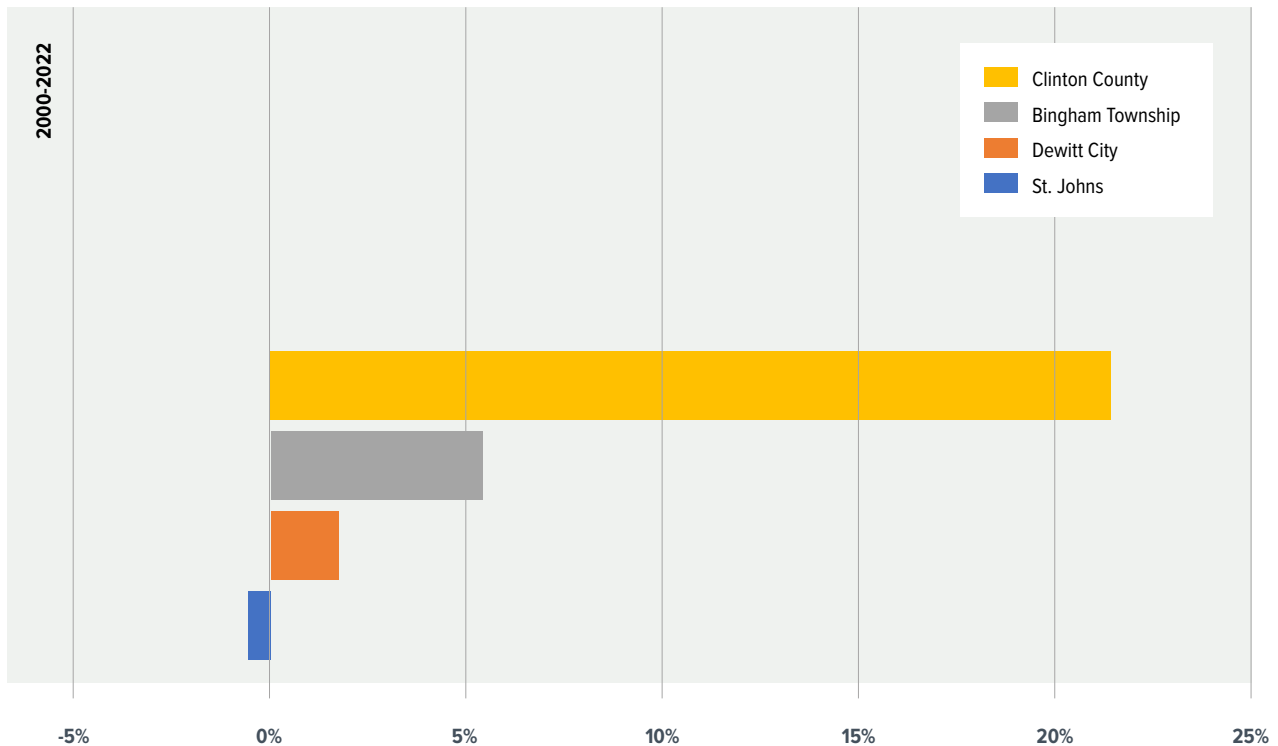
Table 1: Population

POPULATION	ST. JOHNS	CITY OF DEWITT	BINGHAM TOWNSHIP	CLINTON COUNTY
2000	7,733	4,701	2,776	64,940
2010	7,920	4,591	2,823	74,235
2016	7,951	4,657	2,896	77,245
2020	7,920	4,743	2,935	78,957
2022	7,711	4,779	2,928	79,249

Source: US Census Bureau

St. Johns has experienced a slight decrease in population since 2000, similar to the City of Dewitt. This contrasts Bingham Township and Clinton County, who have experienced major increases. St. Johns has seen an decrease of approximately 20 people since 2000, with majority of the loss occurring between 2020 and 2022. In the same time frame, Clinton County gained 14,309 residents between 2000 and 2022. Figure 5 below shows the population change over time in each of the communities of study.

Figure 5: Population Change Over Time



Source: US Census Bureau

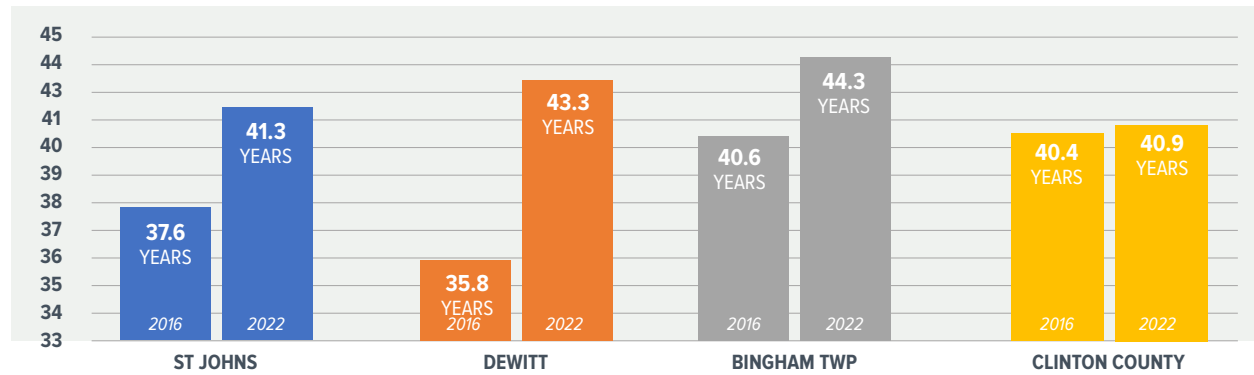
Age

The Age of a community's population has very real implications for planning and development, whether it is an increased or decreased need for schools to serve the population under 18, or a need for housing alternatives for emptynesters and older residents.

Figure 6 compares the median ages (the mid-point where half the population is younger and half is older) of St. Johns and the comparison communities. St. Johns' low median age indicates there are proportionately more young families and fewer retirees in the Village than in the other communities. In contrast, Bingham Townships' median age is high, indicating a lower presence of children in the community.

Figure 6: Median Age, 2022

Source: US Census Bureau



Age structure (analyzing which proportions of a municipality's population are in which stages of life) gives a nuanced view of the makeup of a community. To compare age structure, the population is divided into the following groupings:

- » Under 5 (Pre School)
- » 5 to 19 (School Aged)
- » 20 to 44 (Family Forming)
- » 45 to 64 (Mature families)
- » Over 65 (Retirement)

Table 2 shows the gender breakdown in each of the above age categories for all the communities of study. The values are measured in percentages. The percentage represents the ratio of males or females in each age category when compared to the total number of males and females for each community. For example, males under 5 years old in St. Johns make up 5.7% of all males in St. Johns. 5.7% of St. Johns male population of 3,748 is 236 males under the age of 5 in St. Johns. Generally speaking, the gender ratios are similar across all age categories and communities.

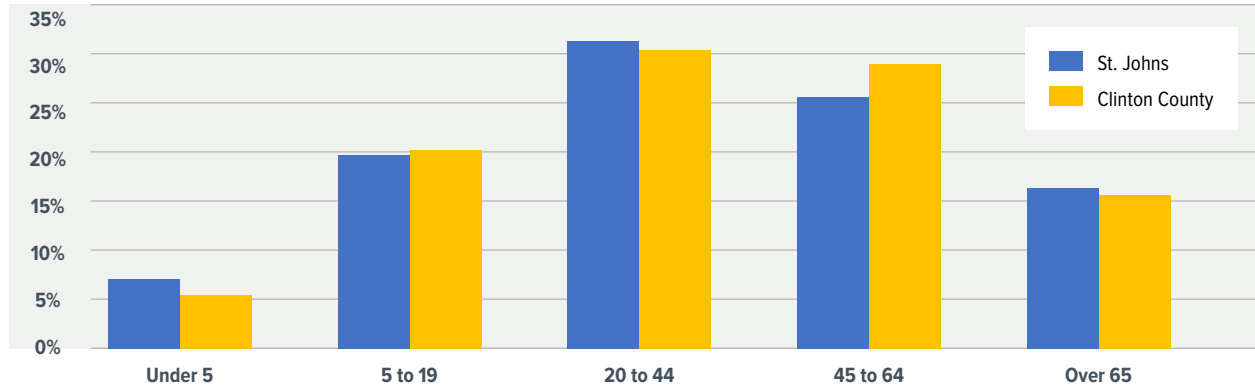
Table 2: Gender Breakdown by Age Structure, 2022

	ST. JOHNS		DEWITT CITY		BINGHAM TOWNSHIP		CLINTON COUNTY	
	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES
Under 5	6.3%	5.2%	5.2%	6%	6%	2.2%	5.4%	5.1%
5 to 19	24.9%	17.8%	19.1%	18.6%	20.4%	23.7%	19.5%	18.0%
20 to 44	28.3%	25.2%	29.8%	27.1%	23.9%	24.9%	31.4%	30.2%
45 to 64	25.9%	27.9%	29.8%	31.9%	33.6%	26.4%	27.1%	27.7%
Over 65	14.6%	23.8%	16%	16.4%	16.1%	22.8%	16.5%	19.0%
TOTAL	3,748	3,963	2,204	2,575	1,505	1,423	39,424	39,825

Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 7 compares the age structure of St. Johns with that of Clinton County overall. St. Johns and the County have very similar distributions, however, Clinton County as a whole holds a slightly higher percentage of 45 to 64 year olds while St. Johns holds a higher percentage of the 20 to 44 age category. This likely means that St. Johns has a higher percentage of families with young children.

Figure 7: Age Structure, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau

Racial Composition

This section compares the racial composition of St. Johns, the City of Dewitt, Bingham Township, and Clinton County. The values are given as percentages of the total population for each of the communities of study. Table 3 displays the number of individuals in each of the following race categories:

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian
- Asian
- Two or more races
- Other

All the communities of study are predominantly white, with each community containing at least 94% white residents.

Table 3: Racial Composition, 2020

	ST. JOHNS	DEWITT CITY	BINGHAM TOWNSHIP	CLINTON COUNTY
White	96.2%	96.3%	97.3%	94.4%
Black or African American	0.8%	1.6%	0.6%	2.2%
Native American	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
Asian	0.6%	1.2%	0.4%	2.5%
Other or More Than One	2.0%	0.6%	1.5%	0.6%
TOTAL	7,019	4,379	2,753	71,959

Source: US Census Bureau,

Education

This section analyzes the level of Educational Attainment in St. Johns for persons aged 25 or older. Overall, St. Johns, the comparison communities, and the County all have decreasing percentages in the less than high school educational attainment category over time. Simultaneously, all geographies of study have increased percentages in college attendance categories. Table 4 shows that St. Johns has a higher percentage of high school graduates when compared to the other geographies. Additionally, they have the highest college attendance percentage when compared to the other geographies. This indicates that high school graduates in St. Johns are not pursuing college education a higher rate than the other study areas.

Table 4: Educational Attainment, Percentage of Population, 2020 and 2022

	ST. JOHNS		DEWITT		BINGHAM		CLINTON	
	2020	2022	2020	2022	2020	2022	2020	2022
Less than High School	6.1	6.2	3.2	2.8	8.9	7.2	4.9	4.9
High School Graduate	93.9	93.8	96.8	97.2	91.1	92.8	95.1	95.1
Attended College	62.9	58.3	54.9	56.6	59.7	58.6	56.5	57.6
Associate Degree	13.7	13	7.7	8.8	11.5	10.7	12.2	12.5
Bachelor's Degree	23.8	23.6	46.5	45.1	23.5	23.3	32.1	32.3
Graduate or Professional Degree	7.5	7.6	18.8	20.2	4.9	5.5	11.8	11.9

Source: US Census Bureau

Economics

INCOME

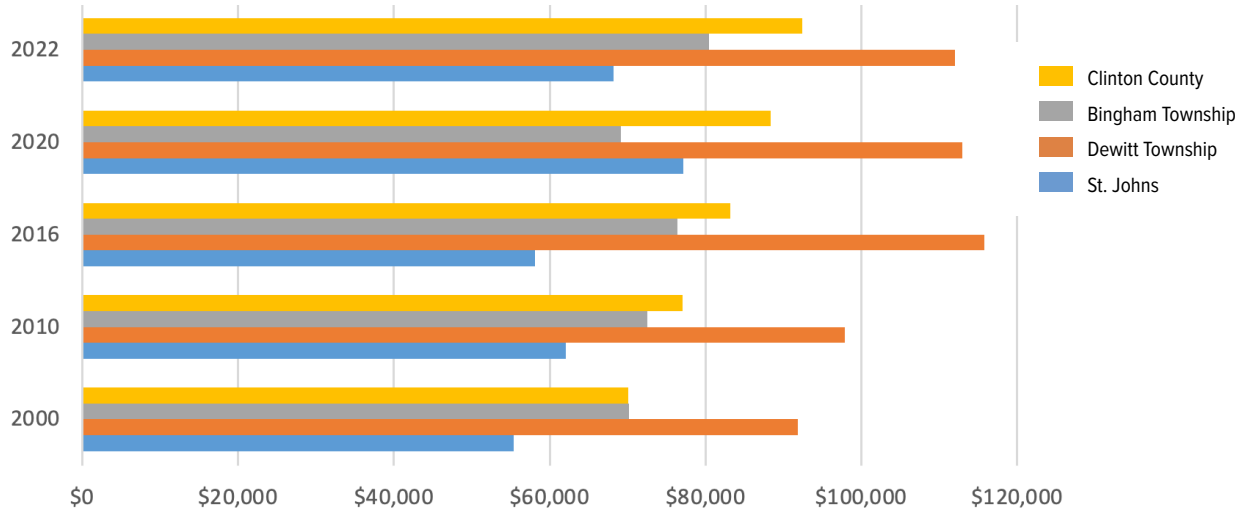
As shown in Table 5, St. Johns Median Household Income is significantly lower than the comparison communities and Clinton County. Businesses in St. Johns can benefit from Dewitt's relative prosperity due to the proximity of the two communities.

Table 5: Median Household Income

	ST. JOHNS	CITY OF DEWITT	BINGHAM TOWNSHIP	CLINTON COUNTY
2000	\$55,380.00	\$91,838.42	\$70,169.94	\$70,107.55
2010	\$62,038.13	\$97,848.66	\$72,515.89	\$77,024.57
2016	\$58,104.32	\$115,810.35	\$76,408.54	\$83,171.56
2020	\$77,196.55	\$112,969.13	\$69,093.19	\$88,385.92
2022	\$68,234.91	\$111,988.90	\$80,411.61	\$92,403.70

Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 8: Growth in Median Income Since 2000

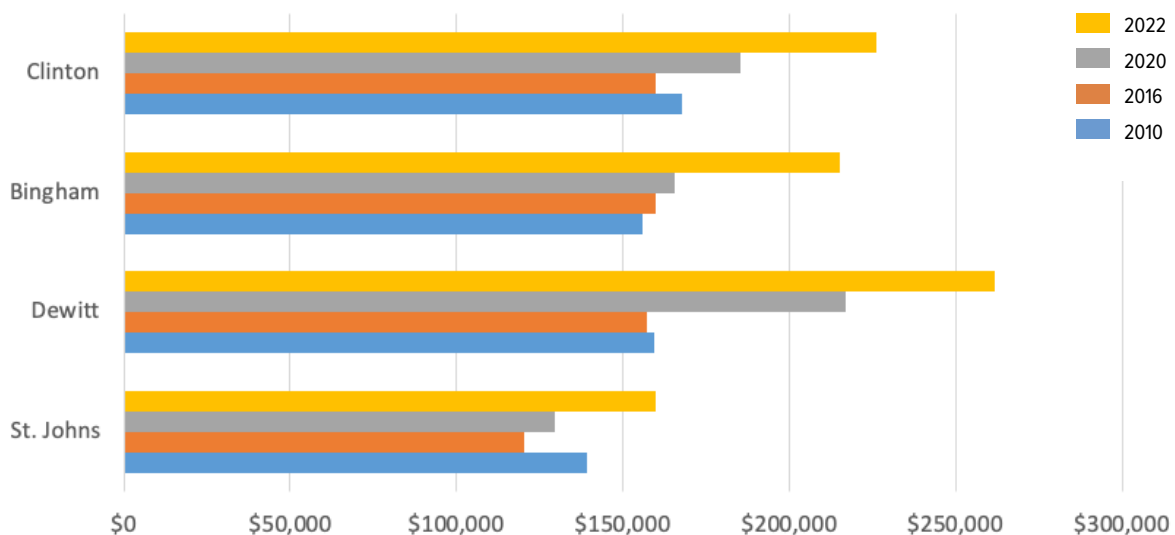


The median household income for St. Johns and Dewitt had different starting points in 2000 but grew at similar rates between 2000 and 2010. However, between 2010 and 2016 Dewitt’s median household income sky rocketed while St. Johns’ decreased by approximately \$3,000. Clinton County and Bingham Township started at nearly the same median household income in 2000 but Clinton County grew at a slightly faster rate than Bingham Township that accounts for the \$5,000 difference in their respective median household income we see in 2016.

HOME VALUE

The value of the homes in St. Johns is a key measure because housing prices are indicative of quality of life and the health of the economy. Currently, the median home value in St. Johns is \$159,700. As shown in Figure 9, homes in all communities of study gained value at a near parallel rate between 2000 and 2010. However, between 2010 and 2016 there wasn’t any significant gained housing value, with St. Johns and Clinton County actually losing housing value. The value has since regained in each community between 2016 and 2022.

Figure 9: Change in Median Home Value



Source: US Census Bureau

OCCUPATION

This section shows the employment of St. Johns residents. This is not an analysis of what kind of employment is offered or what businesses are located within the community, but rather what occupation members of the community are employed in, regardless of where they work. Thus, commuters from St. Johns to other areas are counted in this analysis, but not commuters into St. Johns from other areas.

Table 6 indicates that St. Johns has similar proportions to Clinton County overall. The greatest occupational sector for both St. Johns and Clinton County is Educational and Health Services. This industry proves to be crucial for both municipalities.

Table 6: Occupational Sectors, 2016, 2020, and 2022

	ST. JOHNS						CLINTON COUNTY					
	2016		2020		2022		2016		2020		2022	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Agriculture and Mining	50	1.5%	61	1.6%	33	0.9%	1,050	2.9%	841	2.2%	786	2.0%
Construction	225	6.8%	121	3.1%	136	3.7%	2,178	5.9%	2,457	6.3%	2,521	6.4%
Manufacturing	394	11.9%	420	10.8%	383	10.5%	4,123	11.2%	4,633	11.9%	4,699	12.0%
Transportation and Utilities	124	3.7%	57	1.5%	148	4.1%	1,378	3.8%	1,383	3.5%	1,790	4.6%
Information	16	0.5%	34	0.9%	23	0.6%	546	1.5%	412	1.1%	320	0.8%
Wholesale Trade	57	1.7%	234	6.0%	243	6.7%	797	2.2%	1,161	3.0%	1,000	2.5%
Retail	555	16.7%	426	10.9%	345	9.5%	3,625	9.9%	3,588	9.2%	3,918	10.0%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	243	7.3%	319	8.2%	238	6.5%	2,797	7.6%	3,373	8.6%	3,449	8.8%
Tourism and Entertainment	159	4.8%	349	8.9%	252	6.9%	2,780	7.6%	2,581	6.6%	2,572	6.5%
Education and Health Care	829	25%	984	25.2%	925	25.4%	9,034	24.6%	10,045	25.7%	9,930	25.3%
Professional Services	234	7.1%	344	8.8%	330	9.1%	3,462	9.4%	3,250	8.3%	2,964	7.5%
Other Services	240	7.2%	208	5.3%	201	5.5%	1,774	4.8%	1,773	4.5%	1,661	4.2%
Government	191	5.8%	346	8.9%	383	10.5%	3,167	8.6%	3,589	9.2%	3,683	9.4%

Source: US Census Bureau

COMMUTING

Because of St. Johns proximity to regional centers like Lansing / East Lansing and Mount Pleasant, as well as the accessibility of the Grand Rapids metropolitan area, many residents commute to these areas. Table 7 shows the commute time of St. Johns residents. The mean commute time is 21.1 minutes, a commute that could reach Dewitt or Lansing.

Table 7: Commute Destinations

TIME OF COMMUTE	PLACES OF WORK	PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS		
		2016	2020	2022
Under 10 Minutes	St. Johns / Bingham Township	32.3	30.4	34.1
10-19 Minutes	Dewitt	15.5	15.3	10.3
20-29 Minutes	Alma, Lansing, Holt	15.9	22.7	21.2
30-44 Minutes	Mount Pleasant, Eaton Rapids, Fowlerville	29.3	25.5	26.3
45-59 Minutes	Clare, Jackson, Howell	3.7	2.9	3.6
Over 60 Minutes	Kentwood / Grand Rapids, Battle Creek	3.1	3.3	4.5

Source: US Census Bureau

Retail Gap Analysis

A retail gap analysis was performed focusing on the St. Johns area and its greater surrounding area within 30 minutes driving distance. A retail gap analysis looks at the supply and demand of certain types of retail categories within a certain geographic area, the identified trade area, to determine the gap in supply. A positive gap indicates there is more demand than supply and that a new store could potentially open to fill a particular need. A negative gap indicates that there is more supply than demand, meaning either that some existing stores may be in danger of going out of business or that additional demand is coming from outside the identified trade area. Demand coming from outside the trade area may indicate that this location or a specific store is a unique destination to consumers, and may be part of a draw for tourists visiting a community.

Once the retail gap is calculated, it is compared with the average sales per square foot to determine the square footage of demand for that type of retail. The square footage of demand is then compared with the square footage of a typical store to produce an estimate for the number of new stores demanded in that retail category. The number of new stores demanded for trade areas of 10 and 30 minutes from the downtown by car are shown in the following analysis.

The 10-minute drive area includes the entire City of St. Johns, Bingham Township, and parts of other surrounding townships. There is a small amount of demand for new clothing stores, specialty food stores, and general merchandise stores, but overall there is still not much new demand in this trade area. This shows that the existing retail businesses are adequately serving the population except for a few categories. Potential new businesses should focus on reaching a customer base from beyond this trade area. For example, St. Johns is considered by many to be the beginning of “up north” and could build a retail identity reflective of that; stores with general outdoor gear for hunting, camping, and fishing would attract people driving up US 127 to stop for supplies on their way up north. However, there is little local demand for specialty goods stores, so general merchandise stores that are tailored to retail needs such as outdoor gear would be more successful than smaller individual stores would.

The 30-minute drive area includes most of the surrounding rural areas and reaches communities as far away as Ionia to the west, Alma to the North, Owosso to the east, and Lansing to the south. This trade area

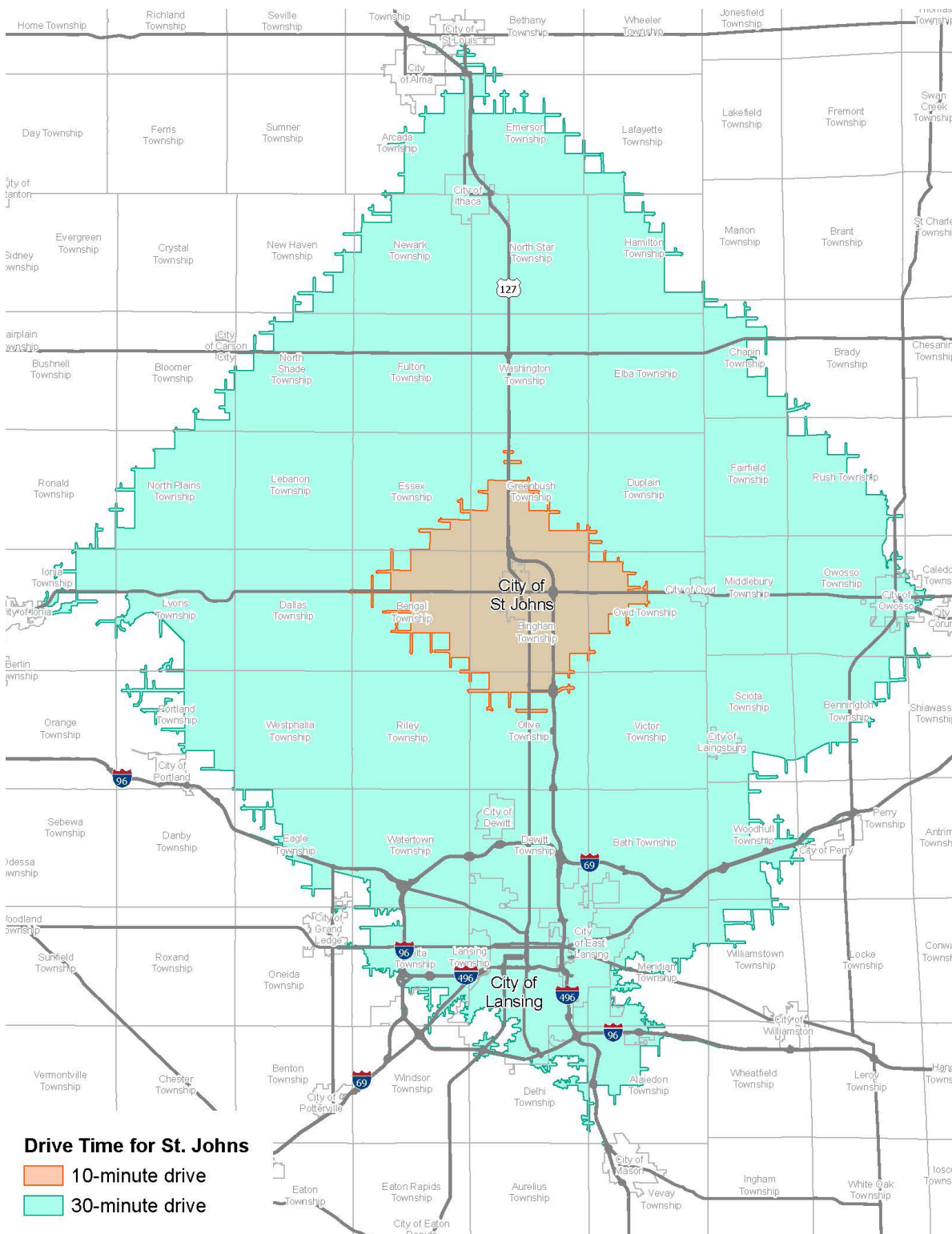
shows unmet demand in several categories with gas stations (17) and beer, wine, and liquor stores (5) showing the most potential. Although there is unmet demand in several retail categories, the extent of the trade area also means this demand can be met with a new store in another part of the trade area. Business owners may find success reaching a broader customer base in the trade area and meeting this demand, but should also create something unique to fill a niche among the greater competition.

Table 8: Retail Gap Analysis

RETAIL CATEGORY	NUMBER OF NEW STORES DEMANDED	
	10-Minute Drive	30-Minute Drive
Automobile Dealers	0	1
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	0	3
Auto Parts Stores	0	0
Furniture Stores	0	2
Home Furnishings Stores	0	1
Electronics and Appliance Stores	0	2
Building Materials and Supplies Dealers	0	0
Lawn and Garden Equipment Stores	0	0
Grocery Stores	0	0
Specialty Food Stores	1	0
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	0	5
Health and Personal Care Stores	0	0
Gas Stations	0	17
Clothing Stores	1	2
Shoe Stores	0	2
Jewelry or Luggage Stores	0	2
Sporting Goods, Hobby, and Music Stores	0	0
Book Stores	0	0
Department Stores	0	1
General Merchandise Stores	1	0
Florists	0	0
Office Supplies Stores	0	0
Used Merchandise Stores	0	1
Special Food Services	0	0
Bars	0	1
Restaurants	0	0

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2017

Map 10: Retail Gap Analysis Trade Areas



Housing

This section analyzes the composition and characteristics of households in St. Johns. Households are an important unit of analysis because changes in the number of households are an indication of changing demand for housing units, retail, and services. Tracking household changes ensures sufficient land is set aside for the future to accommodate future growth and demand for housing.

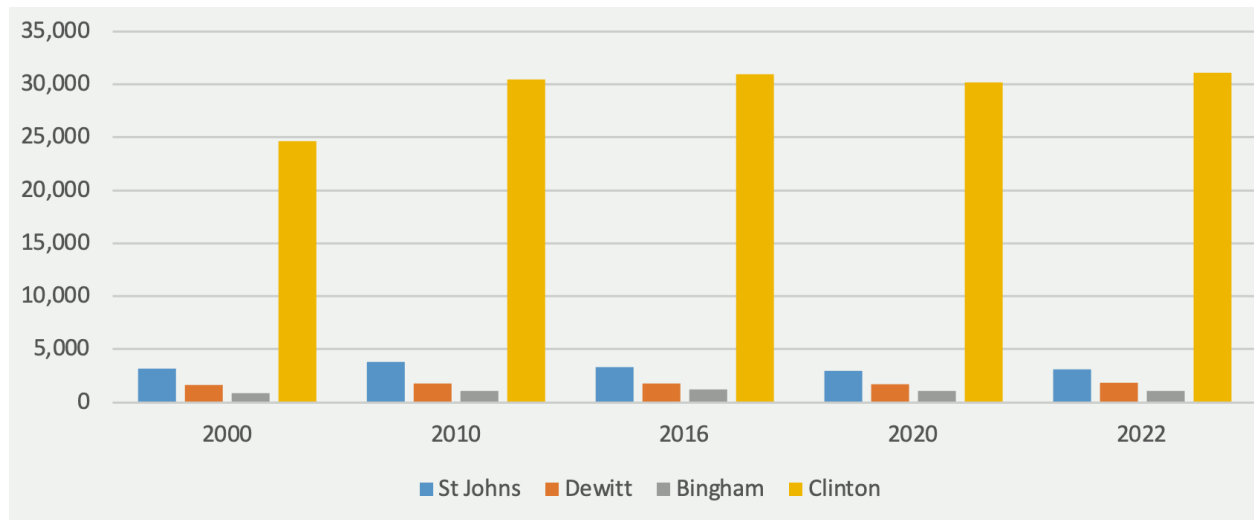
Table 9: Number of Households

HOUSEHOLDS	ST. JOHNS	CITY OF DEWITT	BINGHAM TOWNSHIP	CLINTON COUNTY
2000	3,148	1,624	868	24,630
2010	3,781	1,760	1,074	30,423
2016	3,345	1,749	1,209	30,974
2020	2,947	1,723	1,084	30,182
2022	3,089	1,822	1,079	31,060

Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 10 shows the household trends in St. Johns and the comparison communities between 2000 and 2022. All communities of study saw a large increase in the number of households between 2000 and 2010. St. Johns saw a significant decrease in the number of households between 2010 and 2016. Most have since seen an increase again since 2016.

Figure 10: Change in Number of Households



Source: US Census Bureau

Average Household Size is also an important indicator of community composition. Larger average household size generally means more children and less single-parent families. Nationally, household sizes are shrinking as young singles wait longer to get married and life expectancy increases for the senior population. Table 10 compares the change in average household size since 2000 across St. Johns, the comparison communities, and the County. Average household size in St. Johns is smaller than the comparison communities, and the County. The size of households is slightly declining in each of the municipalities.

Table 10: Average Household Size

	ST. JOHNS	CITY OF DEWITT	BINGHAM TOWNSHIP	CLINTON COUNTY
2000	2.43	2.89	2.87	2.7
2010	2.36	2.72	2.75	2.6
2016	2.43	2.79	2.57	2.64
2020	2.55	2.75	2.75	2.59
2022	2.38	2.60	2.71	2.53

Source: US Census Bureau

This section analyzes the types of housing present in St. Johns and their proportions, as compared to the proportions in Clinton County at large. As Table 11 shows, St. Johns has a higher rate of single family attached, two-family and multiple family units when compared to Clinton County. However, Clinton County has a higher rate of single family detached units as well as mobile home units when compared to St. Johns.

Table 11: Housing Type, 2016, 2020, and 2022

	ST. JOHNS						CLINTON COUNTY					
	2016		2020		2022		2016		2020		2022	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Single Family Detached	2,078	62.1	2,169	73.6	2,235	72.4	24,289	78.4	24,395	80.8	24,774	79.8
Single Family Attached	107	3.2	156	5.3	130	4.2	686	2.2	756	2.5	949	3.1
Two-Family	125	3.7	32	1.1	51	1.7	284	0.9	277	0.9	346	1.1
Multiple Family	905	27.1	514	17.4	610	19.7	3,811	12.4	2,810	9.3	3,254	10.5
Mobile Home	130	3.9	76	2.6	63	2.2	1,896	6.1	1,944	6.4	1,737	5.6
TOTAL	3,345		2,947		3,089		30,974		30,182		31,060	

Source: US Census Bureau

Housing Tenure describes how housing is occupied – by the owner, by a renter, or whether it is vacant. Table 12 shows that while St. Johns has a majority of owner-occupied properties, it also has a healthy proportion of renters. All the communities of study have a relatively low vacancy rate. St. Johns has the highest vacancy rate as well as the highest renter rate.

Table 12: Housing Tenure, 2016, 2020, and 2022

	ST. JOHNS			CITY OF DEWITT			BINGHAM TOWNSHIP			CLINTON COUNTY		
	2016	2020	2022	2016	2020	2022	2016	2020	2022	2016	2020	2022
Owner	56.5%	73.3%	71.3%	74.0%	81.8%	77.4%	78.5%	81.5%	87.1%	74.5%	82.1%	82.0%
Renter	36.5%	26.7%	28.7%	21.5%	18.2%	22.6%	14.7%	18.5%	12.9%	18.84%	17.9%	18.0%
Vacant	7.0%	8.82%	8.09%	4.52%	0.92%	2.46	6.78%	5.41%	4.60%	6.63%	5.55%	5.58%

Source: US Census Bureau

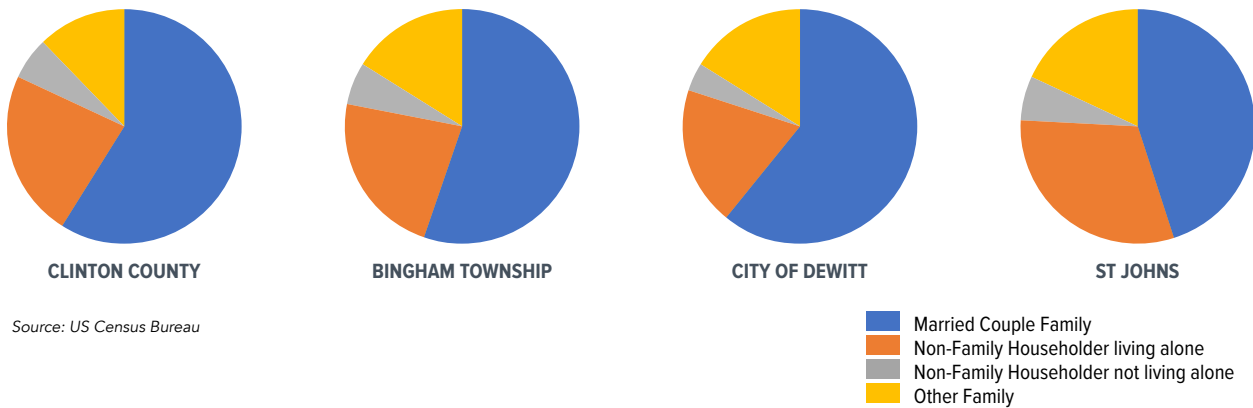
Household Composition details the occupancy characteristics of households within a community. Household Composition categories include; married-couple family, non-family householder living alone, non-family householder not living alone, and other family. The following Table depicts the household compositions for Clinton County, Bingham Township, Dewitt, and St. Johns.

Table 13: Housing Composition, 2016

	ST. JOHNS			DEWITT CITY			BINGHAM TOWNSHIP			CLINTON COUNTY		
	2016	2020	2022	2016	2020	2022	2016	2020	2022	2016	2020	2022
Married Couple Family	44.9%	47.8%	43.4%	61.2%	64.3%	59.5%	55.6%	57.2%	66.1%	58.6%	55.6%	54.8%
Non-Family Householder living alone	31.3%	32.7%	36.6%	19.3%	20.1%	20.9%	23.2%	20.8%	18.7%	23.3%	24.8%	24.2%
Non-Family Householder not living alone	5.5%	4.2%	2.0%	3.6%	3.2%	6.8%	5.5%	2.6%	1.4%	6.3%	6.5%	7.7%
Other Family	18.3%	15.3%	18%	15.9%	12.4%	12.9%	15.7%	19.4%	13.8%	11.8%	13.2%	13.4%

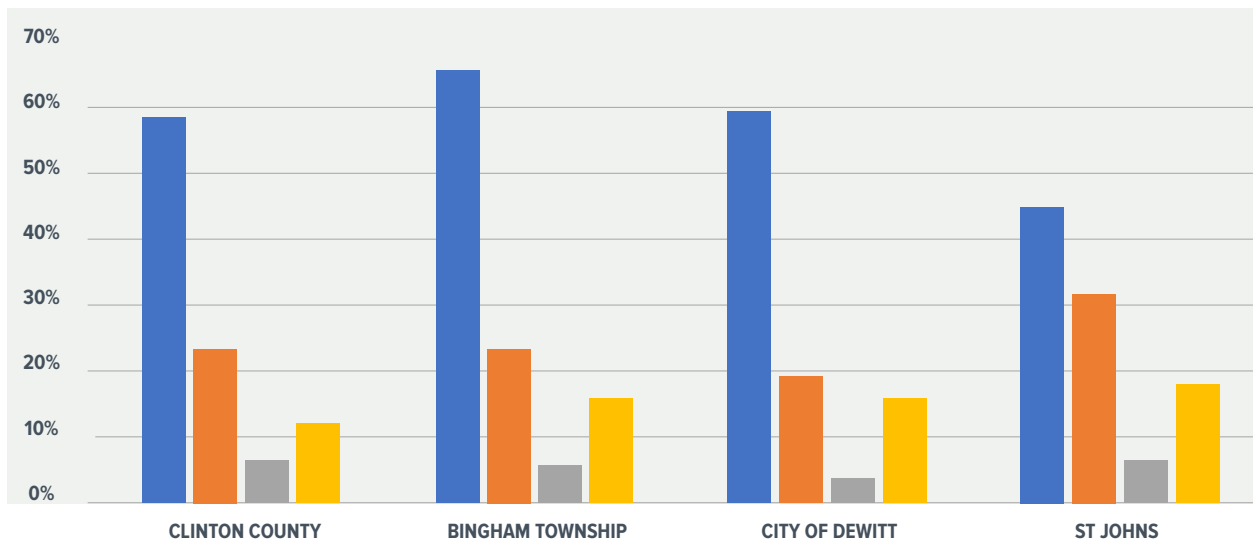
Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 11: Household Composition, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau

Figure 12: Household Composition Comparison, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau

Generally speaking, the communities are similar in household composition categories. However, St. Johns has a lower percentage of married couple family and a higher percentage of other family. Additionally, when compared to the comparison communities St. Johns has more non-family householders living alone.

Summary

There are several key points from each section that should be noted. There has been an overall decrease in population from 2010 to 2022. About 20 people left to St. Johns between 2000 and 2022. The median age in the community (41.3) is higher compared to Clinton County (40.9). This supports the conclusion that St. Johns has a higher percentage of people ages 65 and over as compared to the County. However, the most prevalent difficulty in St. Johns is ambulatory difficulty. This is having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. Hearing difficulty is the next largest disability group in St. Johns.

St. Johns has a large white population which makes up 97.9% of the population. St. Johns has the highest percent of individuals that do not have a high school degree and are over 25 years of age compared to the surrounding communities with the exception of Bingham Township. Compared to Bingham Township, and Clinton County they also have the highest number of residents with a college education with the exception of Dewitt City.

St. Johns saw a large increase in the number of households between 2000 and 2010 with an increase of about 600 households. There was a decrease of 400 households between 2010 and 2016 and an additional 256 households between 2016 and 2022. St. Johns has a lower average household size than the surrounding communities and it has decreased since 2020. St. Johns has a higher rate of single family attached, two-family, and multiple family units when compared to Clinton County. However, Clinton County has a higher rate of single-family detached units as well as mobile homes when compared to St. Johns. St. Johns has the highest vacancy rate as well as the highest renter rate at 8.09% and 28.7% renter when compared to the surrounding communities. However, the renter rate has decreased significantly since 2016. St. Johns has a lower percentage of married couple family and a higher percentage of other family. Additionally, when compared to the comparison communities, St. Johns has more non-family householders living alone.

St. Johns had a median income that grew with the surrounding communities and the County but around the year 2010 the median income decreased while the surrounding communities increased. The median income has since increased again to \$60,991. The housing value in St. Johns follows a similar trend with housing values going up between 2000 and 2010 but decreasing between 2010 and 2016 and then increasing again in 2022. Currently, the median home value in St. Johns is \$159,700. The residents of St. Johns work in similar fields as residents in the rest of the County. However, there is a large number of employees that work in Education and Health Care. The mean commute time is 21.1 minutes and is a commute that could reach Dewitt or Lansing.