

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Montgomery is committed to serving the public in an efficient, effective and professional manner. The purpose of this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is to review existing services and facilities and reflect on the impact of forecast growth upon said facilities and services. Contents include:

- An overview of existing municipal facilities;
- An overview of other community facilities;
- A description of municipal boards and commissions;
- A summary of public input relating to municipal facilities and services; and
- Objectives and Policies for Community Facilities and Public Services.

Montgomery incorporated in 1902. The City of Montgomery operates under a “Council-Administrator Plan”. The City Administrator is responsible for administration of the city and its various departments.

The mission statement reads, “The mission of the City of Montgomery is to provide a positive environment where families thrive.”

## I. EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Locations of current municipal and community facilities are noted on Map 8-1.

### 1. City Hall: 201 Ash Avenue SW

The City’s Administrative Offices are located in a one-story building, which was constructed in 1974. The current facility is in good condition. Offices in the facility include administration, the City Council Chambers, fire department and ambulance facility. According to a facility study, additional space is needed for the departments.

Staff members for administrative functions include a City Administrator, Clerk-Treasurer and Utility Billing Clerk. The City currently contracts building inspection services with a private inspection firm.

Administrative responsibilities include:

- **City Administrator** - The City Administrator is in charge of all day to day operations of City business. The Administrator coordinates the operation of all departments, coordinates efforts to meet goals and objectives established by the City Council and acts as Council liaison for staff.
- **Clerk** – Responding to a wide variety of inquires, the Clerk provides notary public services, coordinates elections, ensures citizens receive high quality products and services, prepares meeting agendas and minutes, and provides staff support to the City Council and citizen advisory boards.
- **Finance** – This includes budget preparation, managing expenditures and receipts including police ticket payments, payroll, special assessments and records management
- **Human Resources**- This includes recruiting, selecting and training of employees, compensation and benefits and personnel policy.

- Licensing of Services – Alcohol, gambling, tobacco and other related licenses.
- Park and Recreation - Park shelter reservation applications.
- Planning & Zoning- Building, electric and zoning permits, land use applications, rental property permits and zoning enforcement.
- Utility Billing - Water and sewer and sell refuse bags on behalf of the local refuse company

## **2. Fire Hall: 201 Ash Avenue SW**

The Montgomery Fire Department has been serving Montgomery and the surrounding area since 1875. The Fire Department is a 100% volunteer Fire/Rescue service, with currently 30 active members serving the city of Montgomery and the townships of Erin, Lanesburgh, and Montgomery.

The primary goal of the Fire Department is to protect and serve the community and townships from fire and other emergencies.

The Montgomery Fire Department (MFD) serves the City of Montgomery and parts of three townships. **There are approximately 2,256 households in the 136 mile service area.** In addition, the Fire Department provides mutual aid to neighboring communities.

The fire hall facility is located in the same building as City Hall and the Ambulance Service. The fire hall includes three storage bays. The entire building is 6,750 square feet and is currently filled with equipment and vehicles necessary to provide emergency services. There are no open lockers, showers, sleeping facility or kitchen. Meeting/conferences are held in City Hall. Several years ago, the City began leasing space in satellite facilities to house some of the equipment and vehicles.

Future Fire Department needs include a new building. The City of Montgomery is looking to double the size of their public safety building in order to meet the growing demand on their fire and ambulance service. The current building, which was built in 1974, does not have enough room to house all the emergency vehicles, not only do the vehicles need to be parked in a certain sequence, but five fire trucks are housed in an offsite location. The City estimates this is a \$ 2.6 million dollar project, which would contain 17,000 to 22,000 square feet for equipment, training space, meeting rooms, overnight quarters for volunteers and storage.

## **3. Montgomery Area Emergency Medical Service (Ambulance Department): 201 Ash Avenue SW**

The Montgomery Ambulance service, established in 1970, is located within the same complex as city offices and fire. The Ambulance Association service area is 136 square miles, with an estimated population of approximately 2,256 households in addition to numerous businesses.

The Ambulance Department consists of 24 volunteer emergency medical technicians (EMTs), first responders and drivers. The Ambulance Department is staffed 24 hours each day, 7 days per week via radio communication, which is coordinated through Le Sueur County's 9-1-1 Dispatch and Sheriff's Department. The Ambulance Service averages around 250 calls per year.

Ambulance facilities include one ambulance stall and a meeting room with storage and office space combined. This space is shared with the Fire Department. The Ambulance Association has expressed a need for additional space.

The City is currently developing a capital improvement plan which should include the replacement of ambulance equipment.

#### **4. Montgomery Police Department: 301 Boulevard avenue nw**

The Montgomery Police Department (MPD) headquarters are located at 301 Boulevard Avenue NW. The Police Department is housed in a pole barn structure built in 1956. It is in fair condition.

The Mission of the MPD is:

*"The Montgomery Police Department through teamwork and cooperation will be responsive to our citizens' needs with a professional level of dedicated service. Officers will display the highest ethics and integrity, and regard each citizen with a focused and unbiased attitude."*

The Montgomery Police Department is comprised of four full-time officers, five part-time licensed officers and one full-time clerical staff. The MPD provides twenty-four hour, seven day per week services in the City of Montgomery.

The emergency 911 service is coordinated through the sheriff's department with the primary dispatch through Le Sueur County. The MPD also utilizes the Le Sueur County sheriff's department on a weekly basis.

Needs identified by the Chief of Police include a new Police facility with a squad room, inventory room and interrogation room. If the Ambulance and Fire Department relocate to a larger/new facility, there is an opportunity for the Police Department to utilize the current Ambulance/Fire Department facility.

#### **5. Public Works/Public Utilities: 205 Boulevard Avenue NW and 16638 and 16730 340<sup>th</sup> Street**

The Montgomery Public Works Department is responsible for numerous tasks and duties throughout the City of Montgomery that focus on the operation and maintenance of the City's infrastructure. The department also maintains all city-owned equipment.

##### **Services include:**

- Composting – Maintaining the city's composting site;
- Parks & Recreation - Maintaining parks, trails and other related facilities, and contract mowing;
- Roadways - Streets including snow removal, street sweeping and sanding, pavement repairs, traffic control signage and street lighting;
- Sanitary Sewer - Sanitary sewer pipes, lift stations, and wastewater treatment facility;
- Storm Sewer - Storm sewer infrastructure and retention ponds;
- Tree Maintenance - Planting and maintenance of all trees located on city property and/or right-of-way; and
- Water - Water mains, wells, tower and water filtration plant.

The Public Works and Public Utilities facilities are located at 205 Boulevard Avenue NW, 16638 and 16730 340<sup>th</sup> Street, respectively.

Constructed in 1950's, the public works facility includes an office and garage space. The Water Plant was constructed in 2005 and the wastewater treatment plant is approximately 10 years old.

Facility needs identified for the future include housing all public works equipment in one facility.

The City public works department includes four employees, one specifically assigned to the Street Department and three cross-trained for public works functions.

## OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. **Library: 104 Oak Avenue SW.** The library is located in a former bank building. It was remodeled for the library in 2004. In 2013, the library had 27,864 visitors and 28,015 circulations of materials.

Although the library has only been in its current location since December 2005, additional space may be needed in the future.

2. **Education:** School District #2905, Tri-City United Public Schools, serves the community of Montgomery as well as residents in Le Center, Lonsdale and adjacent townships in Le Sueur County.

**The mission of Tri-City United Public Schools is:**

To Empower Learners  
Create Opportunities  
United for Success

Tri-City United Public Schools, District 2905 was the result of a merger of the Montgomery-Lonsdale School District and Le Center School District in 2011. The Tri-City United School District provided learning opportunities under the newly merged district for the first school year 2012-2013. Student enrollment grew in grades K through 12 by 74 students from October 1, 2012 to October 1, 2013. Continued growth in the district is anticipated with the goal to decrease the percent of families with students open enrolling elsewhere and re-enrolling within the district, along with new growth.

School District #2905 has a Strategic Plan in place. The School Board and administration are studying efficiencies of programming within the district along with capacities of existing buildings within all cities in the school district. A Capacity Study was completed in 2012 to identify facility needs in the future. While there is some land adjacent to the high school in Montgomery, the current Montgomery Elementary School-Middle School – District Office facility is landlocked. There may be room to expand at the Lonsdale Elementary and capacity within the Le Center Elementary-Middle School.

A decision as to expansions on the current campus or future locations has not been made at this time. The future location of facilities and where children are educated has a direct impact on a community as school activities and after school activities bring families and others into a city and build community.

The district has indicated they have the ability to serve approximately 808 additional students or a 7 % increase, which they estimate will address growth for the next six years. The TCU High School is located on 40 acres of land and the TCU Montgomery K – 8 campus is on a 40 acre site.

Students in the school district are served within three elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and a private school in the City of Montgomery. A description of each follows:

Two of the educational facilities are currently located within the City of Montgomery; the Montgomery Elementary-Middle School and the Tri-City United High School.

- A. **Tri-City United High School, located at 700 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Montgomery,** serves students in grades 9-12. This facility was constructed in 2011 with the capacity to serve 560 students. The current enrollment is 494.
- B. **Montgomery Elementary-Middle School, located at 101 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE, Montgomery,** serves student in grades Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This building was constructed 1955 with additions in the 1970's (the pool), 1982 and 1992 (the gym). The building has a capacity to serve 777 students. The current enrollment is 619.
- C. **Le Center Elementary – Middle School is located at 150 West Tyrone Street in Le Center.** This facility serves children from Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The building has a capacity to serve 673 students. The current enrollment is 445. There is also a Primary Building at the LeCenter campus that currently serves Early Childhood and grades Kindergarten and 1. That building has the capacity to serve 315 students with current enrollment of K and 1 only (not including early childhood as that programming has AM and PM sessions) is 135.
- D. **Lonsdale Elementary School is located at 1000 Idaho Street SW in Lonsdale.** This building was constructed in 2006. The building has a capacity to serve 335 students. The current enrollment is 257.

Montgomery also is home to a private school, the **Most Holy Redeemer Catholic School** which serves children pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The current enrollment is 85 students.

Other educational programs offered; include programs offered through Tri-City United Schools Community Education, which is housed within Montgomery's Elementary-Middle School building. Adult Basic Education (G.E.D.) courses are offered in Le Center. An Area Learning Program is offered for high school students and is located at the Le Center campus in the morning with students returning to TCU High School in the afternoon.

- 3. **Post Office:** The Montgomery Post Office serves the cities of Montgomery and adjacent townships.
- 4. **Medical Facilities.** The City of Montgomery is served by the Mayo Health Systems with a medical clinic. In addition there are a number of private dental and chiropractic professionals that service the community.
- 5. **City owned property/ lots.** The City owns several properties in the City. These are identified on Map 8-2.

### III. MUNICIPAL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

The City of Montgomery has several boards, commissions and committees that shape the policies and decisions of City government. The City encourages citizens to volunteer to serve on these entities and provide their input. A brief description of each entity and its duties follows:

- 1. **City Council.** The City Council is comprised of five (5) elected officials, including the Mayor, who establish policy and govern the issues related to the City of Montgomery. The Mayor is responsible for chairing Council meetings. In all other ways, the Mayor and the Council have the same authority and responsibilities. The Mayor is elected for a 2-year term and Council members are elected for 4-year staggered terms. Elections are held in November of the even numbered years.

2. **Park Board.** The Park and Recreation Board is comprised of seven members who are appointed by the City Council. One member is a non-voting City Council liaison. The mayor recommends applicants to the City Council based on their interest in creating a vision for the development of parks, trails, and recreational facilities in the City of Montgomery, along with willingness to serve. There is no term limit. Members do not receive monetary compensation. The Park and Recreation Board advises the City Council and staff on a variety of matters pertaining to the parks system and all public recreational facilities in the City of Montgomery. The Board reviews development proposals for park dedication requirements when required, reviews recreational programs and activities and determines long-range planning objectives for parks, natural areas and trails. The Board also proposes rules and regulations for use and maintenance of these public facilities, work in cooperation with the School District for joint use of the park system as a matter of economy and convenience, and assists in the development of the budget for the parks department.
3. **Planning Commission.** The Planning and Zoning Commission is comprised of five (5) regular members who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council and one (1) member of the City Council, serving as liaison, who is selected by Mayor and approved by the City Council. Each member serves a three (3) year term. There is no term limit. Members do not receive monetary compensation.

The Planning and Zoning Commission advises the City Council on a variety of planning and land use issues brought before the City. The commission prepares and maintains the city's Comprehensive Plan and advises the City Council on matters regarding implementation of the plan.

The commission also conducts public hearings and makes recommendations to the City Council on proposed changes affecting zoning and land uses within the city, considers site plan reviews, conditional use permits, interim use permits, annexations, subdivisions, vacations, and variances in conformance with the Montgomery Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. The Planning and Zoning Commission forwards information it gathers from these public hearings, along with their own recommendations, to the City Council and/or Board of Zoning Adjustments and Appeals. The City Council and/or Board of Zoning Adjustments and Appeals make the final decision concerning planning consideration applications.

4. **Montgomery Economic Development Authority.** The Economic Development Authority is comprised of five (5) regular members who are recommended by the Mayor and approved by the City Council and two (2) members of the City Council who are selected by Mayor and approved by the City Council. Individuals interested in economic development, including both commercial and industrial uses, should consider serving on the board. Each member serves a three (3) year term. There is no term limit. Members do not receive monetary compensation.

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) Board provides business assistance and referral services, offers historic preservation assistance, assists existing businesses and industry within the community and promotes the continued growth and development of the city of Montgomery. The EDA works to add job opportunities for the residents of Montgomery and the surrounding area and increase the commercial and industrial tax base. The EDA has a variety of tools at its disposal to promote this development through loans, grants and other financial resources as granted by the City Council.

5. **Montgomery Utilities Committee.** The Public Utilities Committee is comprised of five (5) regular members who are recommended by the Mayor and approved by the City Council and one (1) member of the City Council selected by Mayor and approved by the City Council. Each member serves a three (3) year term. There is no term limit. Members do not receive monetary compensation.

The duties and responsibilities of the Montgomery Public Utilities Committee (PUC) are to review and make recommendations to the City Council on all matters concerning the setting of water and sewer rates; delivery of utility service; utility and public works departments' operations; researching and

recommending capital purchases; reviewing or planning streets, alleys, and infrastructure improvements; and/or similar duties.

6. **Housing Redevelopment Authority.** The Housing and Redevelopment Authority is comprised of five (5) regular members who are recommended by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. Individuals interesting in affordable housing and redevelopment opportunities should consider applying. There is no term limit. Members do not receive monetary compensation.

The Montgomery Housing and Redevelopment Authority advises the City Council and staff on a variety of matters pertaining to affordable housing and redevelopment. The Authority's main focus is operating Park Manor Apartments, a 30-unit public housing facility. The Authority is responsible for all public housing in the City of Montgomery.

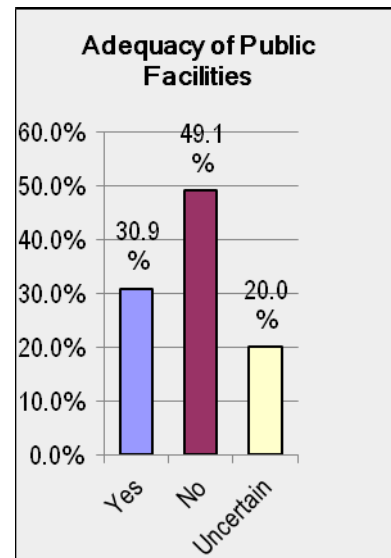
#### IV. PUBLIC INPUT

A community survey completed in conjunction with the updating of the Comprehensive Plan requested input from residents and business leaders regarding municipal facilities and services. Respondents were asked a number of questions. A summary of results relating to community facilities and services follows

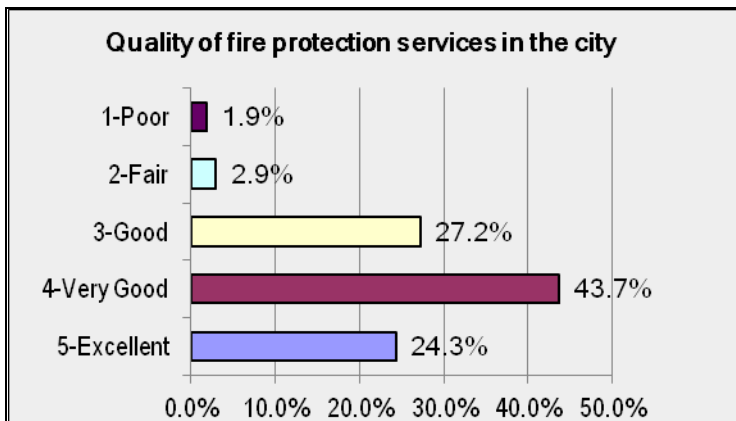
**Public Facilities.** Residents were asked if public facilities are adequate to service future growth. This included city hall, police station, fire hall, ambulance, library, etc. Nearly ½ noted facilities are not adequate, 31% noted they are and 20% are uncertain.

Of the 54 individuals noting an inadequacy, the following facility needs were identified:

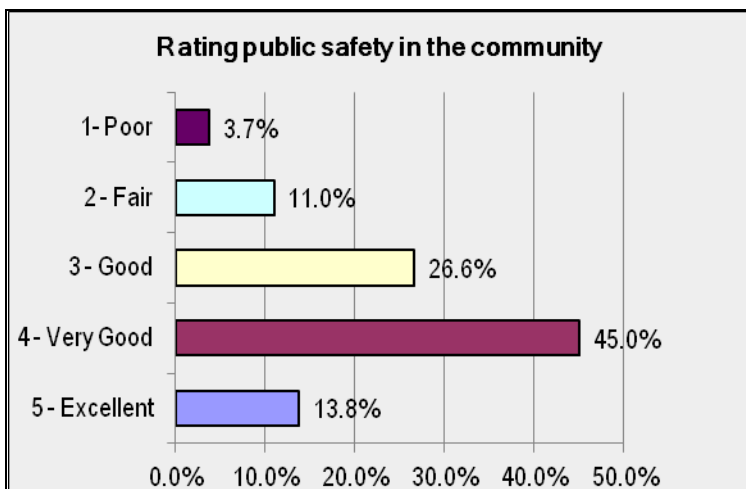
# of Respondents	Facility Needed
26	Fire Hall
16	Police Station
13	Ambulance
7	All facilities
5	City Hall
2	NO new fire hall
1	Garage/Shop



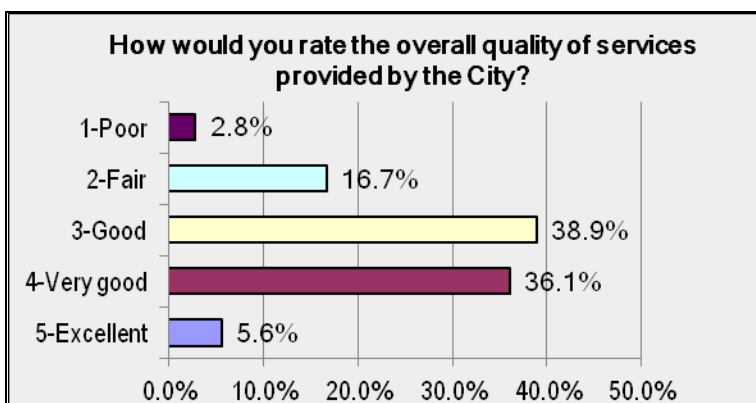
**Rating Fire Protection.** Over 3/4s of the respondents rated the quality of Fire Protection in the City as "Very Good" or "Excellent". Survey responses follow.



**Public Safety.** 58.8% of respondents rated public safety as “Very Good” or “Excellent”. Survey responses are depicted below.



**City Services in General.** A majority of residents rate the overall quality of City services as “Good” to “Very Good”. Responses follow:





## **V. PROJECTED GROWTH**

The population is forecasted to increase from 2,956 people in 2010 to 5,000 people by the year 2030, a 69% increase. The projected growth will reasonably require the expansion of existing administrative and protection services. Such services will not only result in a demand for increased public employees, but also increased facility space and increased capital equipment costs. The expansion of administrative facilities and capital equipment purchases should be included in a capital improvement/equipment program.

## **VI. MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide for adequate facilities and staff to operate and maintain the essential services for current and future residents and businesses in the community.
2. To continue to serve the citizens of Montgomery in an efficient, friendly, and cost effective manner.
3. To begin planning for future space needs, including the evaluation of the feasibility of common facilities
4. To continue to update and maintain facilities and operations.
5. To continue to evaluate technology and incorporate technology in carrying out the functions of the city including partnerships with the school district (i.e. cable television programming) and continued use of Facebook and other social media tools.
6. To provide citizens the opportunity to participate in local government as well as inform citizens of municipal activities.
7. Encourage cooperation and joint service initiatives with other community, city, county, school district and organizations.

### **POLICIES**

1. Upon receiving concept plans, the City shall review its provision of services including, but not limited to, public administration and public protection services such as police and fire service to ensure said services which are reasonably necessitated by proposed subdivisions and must be provided at public expense, can be reasonably provided within two (2) fiscal years of approval of the proposed subdivision. If said services cannot be reasonably provided, the subdivision shall be deemed premature.
2. The City shall monitor and assess the condition and adequacy of existing municipal structures and locations. The City should establish long-term solutions to anticipated building/office space needs. Routine maintenance and repair costs should be allotted for in the annual budget. Reconstruction, remodeling and/or construction of facilities should be addressed in a Capital Improvement Plan. A Facilities Committee may be beneficial to engage the public in finding solutions to meet public facility needs.

3. Continue to work in cooperation with other public agencies, such as the Tri-City United School District, to coordinate rather than duplicate public space such as auditoriums, meeting rooms, storage facilities, park and athletic field space, etc. when feasible. Work with Tri-City United Schools to develop a formal cooperative agreement.
4. Work with the Tri-City United School District to provide data for a long range facility planning and coordinate future referendums and major fiscal expenses to minimize the impact on the tax payers.
5. Meet with the School District to discuss safety issues and potential areas for “Safe Routes to Schools Grants” or other transportation improvements.
6. Meet with representatives from the School District to discuss ways to collaborate in providing services (i.e. lawn care, snow removal, etc) when feasible, to reduce costs.
7. Continue to inventory and analyze all City equipment to make sure that it works safely and efficiently.
8. Increase the city’s participation with other governmental jurisdictions like cooperating with school district, adjacent cities, and the County in the delivery of public services that can gain on efficiency and explore potential joint service initiatives.
9. Explore, develop and implement a purchasing program where the City can partner with other governmental entities to maximize savings. Where appropriate and feasible, engage other institutions, businesses, and residents.
10. Work with other city, county and local community organizations to provide and enhance special area events, celebrations and attractions that benefit residents and business owners.
11. Encourage all governmental units to maintain and improve their buildings and facilities at the highest standards to serve as examples for private development.
12. Encourage City Staff, Commission Members, and Elected Officials to provide testimonials on community affairs through speaking engagements, news articles, and presentations at a variety of events.
13. Actively solicit citizen participation in City affairs, including committees and events. Post events and committee updates on the city’s web site, newsletter and cable access channel.
14. Work with the School District to promote opportunities for youth to be involved in City activities.
15. Locate and retain community facilities within the downtown area where appropriate and possible.