



THE CITY OF  
**MANCHESTER**  
MISSOURI

March 1, 2019

Dear Manchester residents,

A proposed amendment to the Missouri Constitution has been submitted to the Missouri Secretary of State's office by a group called Better Together (BT) seeking a statewide vote for a plan that would require the unification of St. Louis City, St. Louis County and all municipalities within the County's boundary. If the BT plan were to be placed on the ballot and approved by statewide voters, it would eliminate not only the City of St. Louis but all city and village governments as we know them, County-wide. For us living in Manchester, we would likely see the loss of local policing, local public works, local zoning matters, local courts, local sales tax revenue and ultimately, our local and accessible city government. The new Metropolitan City by some accounts would be centered in downtown St. Louis with city services and government being sourced from there. The first Metropolitan City Mayor will be current St. Louis County Executive, Steve Stenger. The Transition Mayor will be current St. Louis City Mayor, Lyda Knewson. Both receive their appointment through the proposed state-wide Amendment rather than regional election.

The five-member Better Together Task Force issuing this plan was not selected through any kind of democratic/open process and their deliberations were not open to the public. Because of its "closed" work, some municipal scholars question its legitimacy. By contrast, Article VI in the Missouri Constitution currently provides the legal mechanism for joint city and county policy deliberation. A Board of Freeholders, made up of nineteen members from St. Louis County and St. Louis City, can be appointed to debate policy and recommend change to voters in St. Louis County and St. Louis City. Their meetings, unlike BT meetings, are required to be open for public presence and subject to Missouri's Sunshine Law. Only St. Louis City and St. Louis County voters would have a vote on their recommendations.

Your City's Board of Aldermen and I believe residents need to be informed of what the Better Together plan and the formation of the Freeholders Board both mean for this community. We encourage you to attend one of the six informational meetings offered through March. Here is the schedule for meetings.

**(Evening sessions) Manchester Parks Building, 359 Old Meramec Station Rd 63021**

**Tues., March 19:** Session 1 (6 - 7 pm); Session 2 (7:15 - 8:15 pm)

**Wed., March 20:** Session 3 (6 - 7 pm); Session 4 (7:15 - 8:15 pm)

**(Morning sessions) Manchester Police Facility, 200 Highlands Blvd 63011**

**Sat., March 30:** Session 5 (9 - 10 am); Session 6 (10:15 - 11:15 am)

Your Board of Aldermen and I encourage you to attend one of the meetings!

Mike Clement  
Mayor, City of Manchester