

**PROPOSED MUNICIPAL CONSOLIDATION
OF THE CITY OF VINITA PARK AND THE
VILLAGE OF VINITA TERRACE**

Comments on BC1601
Prepared by the Saint Louis County Department of Planning
Submitted to the Saint Louis County Boundary Commission
June 14, 2016

Saint Louis
COUNTY
PLANNING

Steven V. Stenger
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Gail Choate
Acting Director of Planning

June 14, 2016

Saint Louis County Boundary Commission
168 North Meramec Avenue, Suite 140
Clayton, Missouri 63105

Re: Municipal Consolidation of the City of Vinita Park and the Village of Vinita Terrace (BC1601)

Dear Commissioners:

These comments represent Saint Louis County's views of the municipal consolidation proposed by the City of Vinita Park and the Village of Vinita Terrace. This submittal is in accordance with the 21 day written comment period provided by state statute.

Based on our review of the Plan of Intent jointly provided by the two proposing municipalities and statements made at the public hearing on May 24, 2016, Saint Louis County Government has no opposition to the proposed consolidation. The County believes local residents and property owners will benefit from improved services, service efficiencies, and streamlined municipal governance should the consolidation occur.

Sincerely,



Gail Choate
Acting Director of Planning

A. Purpose of Comments

The purpose of these comments is to provide the opinion of Saint Louis County ("County") regarding the proposed municipal consolidation of the City of Vinita Park and the Village of Vinita Terrace into a successor municipality to be named the City of Vinita Park. These comments are primarily based on a review of the Plan of Intent submitted jointly to the Boundary Commission by the City and Village on April 19, 2016, the presentation made by the two proposing municipalities at the May 24, 2016 Public Hearing, and comments from those present at the May 24, 2016 Public Hearing.

B. History of Municipal Consolidations in the County

This is first proposed municipal consolidation to come before the Saint Louis County Boundary Commission.

C. Impact on Saint Louis County

The Saint Louis County Planning Department conducted a survey of County departments asking whether this consolidation would have an effect on the County's provision of services. That survey yielded no concerns from County departments regarding the proposed municipal consolidation.

D. General Comments

Saint Louis County believes there are strong financial and improved governance incentives for municipalities in the County to explore the municipal consolidation process. Each consolidation proposal will be unique, with different factors involved in each situation, but as an overarching concept, the County believes there is ample opportunity for this process to be pursued by municipal governments. By consolidating, smaller municipalities can benefit from a streamlined government structures with fewer elected officials and better provision of services to their residents. Municipal consolidations can also reduce jurisdictional confusion, equalize levels of service, and provide increased opportunities for economic development.

E. Concluding Comments

Saint Louis County believes that the proposed municipal consolidation of the City of Vinita Park and the Village of Vinita Terrace is in the best interest of the residents and business owners of the two petitioning municipalities and supports approval by the Boundary Commission. Approval of this consolidation will allow residents to have the final say by giving them the opportunity to vote on the proposed consolidation. Study of the Plan of Intent, the presentation made by the City and Village at the May 24, 2016 Public Hearing, and the fully unified support by residents at the public hearing of the proposal leads the County to voice its support for the proposed consolidation, subject to voter approval.

The Plan of Intent states there will be an increase in taxes for the residents of Vinita Terrace as tax rates are harmonized to the higher rate in Vinita Park. The County does not object to this increase in taxes as it will result in an increase in services provided to the residents of Vinita Terrace. However, residents of Vinita Terrace will no longer pay a separate trash bill, somewhat mitigating the increase in taxes.

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Saint Louis County Comments

Vinita Park & Vinita Terrace Municipal Consolidation

The two proposing municipalities share a common history and are adjacent to one another, with Vinita Terrace already contracting a number of critical municipal services from Vinita Park. This shared history, boundary, and integration of various services (notably police service) provides a strong foundation for a successful consolidation.

The County concurs with the two proposing municipalities that this municipal consolidation meets the standards set forth in Missouri Statute. Saint Louis County has no opposition to this proposal.