



NEWS RELEASE

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EHLMANN RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT ONESTL AT EAST-WEST GATEWAY BOARD MEETING

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO - St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann raised concern about OneSTL at today's East-West Gateway Council of Governments Board Meeting.

OneSTL, which was ultimately approved by the board, was developed through a three-year collaborative process to provide a regional plan for "sustainable" development. It was funded by a \$4.7 million grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In a written reply to the proposed plan, Ehlmann and fellow East-West Gateway Board Member John White, St. Charles County Councilman – District 7, stated, "...the final draft of OneSTL fails to fully reflect our vision, and the vision held by the vast majority of our constituents. In addition, regarding the goals on which we agree, the proposal fails to identify workable strategies, or provides no strategies at all."

Ehlmann and White express their primary philosophical difference with the proponents of OneSTL when they write:

"Implicit in the draft is the authors' belief they know best where people should live, and local governments, along with state and federal bureaucracies, should cooperate with them to make sure they live there." They add "government's role is to respond to people's needs."

Other areas of concern in the OneSTL plan that Ehlmann and White address in their reply include the following:

- Thinking that poor roads in the growing areas of the region will keep people from moving there, the plan promotes maintenance, rehabilitation, and repurposing of existing transportation infrastructure. Ehlmann suggests, "Growing areas like St. Charles County do not advertise for new residents. In fact, when new subdivisions have been proposed in the past, many of our residents have objected to such growth. The population will quit moving outward only when all of our older communities have good schools and safe neighborhoods."
- Given the importance of education to the sustainability of the region, the school transfer program, governance issues, teacher competence or school board politics are not addressed in the plan.
- Public safety gets little attention more than a suggestion that regional leaders "Promote cooperative efforts among residents, government officials, and law enforcement agencies" and the plan offers no suggestions on how to better police high-crime neighborhoods other than to put more bicycle riders on the street to report crime.
- While the plan encourages development in "blighted" areas, it offers no strategy to change laws related to TIF and other economic development that move retail development around the suburbs.

OneSTL, which was adopted by the East-West Gateway Board in spite of Ehlmann and White's criticisms, is available at <http://www.onestl.org/plan>. Ehlmann and White's response is available at <http://executive.sccmo.org/executive/> on the "Reports & Information" page.

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