

MARK W. ECKERT
Mayor



Capt. JOHN E. MOODY II
Operations Division Commander

Department of Police
CITY OF BELLEVILLE
101 SOUTH ILLINOIS STREET
BELLEVILLE, ILLINOIS 62220-2197

COL. WILLIAM G. CLAY III
Chief of Police



(618) 355-9734
Fax (618) 234-6420

January 6, 2015

Ms. Courtney Avery
Illinois Health Facilities and Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

(St. Elizabeth's Hospital Project #14-043)

RECEIVED

JAN 07 2015

Dear Ms. Avery;

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

The City of Belleville has the largest population (44,478 U.S. 2010 Census and the population has grown by 5.5% from 2000 to 2012) south of Springfield, Illinois. It is the County Seat and hosts the following:

- Criminal and Civil Courts
- St. Clair County Probations Department
- St. Clair County Juvenile Detention Facility
- St. Clair County Jail (Inmate population 400 – 460)
- St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office and remaining county government offices

The City is located on 23 square miles and is 10 miles long. It borders E. St. Louis to the west and the Village of Freeburg to the east. The City of Belleville is home to the following institutions of higher learning or school districts:

- Lindenwood University-Belleville (2,100 student enrollment)
- Southwestern Illinois Community College (7,920 student enrollment)
- District 201 Belleville West High School (2,300 student enrollment)
- District 201 Belleville East High School (2,600 student enrollment)
- Althoff Catholic High School (480 student enrollment)
- Belleville District 118 (3,900 student enrollment)
- Belle Valley District 119 (876 student enrollment)
- Harmony-Emge District 175 (500 student enrollment)
- Signal Hill District 181 (360 student enrollment)
- Governor French Academy (177 student enrollment)
- Diocese of Belleville (Blessed Sacrament 200, Cathedral 130, Saint Theresa 326, and Queen of Peace 205)
- Belleville Area Special Services (150 student enrollment)
- Zion Lutheran School (60 preschool and 240 student enrollment)

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Over 22,200 students attend schools and institutions of higher learning on a daily basis during the school year in Belleville. Seventy-nine (79%) of the students attend schools or educational facilities located in the City's Central or East-End corridor making St. Elizabeth's Hospital the closest and most convenient medical facility in the city and surrounding community.

The most recent study by the FBI found the number of sudden mass shootings in the United States has nearly tripled in recent years, prompting the bureau to expand its work with state and local officials to identify potential gunmen before they attack.

In a study of active-shooter incidents, FBI officials said there were 160 cases from 2000 through 2013, with the numbers growing from an average of 6.4 incidents in the first seven years to 16.4 in the last seven years. Seventy percent of the shooters attacked in schools or workplaces, and 60% of the shootings happened so fast that they were over before the police arrived. In 40% of the cases, at least three people were killed, not counting the shooter.

- **32 Killed – April 16, 2007** – Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. A gunman, 23 year old student Seung-Hui Cho, goes on a shooting spree killing 32 people in two locations and wounds an undetermined number of others on campus. The shooter, Seung-Hui Cho then committed suicide.
- **27 Killed – December 14, 2012** – Sandy Hook Elementary School – Newtown, Connecticut. Adam Lanza, 20, guns down 20 children, ages 6 and 7, and six adults, school staff and faculty, before turning the gun on himself. Investigating officers later find Nancy Lanza, Adam's mother, dead from a gunshot wound. The final count is 28 dead, including the shooter.

No Chief Law Enforcement Officer wants to find themselves confronted with such a catastrophic and violent incident, but history teaches such tragedies do happen and are occurring more often. This department plans and practices for such unthinkable 'Active Shooter' incidents. Tantamount to the loss of life after the police response is immediate medical care for the injured.

The central location of St. Elizabeth's Hospital at 211 South 3rd, Street in Belleville is ideally located to provide rapid emergency and triage care to more than 17,000 students should such an incident occur. Some may say this is extremely hypothetical and unlikely to ever happen; and I pray for them to be right. But once it happens it becomes reality and how effective and rapidly the first responders and medical community responds impacts survivability of the injured.

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Abandonment of the current facility and moving seven (7) miles north into a smaller community exposes this 17,000 plus student population to delayed emergency medical care and overburdens the City's one remaining hospital (Memorial). I fail to see how such a move positively impacts the City's regional student population in such a scenario.

On November 10, 2006, at 10:30 a.m., the department's tactical team responded to the 300 block of South 2nd Street. The team was there to take a double homicide suspect into custody. During the operation a fellow police officer and friend, Sgt. Jon Brough was shot in the face, disfigured and blinded by the suspect. Sgt. Brough was taken by ambulance to St. Elizabeth's Hospital two blocks away. He was treated, stabilized and flown to St. Louis. I am convinced that without the presence of St. Elizabeth's Hospital and competent staff, he would not have survived. This tragic shooting could have occurred anywhere, but the central location of this hospital is critical, it was there when the department and Sgt. Brough needed it to be.

The City of Belleville is host to several heavily attended public festivals and events on an annual basis such as:

- **Art on the Square** – is a juried (creative) fine art show held on the Public Square annually the weekend after Mother's Day featuring the original works of over 100 accomplished artists from around the world along with musical and stage performances over a three (3) day weekend. The Art Fair Source Book has ranked this art show number one (1) four times and number two (2) three times since 2008! It attracts over 100,000 visitors.
- **Tour de Belleville** - is an annual community bicycling event, raising funds for safety equipment and providing a quality recreational opportunity for individuals and families in our community. There were more than 2300 riders and 200 volunteers who participated in this event.
- **Oktoberfest** – The traditional annual Fall German festival featuring the 'tapping of the keg, beer drinking, German foods and merrymaking.
- **Chili Cook Off** - Hosted by the Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce, the annual Chili Cook-off has featured the culinary creations of individuals, local organizations, and area businesses for more than 30 years! What started with just a few vendors on one block of East Main Street in downtown Belleville has now grown to more than 70 vendors and based on attendance, is now the largest festival in Belleville.

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- Many people attend the Chili Cook-off to enjoy the great chili, entertainment and other festivities, but most don't realize that it's the biggest fundraiser of the year for many non-profit organizations. Over half of the vendors participating at the Chili Cook-off each year are either a non-profit organization or a business raising money for a charity. 100% of the money you spend at each booth goes to that vendor.
- In addition to the money the vendors donate to their causes, the Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce also donates 100% of the money collected from the People's Choice Award. 100% of the donated proceeds go to the **Community Interfaith Food Pantry** in Belleville.

Additionally, the City is home to several large annual parades, such as the Shriner's, St. Patrick's, Santa and other smaller parades that attract enormous crowds and regional visitors. The City of Belleville is a destination for many metro-east residents with numerous public festivals and events.

St. Elizabeth's Hospital claims this seven (7) mile move north and east of its present central location in Belleville is designed to foster 'regionalism'. They claim the proposed I-64/Green Mount location will facilitate ease of travel and accessibility. This is a rather expedient and myopic view of regionalism.

Abandoning the central corridor of the largest populated City (with a daytime traffic population of 100,000) south of Springfield by moving seven (7) miles north and east does nothing for regionalism. It will seriously affect the timely delivery of emergency/medical care for the more than 22,200 students who attend schools and higher learning institutions.

This move ignores the designation of this City as the County Seat of St. Clair. It ignores special burdens and responsibilities the county jail has in providing medical care to all of the County's inmate population.

St. Elizabeth's Hospital makes the claim that the existing facility is in major disrepair; the infra-structure (which includes the heating and cooling systems) is antiquated and would need to be replaced. They cite the poor condition of the hospital as one of the major reasons for abandoning Belleville. If these claims are accurate, then who is to blame?

St. Elizabeth's corporate leadership and management failed to maintain the hospital; they failed to reinvest in the hospital; they failed to perform corrective and preventive maintenance; they failed to upgrade; and they failed this hospital community and the citizens of Belleville.

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So the answer for St. Elizabeth's Hospital, due to their failure, is simple; move seven (7) miles north to Interstate 64 in O'Fallon and begin again! Sorry about the significant inconvenience and loss of services to the 45,000 citizens of Belleville and the surrounding communities south and west of our location. Not to worry, the interstate location will make everything right.

This notion that all things work better on the Interstate; food tastes better; retail sells more; hotels/motels sleep better and car dealerships do better are all rooted in the belief that more traffic equals more business. There is no dispute Interstate locations have higher traffic volume than local roads or state highways. However, much of that is interstate commercial (truck) traffic.

St. Elizabeth's Hospital is not a private retail business; they are not Wal-Mart, Cracker Barrel, Radio Shack, Holiday Inn nor are they a car dealership. Interstate 64 has become the demarcation line, or better yet the Mason-Dixon Line, for the haves and have-nots. Corporate business philosophies have dictated the relocation of many private, retail establishments to include franchise businesses to these areas.

The City of Belleville has no interstate and has found itself at a significant disadvantage maintaining existing and attracting new businesses. We are an old City celebrating our 200th year of existence. Yet this City has found its niche in the existing paradigm of Interstate bias and we have flourished.

The City invested more than 6 million dollars in the downtown 'Street Scape' Project reinvigorating the business district and becoming a vibrant night life destination for the metro-east. So much so that it became necessary to institute Downtown Street patrols to accommodate the high volume of people and traffic enjoying the expanding amenities. The Mayor and City Council worked to bring major commercial and retail development to the City's east end with the Green Mount Commons Shopping Center anchored by a Super Wal-Mart and Lowe's, followed by the Belleville Crossing Development of State Rte. 15 anchored by a Target and Home Depot.

The City fought relentlessly to keep two of the last three car dealerships from relocating in the "haves territory" of the Mason-Dixon Line on I-64 against the corporate authorities and were successful. Both dealerships relocated to State Rte. 15.

Recently, the Mayor entered into an agreement with the Shrine of our Lady of the Snows for annexation of 400 acres into the City of Belleville.

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This annexation is coupled with a development agreement that will bring two hotels, a convention center, four restaurants and a convenience and gas store to the City's furthest western boundary. This Mayor, supported by the City Council, continues to aggressively pursue substantive economic growth for this community.

The City of Belleville has seen its African American population grow from 12% to 25% in the last 10 to 12 years. The majority of that growth is from the blighted, crime-ridden urban areas of the cities west of Belleville. Despite this increase, the City of Belleville has not experienced the associated criminal activity that often plagues urban minority communities.

Belleville's Uniform Crime Reporting Data was collected and analyzed from 1999 until 2013. Our crime footprint remains unchanged both in raw numbers of crimes reported and percentage breakdowns of crime categories. This is not a City in decline; this is not a City that has given up on itself.

But Belleville is a City without an Interstate, and thus we are in the Mason-Dixon Line territory of the have-nots! St. Elizabeth's Hospital wants to have it four ways:

- They want no accountability or ownership for their irresponsible management and lack of maintenance to the existing facility.
- They want this board to view and treat this application as if they were a private retail establishment looking to move to greener pastures with no consideration for their public health and safety obligations to this community.
- They want the City of Belleville to bear the burden and suffer the consequences for their irresponsibility. They want the City to accept the move and go away quietly into the night.
- They want the protection of the Certificate-of-Need Process accorded to hospitals when it suits them, as evidenced by their opposition to the satellite facility by Memorial Hospital in Shiloh.

Hospital management would have you believe this move is best for all in the metro-east. The move to I-64 will allow for easier access for all involved. That citizen's west of Belleville will have more direct and shorter drive times. To hear management tell it, the poor and indigent residing in the Gomper Homes Public Housing Development will be able to hop into their SUV's and take I-64 to the hospital. No longer burdened by Bi-State Bus and the Metro-Link Rail; which by the way does not service the proposed new site.

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African Americans and the poor comprise over 90% of the population in the communities immediately west of Belleville. They suffer from disproportionate violent crime and a lack of goods and services. They almost never have a voice in such matters.

This move is detrimental and harmful to the City of Belleville and the poorer communities west of the City. The Illinois Health Facilities and Review Board must be the voice for these communities. St. Elizabeth's Hospital must not be allowed to evade and walk away from the consequences of their careless mismanagement.

The Mayor and City Council of Belleville are willing to work with, compromise, and find alternative solutions to this problem. Nothing is off the table except the plan to abandon the City and its 45,000 inhabitants. This 'Exit Stage Right' from the heart of the metro-east population only serves the very narrow self-interest of St. Elizabeth's profit picture. Communities can be tipped with the loss of a vital medical institution. Leaving the City of Belleville for the sole purpose of greener pastures should not be an option. There is too much at stake and the loss will be catastrophic and I fear unrecoverable.

Sincerely,

Capt. John E. Moody II
Chief of Operations

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cc: Mayor M. Eckert
Chief W. Clay III
Mr. G. Hoerner, City Attorney