



# Public Safety – Municipal Courts

October 2014

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY MUNICIPAL COURTS REPORT

This report is the product of Better Together’s study of municipal courts in St. Louis City and County. The data and the qualitative evidence in this report point to a troubling and systemic issue in our region: Many of the municipal courts in St. Louis County have lost the trust of their communities, particularly those in which residents are predominantly African-American and poor. In these municipalities, because of a lack of oversight and an overreliance on court fines and fees, the courts are viewed as punitive revenue centers rather than centers of justice.

The recent turmoil in St. Louis has laid bare many of the challenges that our region faces with regard to public safety. This is the first in a series of reports that Better Together will provide on the provision of public safety services in the region. Subsequent reports will also include an examination of police and fire protection.

As with Better Together’s previous studies on public finance, economic development, and public health, this report was conducted with the guidance and insight of practitioners, academic experts, advocates, and stakeholders from across the St. Louis region.

The structure of this report, as with previous Better Together reports, is centered on four key questions:

1. How do municipal courts in St. Louis City and County function individually and as a system?
2. What are considered to be best practices in the field of municipal courts?
3. How does the St. Louis City and St. Louis County region compare to the best-practices?
4. What are scenarios for going forward that could improve the current municipal court system?

By asking these questions, Better Together gathered both quantitative data and qualitative information from those impacted by the system. Our research and conversations revealed a municipal court system with drastically insufficient structural oversight. Because of this systemic issue, the municipal courts in many areas of St. Louis have lost the faith of their communities. Furthermore, data indicates that some municipal courts are nothing more than revenue centers – a blatant system of taxing residents in the poorest communities in the region.

Missouri’s framework for municipal-court oversight provides administrative power to a presiding judge in each of the forty-five circuit courts of Missouri. While this mechanism for oversight appears sound, in a highly fragmented region such as St. Louis County, it becomes completely untenable due to the sheer number of courts.

To put this in perspective: A judicial circuit in Missouri contains 8.6 municipal court divisions on average. St. Louis County’s circuit contains 81 municipal court divisions. So, the presiding judge of St. Louis County’s circuit courts must oversee nearly *ten times* the number of courts and judges as an average presiding judge in Missouri. This significant flaw in the oversight structure manifests itself in a number of problems.

One such problem is the prolific collection of court fines and fees in the St. Louis region. In 2013, the municipal courts of St. Louis City and County collected \$61,152,087 in fines and fees. During that same time, the combined total of court fines and fees collected by Missouri municipal courts was \$132,032,351.63. This means that the municipal courts in the St. Louis region accounted for 46% of all fines and fees collected statewide, despite being home to only 22% of Missourians.

Further analysis revealed that St. Louis City accounts for 5% of Missouri's population and 7% of municipal fines collected statewide, while unincorporated St. Louis County accounts for roughly 5% of Missouri's population and 5% of Missouri's municipal fines and fees revenue. This seems logical. However, while the combined populations of the 90 municipalities in St. Louis County accounts for only 11% of Missouri's population, those municipalities bring in **34%** of all municipal fines and fees statewide (\$45,136,416 in 2013).

Municipal courts are used most frequently as a revenue stream in municipalities north of Olive Boulevard and within the boundary of I-270. In fact, 20 of the 21 municipalities that derive at least 20% of their general budget from fines and fees are located in that geographic area. Furthermore, there are fourteen municipalities in St. Louis County whose largest individual source of revenue is municipal fines and fees. Thirteen of those fourteen are also located north of Olive Boulevard and within the boundary of I-270.

The existence of such a tight geographic cluster raised questions and prompted further research. Financial and demographic data revealed that, on average, these municipalities were bringing in one-third of their general operating revenue from fines and fees. Their populations were on average 62% black, with 22% of their citizens below the poverty line. In comparison, St. Louis County as a whole is 24% black with 11% of its population below the poverty line. When combined with the Attorney General's finding in the "Executive Summary for 2013 Missouri Vehicle Stops" that black drivers were 66 percent more likely than white drivers to be stopped, it becomes all too clear that fines and fees are paid disproportionately by the African-American community. In other words, these municipalities' method of financial survival – bringing in revenue via fines and fees – comes primarily at the expense of black citizens. This practice will be further analyzed in future Better Together reports.

The practice of using fines and fees to impose "hidden taxes" on the poorest populations is evident. The intent is also clear, and is demonstrated by some municipalities that actually *budget* for increases in fines and fees. Additionally, research revealed that fines-and-fees revenue increased at a time when property-tax revenue declined. Desperate to maintain their income stream in the face of dwindling property values, many municipalities turned to the municipal courts for revenue. Financially, this strategy yielded the results needed for the municipal governments to survive. 2013 data shows that of the 81 municipal courts in St. Louis County, 73 brought in more revenue than they require to operate. In fact, on average, a municipal court in St. Louis County costs \$223,149 to operate yet brings in an average of \$711,506 in revenue from fines and fees each year, for an average net revenue of \$488,357.

In actuality, state statute places a 30% cap on the amount of fines and fees that a municipality can collect for general revenue. However, this law is rarely meaningfully enforced at either the court or

circuit level. Both the oversight and the practical implementation of this law must be addressed and reformed.

In addition to financial reforms, there are issues that must also be addressed in individual courts. When members of the public visit one of the many municipal courts in St. Louis County, they see a system that caters to defendants who have lawyers. Lawyers' cases are typically heard first, to accommodate the fact that many lawyers are attending more than one municipal court session in the same evening. Lawyers get "no-points" deals and dismissals for their clients; the unrepresented defendants do not. When the unrepresented citizen goes to court, he or she sees a system that blatantly favors people with money. This is the face of the judiciary as far as the average person is concerned.

With this in mind, additional reforms must be made in order to create a more just region. A recent white paper by the Arch City Defenders, as well as newspaper reports and conversations with experts, reveals that problem areas include:

- Access to open courts
- Methods for collecting court fines and fees
- Notification of rights

Both Constitutional and Missouri law define open and public courts as a fundamental right. However, a recent study revealed that 37% of municipal courts do not allow children in the courtroom. Ten percent of St. Louis County municipal courts allow only the person listed on the docket inside the courtroom. While some of these courts did change these policies at the request of the presiding judge, research in early October 2014 found that not all courts had come into compliance with this basic request.

The sheer number of cases handled leads to some troubling questions about how justice is served in our region. With an average St. Louis County municipality holding only one or two court dates a month, some courts handle over 500 cases in just one night-court session. Because of this, many courts contend that they cannot accommodate individuals beyond those on the docket – even though this issue could be remedied by adding additional court dates or hours.

Additionally, many municipal courts appear to be perpetuating the idea that their tactics amount to little more than a “money grab.” These courts frequently go to extreme measures in order to collect fines and fees. Tactics include locking up citizens without the means to pay their fines, and issuing warrants to those who do not appear (often out of fear that their inability to pay will result in them being locked up). While municipal judges are permitted under Missouri law to pursue other methods of collection including private debt collection, the establishment of payment plans, or even the reduction of a fine, these “softer” methods often go unutilized. What’s more, many courts will detain an individual who is unable to pay without even holding a required hearing of that person’s ability to pay the fine.

The protection of a defendant’s rights would go a long way toward solving problems in the municipal courts. When an individual receives a citation, the process for paying the fee – and the consequences for failing to do so – should be described clearly and uniformly on that citation.

Defendants should be aware that the simple decision to not appear in court can result in a warrant being issued, which can impact an individual's ability to secure housing or get a job. The impact of the proceedings can be life-altering, yet no adequate safeguards are in place to prevent uninformed decisions.

Several best practices and reforms have been offered by subject matter experts, practitioners, academics, and national research. These include:

- Granting greater oversight of the municipal courts by providing additional circuit judges to assist the presiding judge in oversight of the municipal system.
- Implementing a 10% cap on the amount of general revenue that a county or municipality can collect each year and creating a strict framework for annual reporting to the State Auditor for review.
- Pooling municipal court fines and fees among all municipalities or counties within a judicial circuit, to lessen the incentive to utilize fines and fees as a revenue stream.
- Ensuring a court's ability to remain open to the public by establishing a cap on cases per session of municipal court.
- Providing a uniform list of rights and procedural options and consequences on the back of every municipal citation, as well as providing contact numbers to potential legal resources and clinics. These same uniform lists should also appear on every municipal court website and entrance.
- Requiring courts to utilize alternative means to collecting fines and fees outside of jailing.
- Providing for an "ability to pay" hearing before any individual can be detained or otherwise penalized for failure to do so.
- Requiring that municipal judges be selected by a panel in the judicial circuit in which they sit, rather than by the municipality itself.
- Requiring any municipal court to have a paid public defender available to provide basic consultation and to protect the rights of each defendant.

## **MUNICIPAL COURTS REPORT INTRODUCTION**

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The structure of this report, as with previous Better Together reports, is centered on four key questions:

1. How do municipal courts in St. Louis City and County function individually and as a system?
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4. What are scenarios for going forward that could improve the current municipal court system?

An honest discussion about the current municipal court system, and its impacts on the people for whom it is designed to provide justice, is critical to the healing and eventual growth of the St. Louis region. Recent events have highlighted a need for this difficult discussion. It is one that must be had in the pursuit of a stronger region that not only enjoys world-class parks, museums, and universities, but also insists on a basic standard of living and justice for each and every individual that calls the St. Louis region home. It is not the intent of this report to provide the answers to the issues of the municipal courts system. Rather, its goal is to provide the facts and data necessary to foster a community-wide discussion upon which answers and potential reforms can be based.

## **THE LANDSCAPE OF MUNICIPAL COURTS IN ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY**

In St. Louis City and County there are 82 municipal courts. Of these 82 courts, 1 is St. Louis City Municipal Court, and 1 is St. Louis County, while the remaining 80 courts lie in municipalities throughout St. Louis County. Each of these 82 courts are divisions of the state circuit in which they are located. They are established by and derive their authority over municipal ordinances from Article V of the Missouri Constitution<sup>1</sup> and Section 479<sup>2</sup> of the Missouri Revised Statutes.

Oversight of municipal courts is established by the Missouri Supreme Court Rules, which state that a presiding judge in each Missouri judicial circuit has general administrative authority over the judges and court personnel of all divisions of the circuit court hearing and determining ordinance violations within the circuit.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, a judge in each state judicial circuit is responsible for overseeing the municipal courts operating within that circuit as they are a division of that larger state circuit. St. Louis City is located in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit of Missouri and comprises the entirety of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Circuit. Judge Philip Heagney, a Missouri

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<sup>1</sup> MO Constitution Article V <http://www.moga.mo.gov/const/t05.htm>

<sup>2</sup> MO Revised Statutes Section 479 <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/C479.HTM>

<sup>3</sup> Missouri Constitution Article V Section 15 <http://www.moga.mo.gov/const/A05015.HTM>

Circuit Court Judge from the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit, presides over the St. Louis City Municipal Court<sup>4</sup>. St. Louis County is located in the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit of Missouri and comprises the entirety of the 21<sup>st</sup> Circuit. Presiding Judge Maura McShane from the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit oversees the municipal courts in St. Louis County<sup>5</sup>.

### **A PROBLEM OF OVERSIGHT**

The oversight for municipal courts as established appears sound. For virtually every circuit in the state, it provides a sufficient method of oversight. However, the exception to this seemingly sufficient model lies in St. Louis County. As the oversight structure is determined by the boundaries of a judicial circuit and not by overall workload, the current structure is vulnerable to reflecting the fragmentation present within the circuit. The result is an alarming lack of oversight where it is needed most.

For example, St. Louis City's municipal court is overseen by a presiding judge from the 22<sup>nd</sup> Judicial Circuit of the State of Missouri, while the presiding judge of 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit is responsible for the oversight of 81 municipal courts located in the 21<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit.<sup>6</sup> To put that number in a larger context, on average there are 8.6 municipal courts in all other Missouri judicial circuits. The presiding judge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Circuit is charged with oversight of nearly ten times that amount. The average number of courts is not skewed by judicial circuits on opposite sides of the spectrum when it comes to number of courts. The 21<sup>st</sup> Circuit and St. Louis County is the outlier. The next largest number of municipal courts overseen by one circuit is the 39<sup>th</sup> Circuit (Barry, Lawrence, Stone Counties), which has twenty municipal courts, sixty-one fewer than the 21<sup>st</sup> Circuit in St. Louis County.<sup>7</sup> Analysis of Jackson County's 16<sup>th</sup> Circuit revealed that while Jackson County is the second-largest county in Missouri with a population of 679,996, it contains only 16 municipal courts, just one-fifth of the municipal courts in St. Louis County<sup>8</sup>.

The problem in the oversight of the municipal courts in St. Louis County cannot be attributed to anything other than the fragmentation of the municipal court system. It is simply not possible for one judge to provide proper oversight to 81 municipal courts. Frank Vatterott, municipal judge for the City of Overland, and the leader of a commission of municipal judges looking at possible court reforms, stated in a recent radio interview that the lone presiding judge in St. Louis County simply "can't control 80 courts."<sup>9</sup> As the Supreme Court has "superintending power" over all courts in Missouri<sup>10</sup>, as well as rulemaking power such as that employed in Supreme Court Rule 37,<sup>11</sup> it is within its power to address this overwhelming lack of oversight.

While addressing the issue of oversight offers the possibility of preventing future issues moving forward, it does not provide a remedy for the abuses that have steadily become part of the

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=1909>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.stlouisco.com/YourGovernment/CountyDepartments/StLouisCountyCircuitCourt/Judges/Division2>

<sup>6</sup> MO State Courts Administrator, Table 94 Municipal Division

<sup>7</sup> MO State Courts Administrator, Table 94 Municipal Division & <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=1932>

<sup>8</sup> <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/29/29095.html>

<sup>9</sup> <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/law-professionals-discuss-court-fines-fees> (audio interview)

<sup>10</sup> Missouri Constitution Article V Section 4 - <http://www.moga.mo.gov/const/A05004.HTM>

<sup>11</sup> Missouri Supreme Court Rule 37 - <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=831>

municipal court system and the culture that has been established over the decades such oversight was absent.

**ADDRESSING MUNICIPAL COURT FINES & FEES**

In 2013, the municipal courts of St. Louis City and County region collected \$61,152,087<sup>12</sup> in municipal court fines and fees. During that same time, the combined total of court fines and fees collected by municipal courts in Missouri was \$132,032,351.63, meaning that the municipal courts in the region accounted for 46% of all fines and fees collected statewide, though only 22% of Missouri residents live in St. Louis City and County.<sup>13</sup>

**TABLE 1**  
**REVENUE COLLECTED FROM MUNICIPAL COURT FINES & FEES (2013)**

State of Missouri	\$132,032,352	% of State Total
St. Louis Region*	\$61,152,087	46%
St. Louis County	\$6,699,384	5%
St. Louis City	\$9,316,287	7%
St. Louis County Municipalities	\$45,136,416	34%

\* Consists of St. Louis City, St. Louis County, Municipalities in St. Louis County

The question becomes: why does the St. Louis City and County region account for such a large percentage of the fines and fees collected by municipal courts statewide? A deeper look into the numbers shows that as a region St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and the municipalities located in St. Louis County comprise roughly 22% of Missouri’s population, yet account for over double that amount, 46%, of all municipal fines and fees collected statewide.

Further analysis of the numbers reveals that St. Louis City accounts for roughly 5% of Missouri’s population and 7% of its overall municipal fines and fees<sup>14</sup>. Similarly, unincorporated St. Louis County comprises roughly 5% of Missouri’s overall population while accounting for 5% of statewide municipal fines and fees<sup>15</sup>. However, the population of the 90 municipalities in St. Louis County is 675,319, 11% of Missouri’s population, but it accounts for 34% of all fines and fees collected by municipal courts in Missouri statewide.<sup>16</sup>

The reason for the high levels of revenues from municipal court fines and fees is simple – survival of the municipality. While not all municipalities in St. Louis County are generating a large portion of their revenue from court fines and fees, it is the largest single source of revenue for at least fourteen municipalities including Bella Villa, Bellerive, Beverly Hills, Calverton Park, Charlack, Cool Valley, Edmundson, Moline Acres, Normandy, St. Ann, Pine Lawn, Northwoods, Velda City, and Vinita Terrace.<sup>17</sup> Without revenue from fines and fees it is inconceivable that these communities could afford to operate.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>12</sup> MO State Courts Administrator, Table 94 Municipal Division, FY2013 Net Collections/Disbursements. Aggregate of Fines, Clerk/Court Fees, POST Fund Surcharge, CVC Fund Surcharge, LET Fund Surcharge, Dom Violence Shelter Surcharge, and Inmate Security Fund Surcharge Available at: <https://www.courts.mo.gov/file.jsp?id=68844>.

<sup>13</sup> MO State Courts Administrator.

<sup>14</sup> MO State Courts Administrator; Population figures for United States Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>)

<sup>15</sup> MO State Courts Administrator; Population figures for United States Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>)

<sup>16</sup> MO State Courts Administrator; Population figures for United States Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>)

<sup>17</sup> See Table 4 in Appendix

<sup>18</sup> See Table 5 in Appendix.



While revenue from court fines and fees is not the main source of revenue in every municipality, it is a significant source for many. In 2013, 40 of St. Louis County's 90 municipalities collected over 10% of their general operating revenue from municipal court fines and fees.<sup>19</sup> Twenty-one of these municipalities in St. Louis County collected over 20% of their general operating revenue from court fines and fees.<sup>20</sup> As the following table notes, those 21 municipalities collecting 20% or more of their revenue from court fines and fees have populations that are 62% black, and 22% of these populations live below the poverty level. These numbers are more than double the St. Louis County average. According to U.S. Census statistics, St. Louis County as a whole is 24% black and has a poverty rate of just under 11%.<sup>21</sup> It is also worthy of note that 20 of these 21 municipalities are located north of Olive Boulevard and within the boundary of I-270.

**TABLE 2**  
**MUNICIPALITIES COLLECTING OVER**  
**20% OF GENERAL REVENUE FROM**  
**MUNICIPAL COURT FINES & FEES**

<b>MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>% OF GENERAL REVENUE FROM FINES &amp; FEES</b>	<b>% OF POPULATION THAT IS BLACK</b>	<b>% OF POPULATION THAT IS BELOW POVERTY LINE</b>
CALVERTON PARK	66.32%	42.23%	23.60%
BELLA VILLA	57.38%	1.51%	8.60%
VINITA TERRACE	51.83%	72.92%	19.20%
PINE LAWN	48.12%	96.40%	31.80%
NORMANDY	40.61%	69.75%	35.40%
SAINT ANN	37.47%	22.11%	15.10%
EDMUNDSON	34.86%	26.38%	19.00%
MOLINE ACRES	31.06%	92.10%	21.30%
BELLERIVE	29.38%	43.09%	0.90%
COOL VALLEY	29.11%	84.53%	14.00%
CHARLACK	28.88%	35.44%	13.20%
BRECKENRIDGE HILLS	28.82%	32.70%	24.50%
HILLSDALE	26.92%	95.94%	46.60%
BEVERLY HILLS	26.37%	92.68%	17.70%
NORTHWOODS	26.35%	93.94%	25.70%
BEL-RIDGE	24.46%	83.12%	42.30%
SAINT JOHN	24.31%	24.29%	17.00%
UPLANDS PARK	23.50%	96.40%	17.10%
SYCAMORE HILLS	22.95%	12.28%	7.30%
FLORDELL HILLS	22.52%	90.75%	36.00%
VELDA CITY	21.58%	95.42%	18.50%
AVERAGE FOR TOP 21 MUNICIPALITIES	33%	62%	22%
AVERAGE FOR ALL ST. LOUIS COUNTY	13%	24%	11%

<sup>19</sup> See Table 5 in Appendix.

<sup>20</sup> See Table 5 in Appendix.

<sup>21</sup> United States Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>)

Yet another disturbing fact is that research into municipal courts revealed that only eight of the eighty-one municipal courts did not operate at a profit when the cost of operating the municipal court was compared to the revenue collected from court fines and fees. On average a municipal court in St. Louis County costs \$223,149 to operate while bringing in an average of \$711,506 in revenue from fines and fees each year,<sup>22</sup> returning an average net revenue of \$488,357 annually.<sup>23</sup>

There are even examples of municipalities proposing budgeted increases in revenue from fines and fees, which would indicate plans to increase ordinance enforcement – ticketing – as a means of enhancing municipal budgetary support. Dellwood’s 2012 budget anticipated an \$80,000 increase in revenue from fines and fees between 2011 (\$219,893 actual) and 2012 (\$300,000 budgeted). A similar increase was predicted in the 2013 budget, which anticipated \$400,000 in revenue from fines and fees.<sup>24</sup>

Yet another example of fines and fees being utilized as a municipal revenue stream can be seen in Florissant’s recent move to increase court fees. Earlier this year, St. Louis County Presiding Judge Maura McShane issued a notice to St. Louis County municipal courts requiring them to comply with the law and a constitutional guarantee to open and public courts. In response, Florissant approved a measure to “collect \$10 for each municipal ordinance violation,” with the money generated “to be used to for land, construction, maintenance and upkeep of a municipal courthouse” that can accommodate its docket.<sup>25</sup> It is important to note that Florissant generates over \$1.5 million dollars more than it spends on costs to operate its courts.<sup>26</sup> However, the structure and practice of viewing these fines as a revenue stream is so commonplace that the additional fee was approved and implemented.

There is sufficient evidence, both of practice and intent, for the conclusion to be drawn that municipal courts are not being used as instruments of justice and public safety, but rather as revenue generators for municipalities that would otherwise struggle or simply be unable to survive. Furthermore, the fact that the municipalities most reliant on fines and fees for revenue are disproportionately poor lends to the belief that the revenue generated by fines and fees is intended to supplement revenue that would come from property and sales taxes in more affluent areas. However, not all revenue from fines comes from residents of the particular municipality collecting the fines. This is especially true of those municipalities that include parts of I-70, I-170, and I-270. A motorist driving to the airport from Clayton or from downtown St. Louis may encounter three or four patrol cars with radar from three or more separate municipalities. These highways may be the most over-policed roadways in the state.

### ***Current Oversight***

Missouri law does provide for a cap and oversight of court fines and fees in Section 302.341 of the Missouri Revised Statutes. Three key elements of this statute are:

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<sup>22</sup> Does not include St. Louis City’s municipal court or St. Louis County’s municipal court.

<sup>23</sup> See municipality data table on Better Together website, <http://www.bettertogetherstl.com/files/better-together-stl/Dellwood%202013%20Budget.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> City of Ferguson Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2013 p.3

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.flovalleynews.com/florissant-to-collect-10-for-each-municipal-ordinance-violation>

<sup>26</sup> See Table 6 in Appendix.

1. **Cap of 30% on Fines and Court Fees**<sup>27</sup> - If any city, town, village or county receives more than thirty percent of its annual general operating revenue from fines and court costs for traffic violations, including amended charges from any traffic violation...all revenues from such violations in excess of thirty percent of the annual general operating revenue shall be sent to the director of revenue and distributed annually to the schools of the county.
2. **Duty of Municipality or County to Report** - An accounting of the percent of annual general operating revenue from fines and court costs for traffic violations, including amended charges from any charged traffic violation, occurring within the city, town, village, or county and charged in the municipal court of that city, town village, or county shall be included in the comprehensive annual financial report submitted to the state auditor...under section 105.145.
3. **Failure to Report Results in Loss of Court Jurisdiction**– Any city, town, village, or county which fails to make an accurate or timely report, or to send excess revenues from such violations to the director of the department of revenue by the date on which the report is due to the state auditor shall suffer an immediate loss of jurisdiction of the municipal court...on all traffic-related charges until all requirements of this section are satisfied.

While the framework of 302.341 appears to provide restrictions and oversight, two issues arise: the real-world application of the 30% cap and weak oversight. If all municipalities collected 30% of their general revenue from fines and fees, the cap for the St. Louis City and County region would be \$374,811,478.<sup>28</sup> If looking only at municipalities in St. Louis County, the cap would be \$143,360,177, meaning that under current state law the municipalities as a whole could double the current amount of revenue brought in from fines and fees.<sup>29</sup>

A suggested potential reform offered during this study was to lower the cap from 30% to 10%. A majority of municipalities in St. Louis County, as well as the City of St. Louis and St. Louis

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<sup>27</sup> The Missouri Constitution, Article IX, section 7 provides that "the clear proceeds of all penalties, forfeitures and fines collected hereafter for any breach of the penal laws of the state, ... shall be distributed annually to the schools of the several counties according to law." Numerous cases broadly define "penal laws of the state" to suggest that the phrase includes municipal fines; for instance, the Supreme Court in *Missouri Gaming Commission v. Missouri Veterans Commission*, 951 S.W.2d 611 (MO banc 1997) said penal laws include all fines imposed by public authorities as punishment for offenses against the public. Costs of enforcement, such as police, are not to be deducted from such proceeds; see, e.g., *State v. Williams*, 872 S.W.2d 669 (MO App. 1994). There is an exception to Article IX, section 7 in Article V, section 27, subsection 16, which allows municipalities that enforce their ordinances in associate circuit court divisions to keep the fines to which they "may be entitled." That "may be entitled" phrase in subsection 16 would seem to authorize the limit of 30 percent of municipal budget in RS MO 302.341.2. There is no exception to the requirement in Article IX, section 7 for municipalities that enforce their ordinances in their own municipal court divisions. If these Constitutional provisions and case law principles apply to ordinance fines, municipalities that operate their own municipal court divisions would be required to turn over all clear proceeds of their fines to the schools. Article V, section 27(16), however, creates an exception to Article IX, section 7 for municipalities that enforce their ordinances in associate circuit court divisions -- they are entitled to keep their fines revenues up to the limit of 30 percent (RS MO section 302.341.2) of the municipal budget, with the rest distributed to the schools of the county as with all other proceeds of fines.

<sup>28</sup> See Table 7 in Appendix.

<sup>29</sup> See Table 7 in Appendix.

County, are already in compliance with this potential reform and seemingly in sound financial health. It appears that a municipality gathering a large amount of revenue from fines and fees is problematic in that it loses the faith and trust of constituents (as documented in a recent white paper issued by the Arch City Defenders), as well as masks underlying financial troubles as indicated by the examples below that demonstrate the replacement of declining property tax revenue with fines and fees.<sup>30</sup>

**TABLE 3**

<b>ST. JOHN<sup>31</sup></b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Assessed Value – Real Property</b>	\$48,172,540	\$48,112,280	\$44,342,260	\$44,504,180	\$40,103,330	\$39,728,520	\$35,332,530
<b>Assessed Value – Personal Property</b>	\$12,300,400	\$11,794,760	\$12,387,753	\$10,298,187	\$10,393,276	\$9,781,183	\$9,846,369
<b>Fines and Forfeitures</b>	\$803,217	\$860,146	\$949,216	\$941,371	\$1,092,093	\$1,199,022	\$1,126,763
<b>FERGUSON<sup>32</sup></b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Assessed Value – Real Property</b>	\$155,931,428	\$197,435,766	\$198,084,849	\$169,478,310	\$169,400,220	\$163,979,466	\$134,734,400
<b>Assessed Value – Personal Property</b>	\$43,042,580	\$43,673,690	\$44,814,332	\$42,468,940	\$35,806,960	\$34,082,970	\$33,379,110
<b>Fines and Forfeitures</b>	\$1,477,985	\$1,447,904	\$1,391,546	\$1,394,729	\$1,520,118	\$2,227,648	\$2,571,190

Additionally, as with the municipal courts themselves, oversight of 302.341 is limited. An inquiry placed with the Missouri Department of Revenue (DOR) revealed that the DOR relies on municipalities to self-report any violations of the 30% threshold provided in 302.341. Additional inquiries to the State yielded no documented instances of municipalities that exceeded the 30% threshold self-reporting and turning over the excess revenue to the state for distribution amongst the schools of St. Louis County. This fact, along with information gathered from municipal reports<sup>33</sup>, appears to indicate that several municipalities are in violation of 302.341. A stronger mechanism for oversight must be implemented.

Recently, the Missouri State Auditor’s office announced a new oversight program that will pick “five of the most suspect courts in the state each year” to see if they are in compliance with the

<sup>30</sup> <http://03a5010.netsolhost.com/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/ArchCity-Defenders-Municipal-Courts-Whitepaper.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> City of St. John Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2013

<sup>32</sup> City of Ferguson Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2013

<sup>33</sup> See Table 5 in Appendix

requirements of 302.341.<sup>34</sup> While this program will offer needed additional oversight, more is required. With over 450 municipal courts in the state of Missouri, 82 of which are in St. Louis City and County, it may take years to implement reforms system-wide.<sup>35</sup> Oversight must consist of annual reviews and audits to ensure compliance, and stiff penalties (like the loss of municipal court jurisdiction) should remain in place for a defined length of time and not simply until a municipality comes back into compliance. Courts must be held to a higher standard than those they impose in order for the faith of the public and the communities they serve to be restored. Reforming this law and assuring proper compliance would provide critical first steps in that process.

Finally, another reform that could be implemented to eliminate the practice of utilizing fines and fees as a major general revenue source would be to follow the sales tax pool model in St. Louis County. Pooling all of the fines and fees by Missouri judicial circuit to be distributed per capita would eliminate the direct incentive to issue fines and fees for reasons other than the interests of justice and public safety. This reform would also take a step toward restoring trust in those communities where there exists a belief that municipal courts are being utilized solely to generate revenue.<sup>36</sup>

### **MUNICIPAL COURT PRACTICES & PROCEDURES**

In addition to financial reforms, there are issues that must also be addressed in individual courts. When members of the public visit one of the many municipal courts in St. Louis County, they see a system that caters to defendants who have lawyers. Lawyers' cases typically go first, to accommodate the fact that many lawyers are attending more than one municipal court session in the same evening. Lawyers get "no-points" deals and dismissals for their clients; the unrepresented defendants do not. When the unrepresented citizen goes to court, he or she sees a system that blatantly favors people with money. This is the face of the judiciary as far as the average person is concerned. It is not a pretty face.

Recent reports, as well as actions taken by the Legal Clinic at Saint Louis University Law School, by the non-profit Arch City Defenders, and by a group of municipal court officials led by Judge Frank Vatterott, have highlighted several critical municipal court issues that require reform including:

- Access to open courts
- Methods for collecting court fines and fees
- Notification of rights

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<sup>34</sup> <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/post/schweich-will-check-whether-municipal-courts-are-collecting-too-much-fines> ; Section 302.341 MO Revised Statutes - <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/C300-399/3020000341.HTM>

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=7418>

<sup>36</sup> <http://03a5010.netsolhost.com/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/ArchCity-Defenders-Municipal-Courts-Whitepaper.pdf>

### *Access to Open Courts*

Open and public courts are a fundamental principle that is specifically provided in both Constitutional and State law. Article I Section 14 of the Missouri Constitution explicitly states that “the courts of justice shall be open to every person.”<sup>37</sup> However, a committee established by 21<sup>st</sup> Circuit Presiding Judge Maura McShane recently found that 37% of municipal courts do not allow children in the courtroom, and 10% of St. Louis County municipal courts allow only the person listed on the docket inside the courtroom.

After requests from the Saint Louis University Law Clinic and the Arch City Defenders that Judge McShane order these courts to be open to the public, she issued a directive to the municipal courts requiring that they adjust their policies for access to courts. Any court that did not comply would be subject to further action by Judge McShane, as well as to potential lawsuits. Judge McShane’s order, issued in June of 2014, along with the reform efforts of a small group of advocates led by Judge Frank Vatterott, resulted in added courts coming into compliance. However, there was pushback and research revealed that as of October of 2014, some courts are still not in compliance with the order or the Constitution. A basic search conducted on October 8<sup>th</sup> revealed that Bel-Ridge and Berkeley remain noncompliant with the law and Judge McShane’s directive, with both municipalities still emphasizing that children will not be permitted inside the courtroom.<sup>38</sup>

While prohibiting children from entering the courtroom may seem like a minor inconvenience to some, it presents yet another scenario for a minor offense to lead to a life-altering event, as it did for one parent attempting to pay a municipal fine in Hazelwood. After being told that he could not bring his children in the court, a father had them wait in the parking lot with a friend who was also at court. While the father was inside paying the fine, a police officer entered and arrested him for child endangerment, since he left them outside to come pay his fine.<sup>39</sup>

Several courts responded to Judge McShane’s order by stating that they had limited facilities and could not accommodate children and the general public.<sup>40</sup> This argument would be more compelling if not for several facts. First, Missouri statute states that every “municipality shall provide a suitable courtroom in which to hold court.” Second, every municipal court in St. Louis City and County generates a profit except for eight.<sup>41</sup> Third, on average, a municipal court in the St. Louis region brings in \$488,357 beyond what it cost to operate, which on average is \$223,149.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, if municipalities are unable to afford the standards for maintaining constitutionally adequate court divisions, they have the option under Article V, Section 27(16) to prosecute their ordinance violations in associate circuit court divisions of the State of Missouri and retain the revenue from fines (up to the 30 percent of the budget limit per Missouri Statute 302.341.2).<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> MO Constitution Article I Section 14 - <http://www.moga.mo.gov/const/A01014.HTM>

<sup>38</sup> See Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix.

<sup>39</sup> <http://03a5010.netsolhost.com/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/ArchCity-Defenders-Municipal-Courts-Whitepaper.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/municipal-court-judges-in-st-louis-county-are-told-to/article\\_e965d081-758d-500a-abb7-a054916edad2.html?print=true&cid=print](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/municipal-court-judges-in-st-louis-county-are-told-to/article_e965d081-758d-500a-abb7-a054916edad2.html?print=true&cid=print)

<sup>41</sup> See Table 6 in Appendix.

<sup>42</sup> See Table 6 in Appendix.

<sup>43</sup> Missouri Revised Statute 302.341.2 - <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/C300-399/3020000341.HTM>

Simple fixes such as adding court sessions or extending hours could be made in order to address the need to make courts open and public. Most municipal courts have 1-2 sessions per month with some averaging over 500 cases per session.<sup>44</sup> By increasing the number of sessions, courts could be opened as required without raising funds through additional fees as Florissant plans to do.<sup>45</sup> A requirement that courts limit their docket size per hour of court session would ensure that courts could remain open and prevent public perception that courts with such large dockets are being utilized solely for the revenue they generate.

### ***Methods of Collecting Fines and Fees***

The perception that many municipal courts are simply in place to generate revenue has been reinforced by multiple accounts from attorneys<sup>46</sup>, citizens<sup>47</sup>, and reporters<sup>48</sup> that call into question the manner in which municipal court sessions are conducted and the methods utilized to collect fines. Common complaints include inability to pay and judges ordering individuals be locked up until they can gather the money from friends and family. This process in particular has left individuals with minor traffic offenses “feeling violated” according to one account documented in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.<sup>49</sup> However, this is far from an isolated incident. Similar accounts led a group of attorneys at Saint Louis University and the nonprofit Arch City Defenders to advocate for reforms in how fines are imposed and in treatment for failure to pay with regard to those financially unable to do so.<sup>50</sup>

Under Missouri law, it is well established in numerous statutes and the Missouri Supreme Court Rules that municipal judges may alter fines and provide for a payment plan to those unable to pay a fine in full. Rule 37.65 of the Missouri Supreme Court Rules provides a municipal judge with the discretion to provide for payment of the fine in installments and an extension to satisfy the fine. In addition 37.65 provides the judge with the ability to require the defendant show cause for an inability to pay. Missouri statute is clear on these matters, as well, with Section 479.240 stating:

When a fine is assessed for violation of an ordinance, it shall be within the discretion of the judge assessing the fine to provide for the payment of the fine on an installment basis under such terms and conditions as he may deem appropriate.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Cite to Table 5 Showing Court Schedules and Caseloads for Each Municipality as gathered from MO Court Admin Site

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.flovalleynews.com/florissant-to-collect-10-for-each-municipal-ordinance-violation>

<sup>46</sup> <http://03a5010.netsolhost.com/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/ArchCity-Defenders-Municipal-Courts-Whitepaper.pdf> and <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/law/News/Scanned%20document.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/for-people-living-under-threat-of-arrest-around-st-louis/article\\_5135fe78-02f4-5ff2-8283-3b7c0b178afc.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/for-people-living-under-threat-of-arrest-around-st-louis/article_5135fe78-02f4-5ff2-8283-3b7c0b178afc.html)

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-watch/wp/2014/09/03/how-st-louis-county-missouri-profits-from-poverty/>

<sup>49</sup> [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/for-people-living-under-threat-of-arrest-around-st-louis/article\\_5135fe78-02f4-5ff2-8283-3b7c0b178afc.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/for-people-living-under-threat-of-arrest-around-st-louis/article_5135fe78-02f4-5ff2-8283-3b7c0b178afc.html)

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.slu.edu/Documents/law/News/Scanned%20document.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.moga.mo.gov/statutes/C400-499/4790000240.HTM>

Additionally, Missouri law states that “in determining the amount and method of payment of a fine, the court shall, insofar as practicable, proportion the fine to burden that payment will impose in view of the financial resources of an individual.”<sup>52</sup>

Finally, while not a popular option, collection agencies could be used rather than placing individuals unable to pay in jail. It would also avail these individuals of certain rights, while not causing them to miss work and possibly lose their job while in jail for failure to pay.<sup>53</sup>

Given the discretion that municipal judges hold to adjust fines and provide for alternative methods and schedule of payment, it is difficult to understand the use of jailing to collect fines and fees unless utilized as a matter of last resort and after a hearing on a defendant’s ability to pay is held. Those steps are noticeably absent from many accounts provided in both professional and media reports.

A logical reform would be for the Supreme Court of Missouri to follow the suggestions of the Clinical Law Offices at Saint Louis University, whose attorneys in conjunction with attorneys from Arch City Defenders asked that the Court “adopt an amendment to Supreme Court Rule 37.65 (a) and (b),” which would “clarify the obligation of municipal courts to proportion fines to the resources of offenders and the power of the courts to respond in a constitutional manner to non-payment by indigent defendants.”<sup>54</sup> This reform would be seen as an act of good faith towards the community and also provide a solution to non-payment of fines and fees that does not include a citizen being locked up for a traffic violation.

Such reforms would also deter a common practice among those unable to pay fines in full at their court date, which is simply not appearing in court out of fear of being locked up for inability to pay. While judges and attorneys agree that this is a losing strategy, rumors and misunderstanding make this path not uncommon. Unfortunately, it results in the issuance of warrants for the arrest of those failing to appear and places defendants in a more difficult position. Warrants for failing to appear for a basic traffic fine can prevent individuals from being hired or getting access to housing once background checks turn up the warrant.

Two potential reforms could alleviate the negative personal and economic impacts of these warrants being issued. First, a basic list of rights, procedures, and consequences should be listed on the back of every municipal citation issued. This list should also be prominently displayed at the entrance to every court session. This simple step could prevent individuals from making uninformed or misinformed decisions that could significantly impact their lives and the lives of their family.

Second, public defenders should be available at each municipal court session. Given the large-scale profit that many municipalities gain from operating a municipal court, their expenses should include not only a judge, prosecutor and clerk that they hire and pay, but also an attorney that is available to protect the rights of the citizens. A recent reform has proposed the creation of

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<sup>52</sup> MO Rev Stat 560.026

<sup>53</sup> VAMS 67.136

<sup>54</sup><http://www.courts.mo.gov/courts/ClerkHandbooksP2RulesOnly.nsf/c0c6ffa99df4993f86256ba50057dcb8/7faef21dd98bc5af86256ca60052130d?OpenDocument>



a pro bono organization of attorneys that would volunteer to represent defendants in municipal court. This reform may be a symbolic step in the right direction, but it is unsustainable and impractical. Providing a paid attorney to represent clients offers practical benefits. First, it demonstrates to citizens that their rights are important and that the court does not exist simply to bring in revenue. Second, an attorney could work with a defendant to devise a plan for payment of fines or represent that defendant in challenging the charges. While in Missouri counsel is only required when incarceration is probable as a sentence, providing a public defender would be a true reform with practical implications, such as removing fear that a defendant would be immediately locked up for inability to pay. It would also ensure that all contempt hearings for nonpayment were properly staffed and defendants' rights were preserved.

Several best practices have been offered by subject matter experts, practitioners, academics, and national research. The implementation of proposed reforms and the enforcement of current constitutional and state laws would help revitalize the trust of the community.



# Public Safety – Municipal Courts

## Appendix

October 2014

State of Missouri	\$132,032,352	% of State Total
St. Louis Region*	\$61,152,087 [2]	46%
St. Louis County	\$6,699,384 [3]	5%
St. Louis City	\$9,316,287 [4]	7%
St. Louis County Municipalities	\$45,136,416 [5]	34%

\* Consists of St. Louis City, St. Louis County, Municipalities in St. Louis County

TABLE 2

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION [6]	% OF GENERAL REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES [7]	% OF POPULATION THAT IS BLACK [8]	% OF POPULATION THAT IS BELOW POVERTY LINE [9]
CALVERTON PARK	1,293	66.32%	42.23%	23.60%
BELLA VILLA	729	57.38%	1.51%	8.60%
VINITA TERRACE	277	51.83%	72.92%	19.20%
PINE LAWN	3,275	48.12%	96.40%	31.80%
NORMANDY	5,008	40.61%	69.75%	35.40%
SAINT ANN	13,020	37.47%	22.11%	15.10%
EDMUNDSON	834	34.86%	26.38%	19.00%
MOLINE ACRES	2,442	31.06%	92.10%	21.30%
BELLERIVE	188	29.38%	43.09%	0.90%
COOL VALLEY	1,196	29.11%	84.53%	14.00%
CHARLACK	1,363	28.88%	35.44%	13.20%
BRECKENRIDGE HILLS	4,746	28.82%	32.70%	24.50%
HILLSDALE	1,478	26.92%	95.94%	46.60%
BEVERLY HILLS	574	26.37%	92.68%	17.70%
NORTHWOODS	4,227	26.35%	93.94%	25.70%
BEL-RIDGE	2,737	24.46%	83.12%	42.30%
SAINT JOHN	6,517	24.31%	24.29%	17.00%
UPLANDS PARK	445	23.50%	96.40%	17.10%
SYCAMORE HILLS	668	22.95%	12.28%	7.30%
FLORELL HILLS	822	22.52%	90.75%	36.00%
VELDA CITY	1,420	21.58%	95.42%	18.50%
AVERAGE FOR TOP 21 MUNICIPALITIES	2,536	33%	62%	22%
AVERAGE FOR ALL ST. LOUIS COUNTY		13%	24%	11%

<b>ST. JOHN [10]</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Assessed Value – Real Property</b>	\$48,172,540	\$48,112,280	\$44,342,260	\$44,504,180	\$40,103,330	\$39,728,520	\$35,332,530
<b>Assessed Value – Personal Property</b>	\$12,300,400	\$11,794,760	\$12,387,753	\$10,298,187	\$10,393,276	\$9,781,183	\$9,846,369
<b>Fines and Forfeitures</b>	\$803,217	\$860,146	\$949,216	\$941,371	\$1,092,093	\$1,199,022	\$1,126,763
<b>FERGUSON [11]</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Assessed Value – Real Property</b>	\$155,931,428	\$197,435,766	\$198,084,849	\$169,478,310	\$169,400,220	\$163,979,466	\$134,734,400
<b>Assessed Value – Personal Property</b>	\$43,042,580	\$43,673,690	\$44,814,332	\$42,468,940	\$35,806,960	\$34,082,970	\$33,379,110
<b>Fines and Forfeitures</b>	\$1,477,985	\$1,447,904	\$1,391,546	\$1,394,729	\$1,520,118	\$2,227,648	\$2,571,190

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION [12]	SALES TAX - GENERAL REVENUE	PROPERTY TAX - GENERAL REVENUE	REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES	GENERAL REVENUE TOTAL
BELLA VILLA	729	\$92,524.00 [13]	\$0.00	\$371,393	\$647,243 [14]
BELLERIVE	188	\$49,025.71 [15]	\$30,860.71 [16]	\$71,979	\$245,032 [17]
BEVERLY HILLS	574	\$73,884.00 [18]	\$9,858.00 [19]	\$221,165	\$838,833 [20]
CALVERTON PAR	1,293	\$158,880.00 [21]	\$24,122.00 [22]	\$482,931	\$728,226 [23]
CHARLACK	1,363	\$278,405.00 [24]	\$19,501.00 [25]	\$291,634	\$1,009,747 [26]
COOL VALLEY	1,196	\$169,188.00 [27]	\$39,686.00 [28]	\$366,763	\$1,259,770 [29]
EDMUNDSON	834	\$318,196.00 [30]	\$92,845.00 [31]	\$559,465	\$1,604,815 [32]
MOLINE ACRES	2,442	\$317,551.00	\$0.00	\$503,061	\$1,619,488 [33]
NORMANDY	5,008	\$662,900.00 [34]	\$101,541.00 [35]	\$1,725,753	\$4,249,631 [36]
NORTHWOODS	4,227	\$593,923.00 [37]	\$106,349.00 [38]	\$690,534	\$2,620,992 [39]
PINE LAWN	3,275	\$380,913.00 [40]	\$43,654.00 [41]	\$1,841,985	\$3,827,753 [42]
ST. ANN	13,020	\$1,113,313.00 [43]	\$360,746.00 [44]	\$3,415,671	\$9,115,012 [45]
VELDA CITY	1,420	\$194,213.00	\$115,362.00	\$224,909	\$1,042,254 [46]
VINITA TERRACE	277	\$52,228.00 [47]	\$4,173.13 [48]	\$121,145	\$233,738 [49]

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION [50]	REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES [51]	GENERAL REVENUE TOTAL	% OF GENERAL REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES
BALLWIN	30,404	\$1,031,778	\$17,620,540 [52]	5.86%
BEL-NOR	1,499	\$84,414	\$755,600 [53]	11.17%
BEL-RIDGE	2,737	\$362,433	\$1,481,633 [54]	24.46%
BELLA VILLA	729	\$371,393	\$647,243 [55]	57.38%
BELLEFONTAINE	10,860	\$685,700	\$4,918,310 [56]	13.94%
BELLERIVE	188	\$71,979	\$245,032 [57]	29.38%
BERKELEY	8,978	\$951,412	\$8,680,716 [58]	10.96%
BEVERLY HILLS	574	\$221,165	\$838,833 [59]	26.37%
BLACK JACK	6,929	\$93,073	\$2,621,186 [60]	3.55%
BRECKENRIDGE HILLS	4,746	\$622,636	\$2,160,734 [61]	28.82%
BRENTWOOD	8,055	\$470,868	\$11,780,199 [62]	4.00%
BRIDGETON	11,550	\$349,145	\$12,887,494 [63]	2.71%
CALVERTON PARK	1,293	\$482,931	\$728,226 [64]	66.32%
CHAMP	13		\$48,757 [65]	0.00%
CHARLACK	1,363	\$291,634	\$1,009,747 [66]	28.88%
CHESTERFIELD	47,484	\$1,340,143	\$21,125,292 [67]	6.34%
CLARKSON VALLEY	2,632	\$161,604	\$881,785 [68]	18.33%
CLAYTON	15,939	\$672,029	\$21,761,741 [69]	3.09%
COOL VALLEY	1,196	\$366,763	\$1,259,770 [70]	29.11%
COUNTRY CLUB HILLS	16,541	\$220,618	\$1,400,359 [71]	15.75%
COUNTRY LIFE ACRES	74		\$84,041 [72]	0.00%
CRESTWOOD	11,912	\$250,272	\$7,800,717 [73]	3.21%
CREVE COEUR	17,833	\$1,966,254	\$16,365,796 [74]	12.01%
CRYSTAL LAKE PARK	470		\$222,147 [75]	0.00%
DELLWOOD	5,025	\$244,694	\$3,434,353 [76]	7.12%
DES PERES	8,373	\$433,576	\$9,782,524 [77]	4.43%
EDMUNDSON	834	\$559,465	\$1,604,815 [78]	34.86%
ELLISVILE	9,133	\$596,932	\$5,905,836 [79]	10.11%
EUREKA	10,189	\$143,936	\$4,853,232 [80]	2.97%
FENTON	4,022	\$421,832	\$5,607,923 [81]	7.52%
FERGUSON	21,203	\$1,832,519	\$12,746,894 [82]	14.38%
FLORDELL HILLS	822	\$116,351	\$516,749 [83]	22.52%
FLORISSANT	52,158	\$2,421,797	\$23,120,332 [84]	10.47%
FRONTENAC	3,482	\$513,790	\$5,962,282 [85]	8.62%
GLEN ECHO PARK	160		\$41,974 [86]	0.00%
GLENDALE	5,925	\$143,194	\$3,746,924 [87]	3.82%

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION [50]	REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES [51]	GENERAL REVENUE TOTAL	% OF GENERAL REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES
GRANTWOOD VILLAGE	863	\$7,003	\$387,995 [88]	1.81%
GREEN PARK	2,622		\$1,125,902 [89]	0.00%
GREENDALE	651	\$40,467	\$357,424 [90]	11.32%
HANELY HILLS	2,101	\$67,326	\$635,500 [91]	10.59%
HAZELWOOD	25,703	\$1,307,572	\$23,809,852 [92]	5.49%
HILLSDALE	1,478	\$224,550	\$834,036 [93]	26.92%
HUNTLEIGH	334		\$136,396 [94]	0.00%
JENNINGS	14,712	\$436,219	\$7,737,693 [95]	5.64%
KINLOCH	298	\$9,173	\$900,778 [96]	1.02%
KIRKWOOD	27,540	\$528,690	\$19,297,564 [97]	2.74%
LADUE	8,521	\$457,915	\$11,775,575 [98]	3.89%
LAKESHIRE	1,432	\$18,851	\$554,181 [99]	3.40%
MACKENZIE	134		\$48,462 [100]	0.00%
MANCHESTER	18,094	\$430,901	\$8,202,013 [101]	5.25%
MAPLEWOOD	8,046	\$837,774	\$8,844,064 [102]	9.47%
MARLBOROUGH	729	\$91,461	\$575,062 [103]	15.90%
MARYLAND HEIGHTS	27,472	\$1,745,016	\$22,420,540 [104]	7.78%
MOLINE ACRES	2,442	\$503,061	\$1,619,488 [105]	31.06%
NORMANDY	5,008	\$1,725,753	\$4,249,631 [106]	40.61%
NORTHWOODS	4,227	\$690,534	\$2,620,992 [107]	26.35%
NORWOOD COURT	959		\$182,616 [108]	0.00%
OAKLAND	1,381	\$88,930	\$675,079 [109]	13.17%
OLIVETTE	7,737	\$292,184	\$7,046,302 [110]	4.15%
OVERLAND	16,062	\$475,840	\$8,255,774 [111]	5.76%
PACIFIC	7,002		\$3,767,395 [112]	0.00%
PAGEDALE	3,304	\$356,601	\$2,016,430 [113]	17.68%
PASADENA HILLS	930	\$0	\$384,979 [114]	0.00%
PASADENA PARK	470	\$0	\$146,446 [115]	0.00%
PINE LAWN	3,275	\$1,841,985	\$3,827,753 [116]	48.12%
RICHMOND HEIGHTS	8,603	\$809,252	\$12,109,281 [117]	6.68%
RIVERVIEW	2,856	\$105,384	\$913,332 [118]	11.54%
ROCK HILL	4,635	\$628,510	\$3,370,845 [119]	18.65%
SAINT ANN	13,020	\$3,415,671	\$9,115,012 [120]	37.47%
SAINT JOHN	6,517	\$932,313	\$3,835,573 [121]	24.31%
SAINT LOUIS CITY	319,294	\$8,340,407	\$430,213,000 [122]	1.94%



MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION [50]	REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES [51]	GENERAL REVENUE TOTAL	% OF GENERAL REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES
SHREWSBURY	6,254	\$378,706	\$5,997,095 [123]	6.31%
STL COUNTY	998,954	\$5,846,002	\$341,291,336 [124]	1.71%
SUNSET HILLS	8,496	\$404,953	\$7,253,769 [125]	5.58%
SYCAMORE HILLS	668	\$40,126	\$174,844 [126]	22.95%
TOWN AND COUNTRY	10,815	\$1,504,837	\$10,040,225 [127]	14.99%
TWIN OAKS	392		\$572,292 [128]	0.00%
UNIVERSITY CITY	35,371	\$571,516	\$26,917,526 [129]	2.12%
UPLANDS PARK	445	\$90,935	\$386,887 [130]	23.50%
VALLEY PARK	6,942	\$221,432	\$3,290,258 [131]	6.73%
VELDA CITY	1,420	\$224,909	\$1,042,254 [132]	21.58%
VELDA VILLAGE HILLS	1,055	\$41,497	\$420,343 [133]	9.87%
VINITA PARK	1,880	\$262,231	\$2,156,671 [134]	12.16%
VINITA TERRACE	277	\$121,145	\$233,738 [135]	51.83%
WARSON WOODS	1,962	\$43,911	\$1,518,054 [136]	2.89%
WEBSTER GROVES	22,995	\$1,011,126	\$14,955,343 [137]	6.76%
WELLSTON	2,313	\$342,036	\$2,810,091 [138]	12.17%
WESTWOOD	278		No Information Received	
WILBUR PARK	471		\$131,916 [139]	0.00%
WILDWOOD	35,517	\$615,040	\$9,051,444 [140]	6.79%
WINCHESTER	1,547	\$50,361	\$778,189 [141]	6.47%
WOODSON TERRACE	4,063	\$244,040	\$3,706,617 [142]	6.58%

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION	COST TO OPERATE COURTS	GROSS REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES [143]	NET REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES
BALLWIN	30,404	\$190,268 [144]	\$1,031,778	\$841,510
BEL-NOR	1,499	\$63,731 [145]	\$84,414	\$20,683
BEL-RIDGE	2,737	\$132,818 [146]	\$362,433	\$229,615
BELLA VILLA	729	\$87,633 [147]	\$371,393	\$283,760
BELLEFONTAINE	10,860	\$110,817 [148]	\$685,700	\$574,883
BELLERIVE	188	\$11,500 [149]	\$71,979	\$60,479
BERKELEY	8,978	\$166,160 [150]	\$951,412	\$785,252
BEVERLY HILLS	574	No Information Received	\$221,165	N/A
BLACK JACK	6,929	\$63,847 [151]	\$93,073	\$29,226
BRECKENRIDGE HILLS	4,746	\$142,792 [152]	\$622,636	\$479,844
BRENTWOOD	8,055	\$189,680 [153]	\$470,868	\$281,188
BRIDGETON	11,550	\$247,636 [154]	\$349,145	\$101,509
CALVERTON PARK	1,293	\$54,816 [155]	\$482,931	\$428,115
CHAMP	13	No Court [156]	N/A	N/A
CHARLACK	1,363	Need clearer information	\$291,634	N/A
CHESTERFIELD	47,484	\$237,707 [157]	\$1,340,143	\$1,102,436
CLARKSON VALLEY	2,632	\$86,307 [158]	\$161,604	\$75,297
CLAYTON	15,939	\$272,155 [159]	\$672,029	\$399,874
COOL VALLEY	1,196	\$112,143 [160]	\$366,763	\$254,620
COUNTRY CLUB HILLS	16,541	\$106,125 [161]	\$220,618	\$114,493
COUNTRY LIFE ACRES	74	None listed [162]	N/A	N/A
CRESTWOOD	11,912	\$101,951 [163]	\$250,272	\$148,321
CREVE COEUR	17,833	\$865,272 [164]	\$1,966,254	\$1,100,982
CRYSTAL LAKE PARK	470	None listed	N/A	N/A
DELLWOOD	5,025	\$153,668 [165]	\$244,694	\$91,026
DES PERES	8,373	\$278,555 [166]	\$433,576	\$155,021
EDMUNDSON	834	\$172,023 [167]	\$559,465	\$387,442
ELLISVILE	9,133	\$360,791 [168]	\$596,932	\$236,141
EUREKA	10,189	\$180,626 [169]	\$143,936	-\$36,691
FENTON	4,022	\$165,790 [170]	\$421,832	\$256,042
FERGUSON	21,203	\$313,192 [171]	\$1,832,519	\$1,519,327
FLORDELL HILLS	822	\$56,271 [172]	\$116,351	\$60,080
FLORISSANT	52,158	\$868,656 [173]	\$2,421,797	\$1,553,141
FRONTENAC	3,482	\$146,083 [174]	\$513,790	\$367,707
GLEN ECHO PARK	160	None listed	N/A	N/A
GLENDALE	5,925	\$45,051 [175]	\$143,194	\$98,143

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION	COST TO OPERATE COURTS	GROSS REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES [143]	NET REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES
GRANTWOOD VILLAGE	863	\$7,950 [176]	\$7,003	-\$947
GREEN PARK	2,622	No Court [177]	N/A	N/A
GREENDALE	651	\$418 [178]	\$40,467	\$40,049
HANELY HILLS	2,101	\$125,000 [179]	\$67,326	-\$57,674
HAZELWOOD	25,703	None listed	\$1,307,572	N/A
HILLSDALE	1,478	\$8,000 [180]	\$224,550	\$216,550
HUNTLEIGH	334	Contract with Frontenac, Combined with Fire and EMS Services	N/A	N/A
JENNINGS	14,712	\$245,331 [181]	\$436,219	\$190,888
KINLOCH	298	No information received	\$9,173	N/A
KIRKWOOD	27,540	\$252,938 [182]	\$528,690	\$275,752
LADUE	8,521	None listed [183]	\$457,915	N/A
LAKESHIRE	1,432	\$9,421 [184]	\$18,851	\$9,430
MACKENZIE	134	No information received	N/A	N/A
MANCHESTER	18,094	\$333,794 [185]	\$430,901	\$97,107
MAPLEWOOD	8,046	\$255,462 [186]	\$837,774	\$582,312
MARLBOROUGH	729	\$91,957 [187]	\$91,461	-\$496
MARYLAND HEIGHTS	27,472	\$365,548 [188]	\$1,745,016	\$1,379,468
MOLINE ACRES	2,442	\$134,468 [189]	\$503,061	\$368,593
NORMANDY	5,008	\$99,513 [190]	\$1,725,753	\$1,626,240
NORTHWOODS	4,227	\$230,831 [191]	\$690,534	\$459,703
NORWOOD COURT	959	No court [192]	N/A	N/A
OAKLAND	1,381	\$35,689 [193]	\$88,930	\$53,241
OLIVETTE	7,737	\$144,944 [194]	\$292,184	\$147,240
OVERLAND	16,062	\$216,863 [195]	\$475,840	\$258,977
PAGEDALE	3,304	\$90,758 [196]	\$356,601	\$265,843
PASADENA HILLS	930	\$2,300 [197]	\$0	-\$2,300
PASADENA PARK	470	\$7,736 [198]	\$0	-\$7,736
PINE LAWN	3,275	\$453,125 [199]	\$1,841,985	\$1,388,860
RICHMOND HEIGHTS	8,603	\$252,075 [200]	\$809,252	\$557,177
RIVERVIEW	2,856	None listed	\$105,384	N/A
ROCK HILL	4,635	\$144,443 [201]	\$628,510	\$484,067
SAINT ANN	13,020	\$332,313 [202]	\$3,415,671	\$3,083,358
SAINT JOHN	6,517	None listed	\$932,313	N/A
SAINT LOUIS CITY	319,294	\$2,227,000 [203]	\$8,340,407	\$6,113,407

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION	COST TO OPERATE COURTS	GROSS REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES [143]	NET REVENUE FROM FINES & FEES
SHREWSBURY	6,254	None listed	\$378,706	N/A
STL COUNTY	998,954	\$1,986,994 [204]	\$5,846,002	\$3,859,008
SUNSET HILLS	8,496	\$176,807 [205]	\$404,953	\$228,146
SYCAMORE HILLS	668	\$9,165 [206]	\$40,126	\$30,961
TOWN AND COUNTRY	10,815	\$260,570 [207]	\$1,504,837	\$1,244,267
TWIN OAKS	392	No Court [208]	N/A	N/A
UNIVERSITY CITY	35,371	\$313,511 [209]	\$571,516	\$258,005
UPLANDS PARK	445	\$15,219 [210]	\$90,935	\$75,716
VALLEY PARK	6,942	\$101,619 [211]	\$221,432	\$119,813
VELDA CITY	1,420	\$118,519 [212]	\$224,909	\$106,390
VELDA VILLAGE HILLS	1,055	\$50,647 [213]	\$41,497	-\$9,150
VINITA PARK	1,880	\$118,002 [214]	\$262,231	\$144,229
VINITA TERRACE	277	\$61,676 [215]	\$121,145	\$59,469
WARSON WOODS	1,962	\$84,008 [216]	\$43,911	-\$40,098
WEBSTER GROVES	22,995	\$197,567 [217]	\$1,011,126	\$813,559
WELLSTON	2,313	No information received	\$342,036	N/A
WESTWOOD	278	No Court [218]	N/A	N/A
WILBUR PARK	471	No Court [219]	N/A	N/A
WILDWOOD	35,517	\$231,639 [220]	\$615,040	\$383,401
WINCHESTER	1,547	\$11,879 [221]	\$50,361	\$38,482
WOODSON TERRACE	4,063	\$53,788 [222]	\$244,040	\$190,252
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,318,610</b>	<b>\$15,843,552</b>	<b>\$56,920,470</b>	<b>\$37,031,022</b>
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>\$223,149</b>	<b>\$711,506</b>	<b>\$488,357</b>

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION [223]	GENERAL REVENUE TOTAL	30% OF GENERAL REVENUE
BALLWIN	30,404	\$17,620,540 [224]	\$5,286,162
BEL-NOR	1,499	\$755,600 [225]	\$226,680
BEL-RIDGE	2,737	\$1,481,633 [226]	\$444,490
BELLA VILLA	729	\$647,243 [227]	\$194,173
BELLEFONTAINE	10,860	\$4,918,310 [228]	\$1,475,493
BELLERIVE	188	\$245,032 [229]	\$73,510
BERKELEY	8,978	\$8,680,716 [230]	\$2,604,215
BEVERLY HILLS	574	\$838,833 [231]	\$251,650
BLACK JACK	6,929	\$2,621,186 [232]	\$786,356
BRECKENRIDGE HILLS	4,746	\$2,160,734 [233]	\$648,220
BRENTWOOD	8,055	\$11,780,199 [234]	\$3,534,060
BRIDGETON	11,550	\$12,887,494 [235]	\$3,866,248
CALVERTON PARK	1,293	\$728,226 [236]	\$218,468
CHAMP	13	\$48,757 [237]	\$14,627
CHARLACK	1,363	\$1,009,747 [238]	\$302,924
CHESTERFIELD	47,484	\$21,125,292 [239]	\$6,337,588
CLARKSON VALLEY	2,632	\$881,785 [240]	\$264,536
CLAYTON	15,939	\$21,761,741 [241]	\$6,528,522
COOL VALLEY	1,196	\$1,259,770 [242]	\$377,931
COUNTRY CLUB HILLS	16,541	\$1,400,359 [243]	\$420,108
COUNTRY LIFE ACRES	74	\$84,041 [244]	\$25,212
CRESTWOOD	11,912	\$7,800,717 [245]	\$2,340,215
CREVE COEUR	17,833	\$16,365,796 [246]	\$4,909,739
CRYSTAL LAKE PARK	470	\$222,147 [247]	\$66,644
DELLWOOD	5,025	\$3,434,353 [248]	\$1,030,306
DES PERES	8,373	\$9,782,524 [249]	\$2,934,757
EDMUNDSON	834	\$1,604,815 [250]	\$481,445
ELLISVILE	9,133	\$5,905,836 [251]	\$1,771,751
EUREKA	10,189	\$4,853,232 [252]	\$1,455,970
FENTON	4,022	\$5,607,923 [253]	\$1,682,377
FERGUSON	21,203	\$12,746,894 [254]	\$3,824,068
FLORDELL HILLS	822	\$516,749 [255]	\$155,025
FLORISSANT	52,158	\$23,120,332 [256]	\$6,936,100
FRONTENAC	3,482	\$5,962,282 [257]	\$1,788,685
GLEN ECHO PARK	160	\$41,974 [258]	\$12,592
GLENDALE	5,925	\$3,746,924 [259]	\$1,124,077

MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION [223]	GENERAL REVENUE TOTAL	30% OF GENERAL REVENUE
GRANTWOOD VILLAGE	863	\$387,995 [260]	\$116,399
GREEN PARK	2,622	\$1,125,902 [261]	\$337,771
GREENDALE	651	\$357,424 [262]	\$107,227
HANELY HILLS	2,101	\$635,500 [263]	\$190,650
HAZELWOOD	25,703	\$23,809,852 [264]	\$7,142,956
HILLSDALE	1,478	\$834,036 [265]	\$250,211
HUNTLEIGH	334	\$136,396 [266]	\$40,919
JENNINGS	14,712	\$7,737,693 [267]	\$2,321,308
KINLOCH	298	\$900,778 [268]	\$270,233
KIRKWOOD	27,540	\$19,297,564 [269]	\$5,789,269
LADUE	8,521	\$11,775,575 [270]	\$3,532,673
LAKESHIRE	1,432	\$554,181 [271]	\$166,254
MACKENZIE	134	\$48,462 [272]	\$14,539
MANCHESTER	18,094	\$8,202,013 [273]	\$2,460,604
MAPLEWOOD	8,046	\$8,844,064 [274]	\$2,653,219
MARLBOROUGH	729	\$575,062 [275]	\$172,519
MARYLAND HEIGHTS	27,472	\$22,420,540 [276]	\$6,726,162
MOLINE ACRES	2,442	\$1,619,488 [277]	\$485,846
NORMANDY	5,008	\$4,249,631 [278]	\$1,274,889
NORTHWOODS	4,227	\$2,620,992 [279]	\$786,298
NORWOOD COURT	959	\$182,616 [280]	\$54,785
OAKLAND	1,381	\$675,079 [281]	\$202,524
OLIVETTE	7,737	\$7,046,302 [282]	\$2,113,891
OVERLAND	16,062	\$8,255,774 [283]	\$2,476,732
PACIFIC	7,002	\$3,767,395 [284]	\$1,130,219
PAGEDALE	3,304	\$2,016,430 [285]	\$604,929
PASADENA HILLS	930	\$384,979 [286]	\$115,494
PASADENA PARK	470	\$146,446 [287]	\$43,934
PINE LAWN	3,275	\$3,827,753 [288]	\$1,148,326
RICHMOND HEIGHTS	8,603	\$12,109,281 [289]	\$3,632,784
RIVERVIEW	2,856	\$913,332 [290]	\$274,000
ROCK HILL	4,635	\$3,370,845 [291]	\$1,011,254
SAINT ANN	13,020	\$9,115,012 [292]	\$2,734,504
SAINT JOHN	6,517	\$3,835,573 [293]	\$1,150,672
SAINT LOUIS CITY	319,294	\$430,213,000 [294]	\$129,063,900
SHREWSBURY	6,254	\$5,997,095 [295]	\$1,799,129

<b>MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>POPULATION [223]</b>	<b>GENERAL REVENUE TOTAL</b>	<b>30% OF GENERAL REVENUE</b>
STL COUNTY	998,954	\$341,291,336 [296]	\$102,387,401
SUNSET HILLS	8,496	\$7,253,769 [297]	\$2,176,131
SYCAMORE HILLS	668	\$174,844 [298]	\$52,453
TOWN AND COUNTRY	10,815	\$10,040,225 [299]	\$3,012,068
TWIN OAKS	392	\$572,292 [300]	\$171,688
UNIVERSITY CITY	35,371	\$26,917,526 [301]	\$8,075,258
UPLANDS PARK	445	\$386,887 [302]	\$116,066
VALLEY PARK	6,942	\$3,290,258 [303]	\$987,077
VELDA CITY	1,420	\$1,042,254 [304]	\$312,676
VELDA VILLAGE HILLS	1,055	\$420,343 [305]	\$126,103
VINITA PARK	1,880	\$2,156,671 [306]	\$647,001
VINITA TERRACE	277	\$233,738 [307]	\$70,121
WARSON WOODS	1,962	\$1,518,054 [308]	\$455,416
WEBSTER GROVES	22,995	\$14,955,343 [309]	\$4,486,603
WELLSTON	2,313	\$2,810,091 [310]	\$843,027
WESTWOOD	278	No Information Received	No Information Received
WILBUR PARK	471	\$131,916 [311]	\$39,575
WILDWOOD	35,517	\$9,051,444 [312]	\$2,715,433
WINCHESTER	1,547	\$778,189 [313]	\$233,457
WOODSON TERRACE	4,063	\$3,706,617 [314]	\$1,111,985
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,318,610</b>	<b>\$1,249,371,594</b>	<b>\$374,811,478</b>
<b>TOTAL WITHOUT ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY</b>	<b>675,319</b>	<b>\$852,678,736</b>	<b>\$143,360,177</b>

[311] MO Auditor Wilbur Park 2013, p. 1.

[312] MO Auditor Wildwood 2013, p. 20.

[313] MO Auditor Winchester 2013, p. 11.

[314] MO Auditor Woodson Terrace 2013, p. 16.

[315] Information obtained from municipal websites and phone conversations..

[316] <http://www.courts.mo.gov/file.jsp?id=68842>.

[317] The woman on the phone would not answer and then transferred me to a full voicemail box .