CHAPTER 10

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

In this chapter

Goal 1: Continue to provide excellent community services and facilities for all

Goal 2: Provide safety-focused, fiscally responsible, and high quality infrastructure

Goal 3: Develop infrastructure and community facilities in a sustainable manner

Goal 4: Coordinate with local and regional stakeholders

Goal 5: Establish diverse funding strategies

Goal 6: Foster public ownership and community identity

Infrastructure and community facilities play a large role in the quality of place and livability of a community. Investments into infrastructure and community facilities should go beyond pure function, with the goal to improve sense of place and community identity. Beautification efforts should be integrated into infrastructure initiatives, promoting components like green infrastructure and public art. Community facilities should be designed to promote resident pride by incorporating sustainable and eco-friendly design best principles, advanced technologies, and cultural components representative of the community. Key community facilities, like libraries, schools, police and fire stations, and healthcare facilities should continue to be supported and expanded with growth, ensuring all residents are equitably served and can safely reach services through a variety of transportation modes. Quality infrastructure is vital to a strong economy as it provides the business community with the means to power businesses, connect workers and goods, and trade. Together with regional partners, the City should proactively plan for improvements to and expansion of infrastructure and community facilities to support future economic growth and development. This includes stormwater, sanitary sewer, recycling, solid waste, and water infrastructure, which are all essential components to supporting a productive economy and a wide range of employment opportunities.

Look for these icons identifying theme-related strategies!

COMMUNITY PHYSICAL IMAGE

ARTS, CULTURE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES OVERVIEW

Community facilities and infrastructure are essential in maintaining Springfield's high quality of life and ensuring the City is a safe and attractive place to live. Community facilities include public entities and private organizations that offer services to improve the livability of the City, including fire and police protection, arts and culture, library, education, and healthcare services. Infrastructure includes stormwater, sewer, and water lines, which provide residents with critical municipal services for day to day living. The right investments into community facilities and infrastructure can elevate the City's quality of place, community identity, and economic position, and fosters a place of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

While the City of Springfield continues to strive for excellence in addressing the community's needs, many of the services needed for high quality of life are provided by entities other than the City. Springfield also shares a common utility provider, school system, and emergency services with neighboring communities in the metropolitan area. It is therefore critical that the City continues to maintain open communication and promotes collaboration between agencies for the provision of efficient and quality services. This includes both within city limits and in unincorporated urbanized areas. Springfield should lead the way in providing superior services and facilities in the region, setting the example in collaborative planning and environmental stewardship.

1.1 ENHANCE PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

HEALTH & WELL-BEING ✛

Work with Springfield's fire and police departments to expand and enhance public safety services with growth.

Public safety is a key component of providing an attractive, livable community with high quality of life. Crime was identified as a top issue by community members during the *Forward SGF* outreach process, including violent crime, domestic violence, and drug culture and addiction. As Comprehensive Plans are not intended to provide exhaustive direction on public safety policy, a focused approach with regional public safety providers and partner agencies should be completed to form a regional public safety plan. The following sections provide an overview of area fire and police departments, along with future projects to expand and enhance public safety services in the community.

FIRE PROTECTION

Springfield Fire Department

The Springfield Fire Department (SFD) covers an area of nearly 84 square miles with 12 fire stations located throughout the City. The SFD has a total of 236 employees (227 sworn and 9 nonsworn employees). It is made up of two Sections, Emergency Services and Support Services, and three Divisions: Fire Operations Division, Community Risk Reduction Division, and the Safety and Training Division.
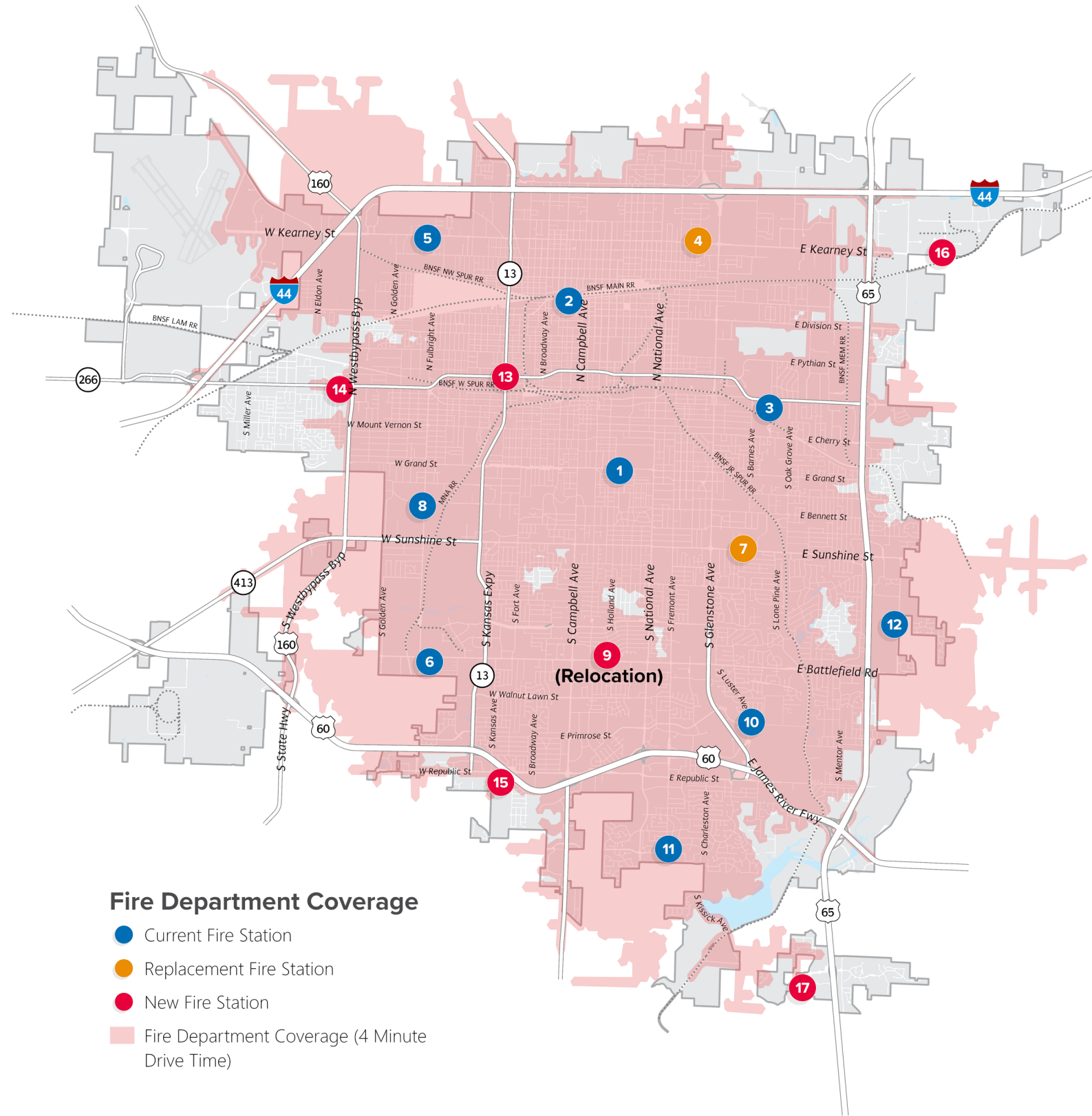
The Department has an Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating of 2 on a Public Protection Classification scale of 1 to 10, where 1 indicates superior fire protection while 10 indicates failure to meet minimum criteria. The rating is based on an area's fire alarm and communication systems, the fire department's equipment, staffing, fire prevention and training activities, and the water supply system. The SFD is one of seven in the State of Missouri with a rating of 2 and is internationally accredited through the Center for Public Safety Excellence.

Facility Upgrades

With increasing emergency response coverage by the SFD as the City has grown, the need for expansion and additional fire stations in underserved areas was identified. The SFD Facilities Master Plan was created to forecast the needs of the Fire Department until 2028. It identifies locations for two future fire stations (Fire Stations 13 and 14) to serve neighborhoods in the West and West Central sections of the City. The plan also calls for existing Fire Stations 4 and 7 to be reconstructed, and for Station 9 to be relocated near Sunset street and Jefferson Avenue. The renewal of the Level Property Tax by resident voters in 2017 set the path for these improvements. The following map shows locations of current and future fire station locations.

Neighboring Fire Districts

Greene County is served by several fire districts, such as of Republic, Brookline, and Battlefield. The City should continue to work collaboratively with these districts as the City grows.

Fire Department Coverage

- ● Current Fire Station
- ● Replacement Fire Station
- ● New Fire Station
- ▨ Fire Department Coverage (4 Minute Drive Time)

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Springfield Police Department

The Springfield Police Department was founded in 1858, comprising a chief and two officers to serve a population of 1,200. The Department has grown to comprise 368 sworn officers and 85 civilian employees today, serving an area of 82.5 square miles and a population of more than 167,000 people. The Springfield Police Department is divided into two bureaus:

1. **Uniform Operations:** This is the larger of the two bureaus with more community contact. This group responds to immediate calls for service (over 100,000 per year), conducts traffic enforcement and crash investigations, handles crisis situations through the Special Response Team, manages hostage negotiations and the K9 unit, and includes a Community Services Section focused on crime prevention and community policing initiatives. As of 2020, there are two patrol zones divided into eight beats or patrol areas staffed by 16 patrol squads, along with the Downtown "Entertainment District" patrolled by a separate squad of officers.

2. **Investigations and Support Services:** This bureau is responsible for investigating reported crimes and sending completed investigative reports to the appropriate prosecutor for filing criminal charges. The Criminal Investigations Section investigates property crimes (e.g. burglary and auto theft) and persons crimes (e.g. homicide and rape). The Special Investigations Section is responsible for narcotics, gambling, prostitution, gangs, and extremist group investigations. The Support Services staff manages records and evidence, grant project applications, and budgeting and purchasing activities; coordinates criminal intelligence and crime analysis activities; manages accreditation compliance; and conducts both recruit and in-service training.

HISTORIC CALABOOSE

The Calaboose, or jail, at 409 West McDaniel Street, is a historic structure dating to 1891. It is the oldest structure owned by the City, which was restored and repurposed as a police substation with a museum on the first floor. The restoration was completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects. The State of Missouri Historical Preservation Program was involved throughout the project to ensure a high quality of work for this treasured structure.

Greene County Sheriff's Office

The Greene County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) covers a jurisdiction of 670 square miles divided into five districts. The GCSO has an operating budget of almost $18 million. It employs 350 personnel, including 131 sworn deputies, 46 reserves, and three K9 units. On average, the Patrol Division handles 32,000 calls for service a year and makes around 20,000 traffic stops. In 2011, Greene County passed a 1/8 cent sales tax that provided funding for 18 additional patrol deputies. The GCSO is divided into four divisions:

- **Administrative Services:** Responsible for the overall administration of office operations and coordination of office activities, including planning, budgeting, and personnel.

- **Patrol:** Responsible for patrolling unincorporated Greene County and providing full law-enforcement services for over 85,000 people who live outside city limits. It is made up of three squads, each under the leadership of a sergeant and comprising two corporals and 14 deputies.

- **Criminal Investigations:** Provides follow-up investigations on felony cases, locates and arrests wanted felons, and follows drug trafficking and meth labs. It is divided into two sections, crimes against persons (eight detectives) and property crimes (nine detectives).

- **Detention:** Oversees the Greene County Jail with a staff of over 200. The jail has 610 beds and an average daily population of almost 900 inmates and has required the temporary use of modular housing units as well. A new jail, funded by the passage of a Law Enforcement Sales Tax completed construction in 2022.

CRIME FACTS: CHANGES FROM 2018 TO 2019*

- 16% Increase in crimes against people
- 20% Increase in aggravated assaults
- 7% Increase in sexual assaults
- 12 Homicides in 2019 vs 16 Homicides in 2018
- 11% Increase in property crimes
- 15% Increase in stolen vehicles
- 5% Increase in burglary
- 12.5% Increase in theft

In 2020 the SPD moved to the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) comprised of three areas and 52 categories. Comparisons therefore cannot be made to previous years' data collected under the Summary Reporting System (SRS) with two areas and seven categories.

FUTURE PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS

Coordination among public safety agencies to comprehensively evaluate facility, equipment, staffing, and resourcing needs should be continued on an ongoing basis and develop a plan to meet those needs.

This includes supporting the following improvement projects identified by the departments:

- Support the implementation of the SFD Facilities Master Plan, including relocating Fire Station 9 and add staffing, apparatus, and facilities to new Fire Stations 14, 15, 16, and 17.

- Develop a new Police and Fire Department driving track, which is currently located at the airport and will not be available in the long term.

- Develop a Police Department firing range (indoor or outdoor facility) at a new site.

- Create a new property storage room for the Police Department, which is currently leased at a warehouse.

- Explore funding for the construction of a joint northeast emergency services station to serve growth on the east side of the City.

- Continue to support and expand the SFD's community risk reduction and fire and life safety education programs, to include Project RED Zone, the Free Smoke Alarm Program, and partnership with Springfield Public Schools.

Crime Prevention Survey

The City of Springfield Police Department should conduct Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Site Surveys to identify and address safety and security concerns at all municipal facilities. The CPTED approach uses the built and natural environment to reduce the potential for crime while increasing the quality of life in neighborhoods. The CPTED Site Surveys should include recommendations that encompass natural surveillance, territorial reinforcement, access control, and maintenance components. The CPTED Site Survey should also be integrated into the development review process and used as a consultation tool to enhance the safety of site designs into future community projects and private developments.

1.2 IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Work with regional healthcare providers to improve access to healthcare.

Access to healthcare is a critical component of improving the health and well-being of the Springfield community. The healthcare industry is prominent in the City, making up 17 percent of Springfield's workforce, with major providers like Mercy Hospital and CoxHealth concentrated in city limits. Despite this, 15 percent of adults are uninsured compared with 13 percent nationally. Notably 13 percent of County residents experience frequent mental distress compared to 11 percent for Missouri as a whole. This showcases the need to better connect residents with quality healthcare services through close coordination with regional healthcare providers.

MAJOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Springfield's primary healthcare facilities provide vital services to area residents and represent major employers within the City and the region. Key healthcare providers within the region include:

Mercy
The Mercy Hospital system has been ranked one of the top five largest U.S. health systems from 2016 through 2019. Serving millions each year, Mercy is a cutting-edge healthcare provider that is charged with "providing the region with high-quality care and an experience that is easier and more personal."

Founded in 1891, Mercy Hospital Springfield, located at Sunshine Street and National Avenue, houses 886 beds that serve people throughout southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas.

CoxHealth
CoxHealth is the largest employer in the Springfield region, offering high-quality medical services to populations in Southwest Missouri and Northwest Arkansas. The locally owned, not-for-profit health system headquartered in Springfield has two large campuses in the City: the southern campus surrounding National Avenue and Primrose Street and the northern campus at Boonville Avenue and Division Street. There is a total of 31 CoxHealth facilities in Springfield, ranging from walk-clinics to the Cox Medical Center South Emergency and Trauma Center, and from the Meyer Orthopedic and Rehabilitation Hospital to the CoxHealth Surgery Center.

Burrell Behavioral Health
Burrell Behavioral Health is the second largest behavioral health provider in Missouri that provides a wide variety of services, including therapy and counseling, psychiatric services, addiction recovery, crisis intervention, and residential treatment. It aims to increase access to behavioral health services through individualized care and quality practices, collaborating with families, schools, healthcare systems, and other networks.

Jordan Valley Community Health Center
Located in Downtown Springfield, Jordan Valley Community Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that offers comprehensive care for families in Southwest Missouri.

Services include adult and family medicine, behavioral services, community services, dental, express care, mobile and school-based care, pharmacy, vision, women's health, and virtual visits. It also helps connect patients with food, housing, Medicaid enrollment, and employment and legal assistance.

Burrell Behavioral Crisis Center
The Burrell Behavioral Crisis Center, located at 800 S. Park Avenue, is a 24/7 walk-in facility that recently opened in 2020. It was funded with significant contributions from Greene County, the Missouri Foundation for Health, with additional financial contributions from local healthcare partners CoxHealth, and Mercy. The center provides access to critical services like immediate psychiatric care, Medication-Assisted Treatment for opioid use, psychiatric assessment, initial assessment eligibility determination, brief therapy, peer support services, 23-hour observation, and referral to appropriate follow up treatment.

TOP ASSESSED HEALTH ISSUES

Ensuring access to quality healthcare services is essential to improving the health and well-being of Springfield residents. In 2019, organizations across the Ozarks, including the Springfields-Greene County Health Department, CoxHealth, and Mercy Hospital, worked together to create the Regional Health Assessment and the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) to better understand the health, behaviors, and needs of the population they serve. Through this data-driven health assessment, which is completed every three years, the group seeks to guide future efforts in improving regional health and wellness.

Common threads of issues identified included access to healthcare, mental health, physical activity, social determinants of health, and tobacco use. The three prioritized health issues identified in 2019 were the following:

- **Lung Disease:** One in four people use tobacco in the Southwest Missouri region, with diseases of the respiratory system accounting for 38% of diagnoses in the area Emergency Departments (ED).

- **Cardiovascular Disease:** Twenty-three percent of visits to area EDs are due to issues related to the circulatory system, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking. In the region, one in four people do not get enough physical activity and 32% are considered obese.

- **Mental Health:** Twenty-one percent of visits to area EDs are due to mental, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental disorders. This rate jumps to over 33% for people between 18 and 64 years old and 41% for people without health insurance. The percent of Greene County residents living at all levels of the Federal Poverty Level is higher than Missouri and the U.S.

The City should continue to collaborate with regional healthcare organizations and agencies to monitor health issues and develop policies and environmental improvements to address them. Review and updates to the CHIP and City's Comprehensive Plan should be coordinated and aligned every five years.

Mental Health and Crime
Nationally, there is a strong correlation between poverty and severe mental illness. According to the 2022 Regional Health Assessment, about 15% of residents in Springfield have poor mental health and 24% have depression.

The 2019 Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Assessment by the Springfield-Greene County Health Department also identified that Greene County has a higher percentage of residents living below the poverty line compared to Missouri and the U.S., as well as a higher number of violent crimes per 100,000 population. This suggests that violent crime, such as homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, are relatively large challenges in Greene County and are related to poverty and mental health within the community and should be addressed holistically.

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

Insufficient mental health services and access to healthcare, both mental and physical, were identified as important concerns during the *Forward SGF* community outreach process. This issue was identified as a primary factor feeding into concerns regarding at-risk youth, drug use, and homelessness.

Other community concerns related to healthcare included:

- Long wait times for certain healthcare facilities.

- Poor physical access to healthcare.

- High number of uninsured individuals.

- Need to expand Medicaid coverage for eligible individuals.

- Concentration of healthcare facilities located under a few providers leading to higher healthcare costs.

- Local culture and social stigma related to mental health treatment as a barrier for patients seeking care.

FUTURE HEALTHCARE PROJECTS

To address pressing health issues and improve the health and safety of residents within the community, the City should work with local healthcare providers to increase access to physical, mental, and behavioral healthcare facilities, services, and educational initiatives. Potential strategies include:

- Work with education providers to create school-based health centers in school facilities that provide students with key health services like immunizations, physical exams, sports physicals, and behavioral healthcare.

- Partner with health agencies or nonprofits to create health clinics to provide health services at little to no cost in underserved neighborhoods. Services could include health screenings, mental health services, and access to various education materials.

- Support the development of community wellness centers near or within neighborhoods to provide residents with recreational facilities with designated exercise rooms and multipurpose spaces.

- Partner with local organizations, such as Family Connects International, to provide an all-inclusive home-visit nursing program to support newborns and their families of all incomes.

- Work with local health care providers to implement screening for adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma with pediatric patients, such as through a Survey of Well-Being for Young Children (SWIC) or Adverse Childhood Experience Surveys (ACES).

- Host health screenings at community events such as festivals and resource fairs to detect and prevent prevalent health conditions.

Community Health Education

The City should also work with healthcare providers and educational institutions to educate the public on best health practices, starting with the youth. Potential strategies include:

- Continue to work with healthcare providers in creating public education materials and media on health issues, such as smoking/vaping, asthma, mental health, and pollution.

- Work with regional health organizations to provide public education on "Housing is Healthcare" concept, which addresses issues like indoor air quality and lead-based paint hazards.

- Partner with education providers to improve health education initiatives within the school system, such as classes on nutrition and healthy eating habits, substance abuse, self-care, active lifestyles, and mental health.

- Partner with regional organizations and healthcare providers, such as the Community Partnership of the Ozarks (CPO), to implement Youth Mental Health First Aid training into all R-12 Public Schools.
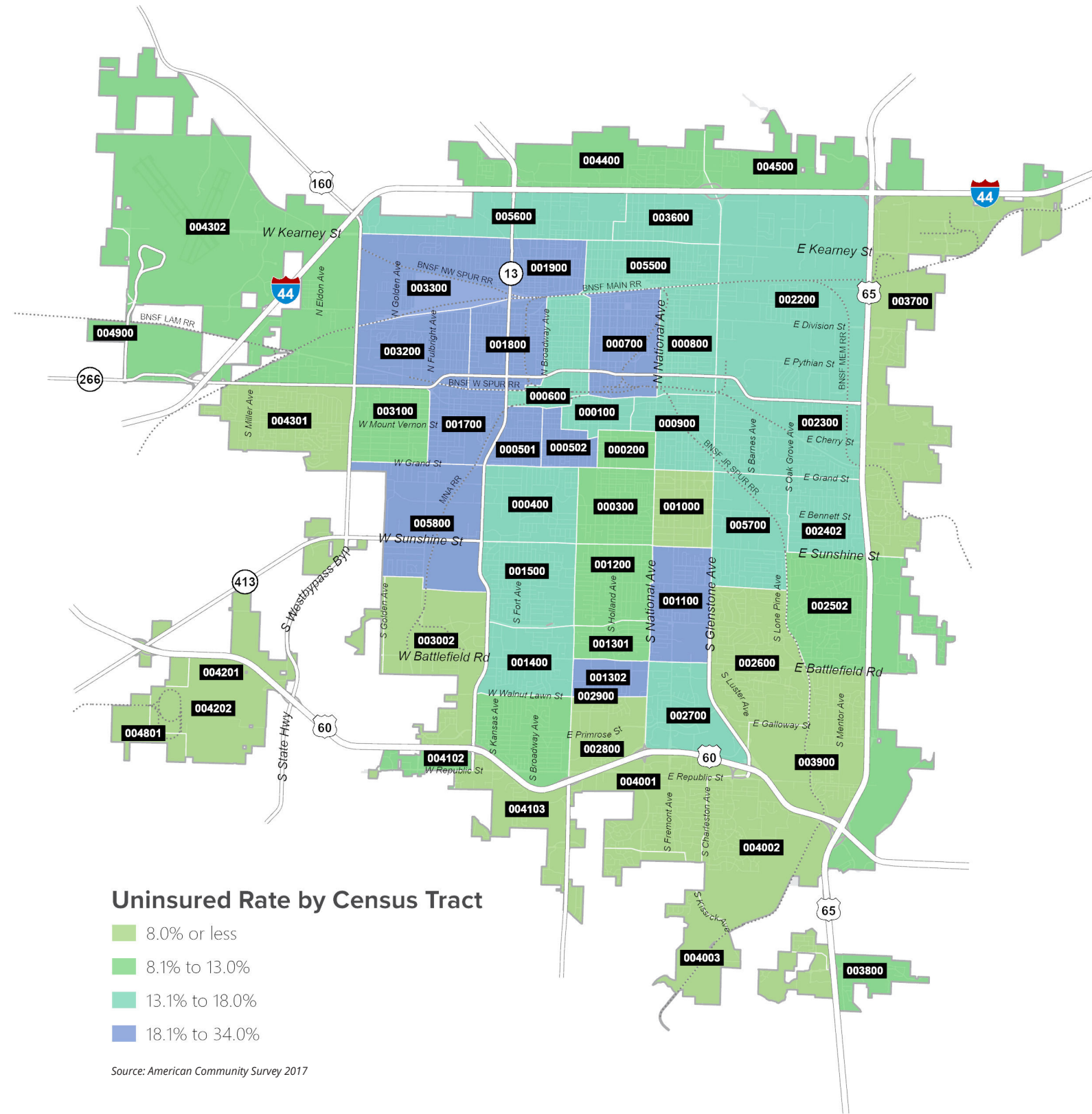
UNINSURED RATE

The following map displays uninsured rates per census tracts in Springfield. A large cluster of census tracts with an uninsured rate of over 18% exists in the northwestern area of the City, as well as census tract 000700 around Drury University, and census tracts 001100 and 011302 near Battlefield Road and National Avenue. In contrast, census tracts in the southern and most northeastern limits show low uninsured rates.

Targeting Resources

Inadequate healthcare coverage is one of the greatest barriers to healthcare access. Residents who are uninsured are often less likely to visit major healthcare providers and/or are unable to afford necessary medical services. The City should coordinate with area healthcare providers and agencies to increase healthcare access within underserved areas and expand insurance and Medicaid coverage through public education on enrollment.

The City should continue to support the Health Department's Community Health Advocates program, and other organizations that provide similar health worker programs, such as Mercy Hospital and Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC). Such programs help connect residents with health and social services through outreach, community education, informal counseling, and social support and advocacy. Health advocates can be considered frontline public health workers who have strong ties with the local community and an understanding of its needs, using this trust to serve as a liaison between services and residents.

Uninsured Rate by Census Tract

- 8.0% or less
- 8.1% to 13.0%
- 13.1% to 18.0%
- 18.1% to 34.0%

Source: American Community Survey 2017

1.3 SUPPORT ART, CULTURE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

COMMUNITY PHYSICAL IMAGE

ARTS, CULTURE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Grow and leverage Springfield's network of arts, culture, and historic preservation to help anchor beautification, community identity, tourism, and economic development.

CULTIVATE A CITYWIDE BRAND IDENTITY

A strong positive community identity is essential in creating solidarity among residents, neighborhoods, and establishing solidarity with community stakeholders. Throughout the *Forward SGF* community engagement process, the desire for cultivating and promoting an authentic and interesting brand identity that differentiates the City from others was expressed repeatedly.

As is highlighted in Goal 3: Parks, Greenways, and Natural Resources Chapter, a unified brand highlighting the City's proximity to beautiful outdoor amenities can be used to promote Springfield as the starting point for experiencing the region's natural attractions and landmarks.

The City's Department of Public Information and Civic Engagement has a successful track record in both building a municipal government brand and sustaining high levels of trust through challenging times. The Public Information Office should lead a collaborative effort with Springfield's creatives and community-at-large in developing a unified, yet flexible branding strategy for the region.

Through collaboration, a "branding kit" should be developed to help create a consistent message and theme that helps to communicate the vision, how the brand will be implemented, and how it will all be tied together.

ASSESS & EXPAND ASSETS

The City must first assess existing assets to understand its needs, issues, and opportunities. This understanding can then be used to guide City codes, policies, and strategies to expand Springfield's collection of art, cultural, and historic assets.

Create Arts & Culture and Historic Preservation Task Force

The City should consider establishing two task forces: an Arts & Culture Task Force and Historic Preservation Task Force. These teams will act as advisory boards to the City in reviewing policies, codes, and projects. Each team should be made up of a diverse variety of members, such as cultural and historical experts, representatives from local arts and culture organizations, local artists, business leaders, and others. A City champion should also serve on each committee to ensure directly connection to all City efforts.

The Arts & Culture Task Force will be chaired by a representative of the Springfield Regional Arts Council while the Historic Preservation Task Force will be chaired by a member of a similar organization.

Each Task Force should be charged with assisting the City with the following tasks:

- Developing a comprehensive Cultural Plan to be used in conjunction with the Forward SGF Comprehensive Plan to guide the development of arts, culture, and historic assets.

- Recommending sufficient allocation of City funds towards cultural programs, facilities, and organizations.

- Studying the creation of additional funding streams including a Percent for Arts policy.

- Identifying potential amendments to the Zoning Code to support the growth of arts, culture, and historic preservation through City policies, such as allowing for art studio leases by right in residential areas.

- Overseeing the proper implementation of arts, culture, and historic preservation-related codes, policies, and guidelines.

- Exploring the necessity of establishing an office of cultural affairs within the City's structure.

- Expanding the artist network to include international artists alongside the local and regional artists.

Inventory Existing Assets

In collaboration with local organizations, partners, and the arts community, the City should compile a comprehensive inventory of Springfield's arts, cultural, and historic assets. This will include, but is not limited to, public art installations, museums, historic landmarks, and cultural events. Exemplary assets identified in the survey should be used as a model for future initiatives. The City should work with community organizations, including the Springfield-Greene County Library and the Springfield Regional Arts Council, to leverage databases of artists and organizations. This inventory will help the respective task forces identify areas for expansion and maintenance.

Community Input

To supplement the inventory of assets, public input should be solicitated to gather data on the types of arts and cultural assets community members would like to experience in the City. This includes from residents, businesses, cultural and ethnic groups, and local artists. This survey should be used to inform existing strengths and weaknesses in Springfield's inventory of assets and how to better integrate the arts into infrastructure, streetscapes, and development. Public feedback should come from the proposed app, annual community-wide surveys, focus groups, and continuous communication with the local creative economy.

Data from the inventory and community input should be incorporated into the comprehensive **Cultural Plan**.

NEW CITY FLAG

After 84 years, the City of Springfield adopted a new flag on March 1, 2022 to mark a time of renewal and pride. The new city flag, adorned with a dark blue and white eight-pointed emblem, called the "Compass Crown" is featured at the center, representing Springfield's role as a crossroads to the nation. The crown is a reference to Springfield's nickname, Queen City of the Ozarks. Three four-pointed stars represent three elements of the city: innovative spirit, connection with nature and Ozarks culture. A broad white horizontal stripe is meant to symbolize the Ozark Plateau, on which Springfield was built, and Route 66. A light blue background represents Ozarks water and skies.

Photo Credit: Springfield, MO Convention & Visitors Bureau

Create Public Art Commission

The City and collaborating community partners should consider establishing a formal Public Art Commission to facilitate the growing portfolio of public art in the public right-of-way. The Commission would also develop recommendations and best practices for improving City ordinances, facilitating other public art installations, and policies for maintenance of City-owned public art.

The Public Art Commission will work collaboratively with the Arts & Culture Task Force and should be charged with assisting the City with the following tasks:

- Developing design guidelines for future public art installations and cultural assets and providing oversight during the review process of projects. Guidelines should be reasonable and allow for a wide diversity of projects to accommodate the unique culture and character of the individual neighborhoods.

- Address public art infrastructure to support the wide variety of public art projects outlined in Forward SGF.

   Establishing a public art team to support current and proposed installations to formalize the relationship between private entities, like Sculpture Walk Springfield and the City, to execute the public art programming efficiently.

- Reviewing ordinances and regulations for public art in public right of way.

- Continue and grow policies and personnel that support ongoing infrastructure, technical, and maintenance support for public art installation.

Collaborate to Build the Arts

The City should strengthen existing and create new partnerships with local and regional arts and culture organizations to solidify Springfield as a regional arts hub. This includes the following strategies:

- Strengthening the relationship and communication between the City and artists, cultural organizations, and community members to better understand the hurdles to creating in Springfield.

- Identifying opportunities for cultural programs and activities in partnership local artists and cultural organizations.

- Evaluating ways to invest in existing festival and special events infrastructure to support public/private partnerships in order to offer help for growing healthy, efficient, and broadly supported community festivals. This should include evaluating the special events produced by the City to make sure there are no duplication of efforts and resources are utilized efficiently.

- Implementing new connectivity routes, like a shuttle, to ease access to arts, culture, and historic preservation venues across the community.

- Expanding opportunities to combine public art in parks and along trails in a collective art experience as demonstrated with existing partnerships with Sculpture Walk Springfield, the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, and Ozark Greenways.

- Investing in efforts for collaborative marketing for various segments of the arts and culture community including museums, theatres, music venues, visual arts, and others.

- Establish an arts district in downtown Springfield through partnerships with cultural and live entertainment venues such as the Springfield Little Theatre, the Gillioz, the Moxie Cinema, the Outland, First Friday Art Walk, and others.

- Create a funded fellowship program to incubate arts and culture creatives, and historic preservation, such as at the efactory.

- Establish an Artist-in-Residence Program to provide opportunities for artists to work directly with community leadership and other stakeholders to apply creative solutions for community challenges.

- In collaboration with Missouri State University's Innovation Lab, transform the silos located on the periphery of downtown to an art installation of murals or projections. A great example of this is the silo mural project completed in Salina, Kansas.

SPRINGFIELD ART MUSEUM

Springfield, Missouri

Founded in 1928, the Springfield Art Museum has maintained an ambitious vision and strategic plan to help make the community in Springfield a better place through art. The Museum has a Master Plan which proposes a state-of-the-art multistory museum with expanded educational spaces including classrooms, artist studios, and a family learning center; updated performing arts space; public gathering area; integrated green space; and a walking and biking trial connecting the Museum to the Fassnight Creek Greenway Trail. The project is estimated to cost up to $20 million depending on completion time, covering 83,400 square feet. The Museum has seen significant growth in number of visitors over recent years, increasing 70% since 2012. The plan aims to capitalize on this growth and better connect the Museum to surrounding amenities, while reviving the nearby Fassnight Creek and refining the floodplain away from the Museum. The City should continue to support the Museum in transforming the facility as both a community hub and world-class attraction through the implementation of the master plan.

SPRINGFIELD REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

The Springfield Regional Arts Council (SRAC) connects people and the arts. Its mission is to transform lives and enrich the community through the arts. The Springfield Regional Arts Council provides resources and support to visual, performing, literary, and film/media arts organizations across 27 counties in southwest Missouri, making their outreach the largest in the state. Through advocacy, education, and collaboration, the SRAC:

- Manages The Creamery Arts Center, which is home to 8 resident arts organizations and dozens of community organizations. The facility also houses a set fabrication studio, costume shop, an exhibition hall, board room, arts library, arts classroom, and film editing bay.

- Coordinates Growing Up in the Arts, providing hands-on art education for under-served students in partnership with local outreach organizations. The SRAC provides teaching artists in a variety of creative fields and all supplies needed for the program.

- Advocates on behalf of artists and the arts community to ensure that their voices are heard and supported. The SRAC works toward educating elected officials, the public, and the media about the importance of the arts in our cultural identity, community building, and economic growth.

MARKET & PROMOTE

The City should market itself as a regional center of arts, culture, and historic preservation to showcase and promote its numerous creative assets. When done in tandem with arts, culture, and historic preservation communities, these marketing efforts can be used for both resident and visitor attraction and retention. Additional partners to help in this promotion efforts should be done in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, the City's Department of Public Information and Civic Engagement, Downtown Springfield Association, Downtown Community Improvement District (CID), Springfield Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB), and the Historic Commercial Street CID.

Build the Bond

The community should be actively involved in City initiatives for arts, culture, and historic preservation in the following ways:

- Building awareness of the significance of these assets and strengthening the relationships with local creatives.

- Partnering with local artists, historians, and ethnic and cultural minority groups to foster inclusivity within the arts community.

- Encouraging participation on City boards and commissions by local artists, creatives, and cultural professionals.

Create a Marketing Campaign

The City should partner with the arts, culture, and historic preservation community to create a cohesive marketing and branding package to be utilized as a template for City promotional efforts.

Marketing co-ops or partnerships among, arts, culture, and historic preservation will be established to effectively promote assets through a collective effort.

The marketing campaign should also include a media campaign that is inclusive to citizens of all backgrounds to promote the Citywide brand identity and civic pride. Contracting with local talent, creativity, culture, and history will ensure the campaign remains hyper-local while also compensating the content creators.

Public Education

Develop a quarterly arts, culture, and historic preservation online publication and a print piece. Educational materials for the public should continue to be created to highlight the benefits of arts, culture, and historic preservation. This could include local examples of or successful case studies of other communities.

The Springfield Regional Arts Council should continue to conduct economic impact studies to showcase the economic benefits of arts and culture. Additional studies should be conducted to demonstrate the impact historic preservation has on the local community.

Develop a One-Stop Shop App

Develop a one-stop shop app that highlights and connects Springfield's artistic, cultural, and historic assets. The City should hire an app developer to incorporate assets including public art, art galleries, museums, landmarks, cultural events, and other engagement activities.

The app will include the following:

- An interactive and collective calendar that highlights upcoming local events. This data should be pulled from the CVB and the Springfield Regional Arts Council's calendars rather than creating another portal to submit information.

- A virtual tour experience with a comprehensive map of attractions, providing real time information about the location, directions, and FAQs. This should be built upon the current programs and inventories held by Sculpture Walk Springfield and Springfield Regional Arts Council.

- Quick access to purchase tickets or make reservations for events.

- A platform for community interaction and feedback on the City's art, culture, and historic assets.

The app should be promoted by the City, local organizations, partners, and the creative community through their media outlets. The app should also be available as a website format and linked to the websites for the City, Springfield CVB, and the SRAC. The CVB could track data and downloads to ensure information and access to the City's cultural assets are reaching target audiences. This data collection should be shared with the arts community and others to build on the City's virtual technology initiatives for tourism.

A managing department at the City should be identified another private partnership will be developed to ensure that data is current and maintained regularly.

SECURE FUNDING

Public funding mechanisms should be secured to allow the City to properly invest in and maintain its existing and future arts, cultural, and historic programs, events, and institutions. This includes the following:

Assess Funding Needs

The City should work with arts, culture, and historic preservation partners to develop a list of funding priorities based on the cultural plan and identify organizations to receive ongoing operational support. The City should work with the proposed Arts & Culture and Historic Preservation Task Forces to seek additional sources of funding and determine steps for collaboration between local and regional organizations.

Local Grantmaking Program

Along with a budget plan, the City should work with established grantmakers, like the Community Foundation of the Ozarks and the Springfield Regional Arts Council, to build a local arts & culture and historic preservation grant cycles. These grant cycles will include priorities for spending based on the cultural plan and operational needs with a required reporting mechanism to measure success and performance.

Diversify Funding Sources

Together with the proposed Arts & Culture and Historic Preservation Task Forces, the City should explore funding opportunities only available to local governmental entities at the county, state, and federal level. This diversification should happen in collaboration with the arts, culture, and historic preservation community to ensure this work does not reallocate funding away from organizations.

The establishment of City tax base should be considered to fund investment for arts, culture, and historic preservation including maintenance of the current infrastructure, investment in future capital projects along with additional research, new technologies, and educational initiatives.

Implement a Percent for the Arts Policy

The City should implement a "Percent for the Arts" policy to require new City-led projects or projects receiving public funding to allocate a percentage of the construction budget toward support for the arts, including public art, either on-site or into a separate fund. Successful case studies should first be examined in comparable communities to determine the appropriate structure for the program.

The Percent for Art Program in Columbia, Missouri is a nearby example, which requires 1% of the cost of new city construction or renovation projects with a budget of $1 million or more to be used for site-specific public art.

With the Arts & Culture and Historic Preservation Task Forces, the City should determine whether this policy will only apply to funding onsite public art installations as part of new development or expanded to fund additional initiatives like:

- Offsite public art installations

- Maintenance of existing art and cultural assets

- Support for nonprofit arts and culture organizations,

- Historic preservation projects

This program could also be tied to the City's capital budget or folded into developments that benefit from City assistance, such as through zoning, planned unit developments, grants, and sale of public land.

1.4 PROVIDE QUALITY LIBRARY SERVICES & EDUCATION

HEALTH & WELL-BEING ✚

Work with regional providers to provide quality library services and education as Springfield's population grows.

REGIONAL LIBRARY AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS

Providing quality education and library services across Springfield is critical for improving educational attainment, professional preparedness, economic mobility, and self-efficiency. A challenge facing Springfield is achieving high educational attainment in poverty-stricken areas and ensuring equitable and inclusive access to quality education and resources across the community. It is necessary to overcome this challenge for the City to fully meet its economic and residential growth potential.

Strong collaboration between the City, County, and other community sectors will be critical in supporting regional library and education providers in overcoming this challenge and elevating educational attainment above State standards. The provision in technical workforce training will also be key in growing the City's business and addressing labor needs (see **Chapter 8: Economic Development**).

Springfield-Greene County Library District

Founded in 1903, the Springfield-Greene County Library District has grown to include 10 branches and outreach programs, including a mobile library and a health library in Mercy's Chub O'Reilly Cancer Center. The Library District recently established its Strategic Plan for 2021-2025, which includes the following initiatives:

- Strengthen Financial Resources
- Improve Access to Services for All Citizens of Greene County
- Enhance the Total User Experience

Springfield Public Schools

Springfield Public Schools (SPS), also known as the Springfield R-12 School District, is Missouri's largest school district. It serves over 25,000 students at 35 elementary schools, an intermediate school for grades five through six, nine middle schools, five high schools, the Phelps Center for Gifted Education, and four early childhood centers, along with more than a dozen choice programs to meet students' diverse needs. All five high schools are Missouri A+ Schools, a program that provides scholarship funds to eligible graduates to attend a public community college or vocational school.

Facilities Master Plan

The school district completed a Facilities Master Plan in 2016 to address long-term facility needs. This plan involved community stakeholders throughout the process and included facility assessments and master planning for campuses. The City should support SPS where applicable as it implements the Facilities Master Plan, which includes 40 projects over the plan's 10-year horizon. This includes reconstruction of seven elementary schools and four middle schools, and renovations, upgrades, and/or additions at eight other campuses (seven elementary schools, one high school) through 2026.

Higher Education

Nearly 50,000 students attend one of the higher education institutions located in Springfield, which include:

- Missouri State University
- Drury University
- Ozarks Technical Community College
- Evangel University
- Cox College
- Baptist Bible College
- Assemblies of God Theological Seminary
- Southwest Baptist University (extension campus)
- Midwest Technical Institute
- Bryan University

These institutions cover a wide array of specializations, including liberal arts, health care, theology, trade, and career development. Many of these schools have received national attention for both affordability and quality of education. Examples include Drury University and Missouri State University, both of which have master plans proposing significant expansion near Downtown.

FUTURE LIBRARY AND EDUCATION PROJECTS

To meet Springfield's growing labor needs for quality employment opportunities and to support educational attainment of all socioeconomic backgrounds, the City should prioritize working with community partners and local entities to pursue the following:

- Continue to support SPS and higher education institutions with future pursuits for facility improvements, expansions, or relocations to ensure quality education. This could include providing adequate road and utility infrastructure to support facility upgrades.

- Support the Mayor's Commission for Children's early childhood programs for improving school readiness, such as Parents as Teachers, IGNiTE, and Early Childhood One Stop.

- Continue to support SPS in providing after-school and summer programs, like the School-Parks Area Reach Communities (SPARC) partnership, through the Springfield-Greene County Park Board and through other youth agencies and local recreational partners, like YMCA, OACAC, and the Boys and Girls Club of Springfield.

- Consider building a public safety center that merges local preventable injury agencies (SPD, SFD, SGF Yields, SPS, OEM, Safekids) with classrooms and exhibits to teach: Fire safety, traffic safety, personal safety, disaster preparedness, and health education.

- Spearhead partnerships between SPS high schools, higher education institutions, major employers, and the local businesses community to create and expand technical training programs, including internships opportunities for students to meet local labor demands and expanding business opportunities. This includes working with Greater Ozarks Centers for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) to expand its program for professional training for high school students.

- Ensure educational facilities are highly accessible by transit, walking, and biking from all neighborhoods. This includes participating in the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe Routes to Schools Program, which promotes walking and biking to school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement, tools, safety education, and incentives.

- Support neighborhood schools and the revitalization and growth of Complete Neighborhoods by implementing strategies to provide safe, healthy, and diverse housing opportunities to decrease student mobility and increase stability for students and their families. For more specific strategies on how to help foster strong neighborhoods where students and families can prosper, see the goals included in the **Chapter 7: Housing and Neighborhoods**.

- Continue to support the Library District where applicable in implementing its Strategic Plan. This includes supporting the district in exploring new facility locations in Springfield if deemed necessary by the service assessment.

GOAL 2: *Provide safety-focused, fiscally responsible, and high quality infrastructure and community facilities.*

2.1 SURVEY EXISTING CONDITIONS TO DEFINE NEEDS

HEALTH & WELL-BEING ✛

Survey the existing conditions of infrastructure and community facilities to identify underserved areas, deferred maintenance, and evaluate levels of service compared to industry standards.

To define current and future needs for infrastructure and community facilities, it is important that the City continues efforts to survey existing conditions, identify deficiencies, gaps in service, funding and staffing shortfalls, and strategically plan efforts to achieve the desired levels of service. A data-driven approach to defining areas of need and allocating infrastructure investments and services can address potential inequities and improve community health.

To effectively survey existing conditions, the City should pursue the following strategies:

LEVEL OF SERVICE EVALUATION

The City should complete a two-fold level of service evaluation of existing infrastructure and community facilities. The City should identify key performance indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks for each category of infrastructure and community facilities. Industry standard KPIs are available to support this evaluation, such as deferred maintenance, emergency work orders, days out of service, usage, operation costs, response time, etc. Once the KPIs are identified, data should be collected, analyzed, consolidated, and presented to stakeholders on a recurring basis. This level of service evaluation, analysis, and results should be used to develop and prioritize funding allocations for maintenance and capital improvement plans.

COMMUNITY-WIDE SURVEY

The City should also continue to conduct its Citizen Satisfaction Survey on a regular basis. The City conducted four Citizen Surveys between 2008 and 2019 to assess satisfaction with the delivery of major city services and to help determine priorities for future planning. The survey should inform whether infrastructure and community facilities meet or exceed the community's desired levels of service.

This statistically valid survey can be augmented by cost-effective technologies such as online questionnaires or mapping tools, interactive public maps available online, and interviews with key stakeholders that represent the community as a whole. The outcome of this information collection can be compared to the previous level of service evaluation to help prioritize future investments for public infrastructure and community facilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMUNITY FACILITIES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The City should develop an operational strategic plan that includes priority maintenance repairs that meet operational and use standards, a financial plan and funding schedule; and provide for environmental justice. Federal grant funding sources include, but are not limited to, the Economic Development Agency Public Works grant, Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grants, EPA Environmental Justice Grants, and FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant. The City grant specialist proposed in the Parks, Greenways, and Natural Resources chapter should be charged with researching these opportunities.

Facility Accessibility

To ensure equitable accessibility to community facilities by all neighborhoods, the City should conduct a service area and transportation connectivity study. This study should evaluate all neighborhoods with respect to proximity and connectivity to key community facilities and services. Types of travel include walking, bicycling, public transportation, and road transportation. After assessment completion, identification of routes that have the least connectivity should be identified as highest priority. Resolution could include the relocation of services to a more central location, construction of new facilities in underserved areas, or development of a new route for neighborhood access.

DEFINITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:

- The same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and

- Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

Source: EPA www.epa.gov/environmental justice accessed April 2022

2.2 PRIORITIZE, BUDGET & TRACK CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Prioritize and budget capital improvements and community facility upgrades based on existing needs, consistently tracking implementation to ensure timely completion.

The City's capital improvement plan for infrastructure and community facility projects should be enhanced to include defined, repeatable, and transparent processes that consider current and future needs and priorities on a City-wide basis. Capital improvement projects should continue to be tracked to ensure timely completion.

The summary of 2022 CIP projects by category presented in the table below provides a snapshot of how the City spends its budget.

Over the long term, public infrastructure projects will play a key role in improving quality of place throughout Springfield. Changes should be considered to the City's annual capital planning processes to ensure quality-of-place is a factor in budget allocation and project design. This shift may result in fewer projects being completed in a given year, but completed projects will be better designed and support a broader range of community goals beyond their engineering function.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

The City of Springfield should formalize a prioritization process between City Staff, Citizen's Tax Oversight Committee (CTOC), City Utilities, active City Task Forces, other stakeholders, technical experts, and community members to review funding prioritization models, metrics, level of service assessments, expansion areas, and recommended capital improvement projects. An Integrated Planning and Adaptive Management Process, consisting of the following six elements, should be used to make City-wide, priority-based investment recommendations for infrastructure and community facility projects.

- Identify how the recommendation addresses environmental quality, human health, and regulatory issues.

- Have a summary of current state and performance of infrastructure/community facility

- Outline how community stakeholders will be incorporated into the planning and implementation.

- Create a process that identifies, evaluates, and selects alternatives and proposes an implementation schedule.

- Create a process for evaluation of continual performance of infrastructure/community facility that includes data monitoring, pilot study information review, and review of other studies.

- Create a process for identifying, evaluating, and selecting proposed new or modifications of old infrastructure/community facilities and updating the implementation schedule based on changes.

The culmination of this coordination and prioritization process will be an annual report from the CTOC providing input to City Council on funding priorities to ensure capital investments are promoting equal access to infrastructure and community services throughout the City; is in line with community needs; and supports the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

CITIZENS TAX OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The City's CTOC should continue its role of providing oversight of the tax revenue received by the city to ensure the tax dollars collected are spent for the programs and projects that were proposed to the voters. Specific projects for each tax are recommended by City staff and ultimately approved by City Council. The CTOC receives quarterly updates on the revenues received for each tax and the status of projects to ensure all revenues are being spent as promised to the voters when the tax was approved.

INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION STRATEGY AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ALIGNMENT

The City should create an infrastructure expansion strategy that provides a framework for developing and expanding infrastructure to new areas at the time when it is most cost effective. This strategy should align with the Growth Area Strategy outlined in Chapter 6 of this Comprehensive Plan.

This infrastructure expansion strategy should include opportunities for public-private partnerships, grants, and other alternative funding sources to support expansion. Identifying economic opportunity zones is a great way to develop and implement projects as large funding sources can come from U.S. Economic Development Agency's Public Works grants for larger infrastructure projects.

INVESTMENT AND MAINTENANCE BALANCE

Careful consideration should be given to new infrastructure expansion projects that evaluates not only the initial resource investment, but also the impacts to future maintenance and rehabilitation resource requirements. A strategic operational and funding strategy should be developed to guide this evaluation. The strategy would include grant cycles applicable to new and existing infrastructure projects, potential local funding partners, and maintenance and rehabilitation schedules for existing infrastructure and community facilities.

EXPERT COLLABORATIONS

Infrastructure and community facility projects can be complex from studying, design, construction, and repair phases. The City should work with design and construction experts to identify and define clear design expectations. These expectations should include using the services of experts that develop high-quality products to enhance the health and safety of the community and environment.

Summary of Planned CIP Projects by Category (2022)

Project Category	Number of Projects/Programs	Total Expenditures Proposed for 2022
Airport Improvements	4	$1,932,512
Fire Station Improvements	4	$6,143,500
Golf Course Improvements	0	-
Municipal Building and Ground Improvements	3	$1,707,000
Park Improvements	3	$1,300,000
Sanitary Sewer Improvements	29	$29,401,000
Solid Waste Improvements	8	$3,700,000
Stormwater Improvements	14	$9,885,000
Street Improvements	31	$51,691,204
Targeted Infrastructure Improvements	8	$16,167,200
Traffic Management System Improvements	11	$2,120,000
Walkability, Bike, and Safety Improvements	13	$13,108,772
Zoo Improvements	0	-
Total	**128**	**$137,156,188**

Source: City of Springfield CIP Project Summary for 2020
CIP projects and budgets are reviewed and updated annual. The current CIP is available at: springfieldmo.gov

GOAL 3: *Develop infrastructure and community facilities in a sustainable manner.*

By preserving, restoring, and protecting natural resources like water, air, and wildlife habitats, sustainable infrastructure and community facilities are critical to the long term environmental health of the community. This includes the integration of green spaces into the built environment that help reduce heat island effects, increase recreational opportunities for residents that encourage outdoor physical activity, and improve mental health and well being. The proactive application of sustainable development and design principles to infrastructure projects will also be key to minimizing negative environmental impacts and leveraging Springfield's natural assets. This includes focusing on natural infrastructure improvements and protecting water quality and drinking water supply.

3.1 APPLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

HEALTH & WELL-BEING ✚

Apply best practices for sustainable design and development when constructing infrastructure and community facilities.

To minimize negative environmental impacts and set an example for private developers, the City should continue to promote and incorporate sustainable and eco-friendly design best principles into City-owned infrastructure and community facilities. The City has adopted and implements a Green Building Policy (Resolution #10419) which requires LEED Silver certification for major construction and renovation projects of City-owned infrastructure and facilities.

The policy outlines minimum LEED points to be met by each project and requires the development and implementation of a Measurement and Verification Plan. The Discovery Center is a successful example of a Gold LEED-Certified Building in Springfield, the first in Southwest Missouri.

The City should also continue to identify and consider incentives to encourage private developers to implement sustainable building practices, such as economic incentives or public service/design excellence award programs for developments that implement sustainable practices. In concert with a comprehensive review and update of city codes, city staff should work closely with stakeholders to identify and address constraints that may limit implementation of sustainable development practices, such as conflicts with City of Springfield building, zoning, and related codes.

The commonly accepted definition of sustainability, established by the United Nations Brundtland Commission in 1987, is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Forward SGF strives to strengthen Springfield's connection to the natural environment and leverage the community's unique position in the beautiful Ozarks region. By promoting sustainable best practices the City can improve the quality of the natural environment and in turn strengthen the community's built environment and quality of place. This includes promoting attainable housing options, strategic growth management, sustainable development practices; providing resilient infrastructure; and fostering complete streets and multimodal transportation.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green Infrastructure is one of the key opportunities for Springfield to improve its "Connection to Nature." Springfield has the ability to capitalize on the use of Green Infrastructure to improve water quality, reduce flooding, and meet regulatory requirements while also improving the natural urban environment, climate resiliency, community physical and mental health, air quality, urban heat island, connectivity to nature, and community livability. Coupled with traditional stormwater "grey" infrastructure, Green Infrastructure can provide the initial absorption of rainwater and treatment of stormwater pollutants before transporting the remaining stormwater downstream.

Green Infrastructure refers to a range of measures that use plant or soil systems, permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspirate stormwater and reduce flows to sewer systems or surface waters. Green Infrastructure practices include rain gardens, bioswales, pervious pavement, tree box filters, urban tree canopy, green roofs, green streets, rainwater harvesting, and stream or riparian restoration. The implementation of green infrastructure helps to mitigate the effects of urban growth and development through practices that mimic nature. It can be incorporated into a city at several scales, including on individual properties and at a neighborhood or community scale. Green infrastructure practices are based on the concepts of "slow, spread, soak," which is centered on treating stormwater close to the source.

Historically, stormwater runoff has been handled as a waste product to be moved downstream as quickly as possible, but green infrastructure looks at stormwater as a resource. In Springfield, the economy relies heavily on the recreational uses of our larger rivers and lakes, so it is a natural leap to see the value of water in smaller urban waterways upstream. Green infrastructure practices retain stormwater on-site, where it can provide beneficial uses, such as landscape irrigation, reclamation as gray water, and recharge of groundwater. Due to Springfield's karst topography, many urban waterways are fed by springs, and groundwater is key to keeping flow consistent throughout the year. Pervious pavement allows for parking lots to infiltrate stormwater on-site. Rain gardens and bioretention features use plants to remove pollutants from stormwater runoff before it is discharged downstream. Wildlife habitat lost due to construction can be replaced by native plants and trees. Green infrastructure can improve the landscape of a property, which boosts property values and assists with the community's beautification goals.

The City has an opportunity to increase the focus and flexibility in building and landscaping codes to become more sustainable, resilient, and environmentally conscious. Flexibility in building, parking lot, and site development codes with a desire to improve water quality and connection to nature can spur creativity in the design community and citizens and allow Springfield to more easily embrace "Connection to Nature." The City should also increase the use of sustainable, nature-based infrastructure practices in City building, parking lot, and street projects to assist in a comprehensive transformation of the community's identity.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs. The City should continue to apply sustainable development and design principles into public and private projects to minimize negative environmental impacts and preserve Springfield's natural assets. This includes building a sustainability lens into development requirements, focusing on natural infrastructure improvements, and protecting natural resources like water quality and drinking water supply.

3.2 IDENTIFY, PROMOTE & PROTECT NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

HEALTH & WELL-BEING ⊕

Identify, promote, and protect the City's natural infrastructure for environmental sustainability.

The City of Springfield has made great strides in protecting the community's natural infrastructure as outlined in the Community Focus 2021 Report: Natural Environment. This report highlights efforts undertaken to address wildlife preservation, invasive species, climate change conditions, air and water quality, water supply, and urban canopy preservation and restoration.

The Springfield-Greene County Integrated Plan for the Environment was notably one of the first initiatives in the U.S. to utilize an integrated approach to meet environmental compliance responsibilities, repair/replace aging infrastructure, and meet the needs for currently nonexistent infrastructure.

To continue proactive efforts in protecting the City's natural environment, the following strategies should be considered:

- Preserve the City's urban forest and stream corridors to create attractive community green spaces, enhancing them with pedestrian amenities where feasible.

- Continue the City's commitment to its Tree Canopy Preservation and Restoration Policy in partnership with Tree City USA Citizens Advisory Committee and Ozark Greenways. This includes conducting an update to the City's Arboricultural Design Guidelines, which were adopted in 1997.

- City Utilities should continue to uphold air quality through implementation of its Integrated Resource Planning effort that includes public input.

- Continue to work with regional partners like the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks, Ozark Greenways, and the James River Basin Partnership to protect and enhance the City's water resources.

3.3 IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

HEALTH & WELL-BEING ⊕

Continue to protect water quality through management plans, sustainable best practices, and secured funding sources.

The Ozark region is well-known for its high-quality water resources that provide drinking water, recreation opportunities, habitat, and countless other benefits that ultimately make the region highly desirable for residents, businesses, and visitors. Protecting and enhancing regional water resources is critical to the City of Springfield and surrounding areas.

WATER QUALITY STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

To ensure water quality protection and infrastructure, community facilities should comply with Missouri's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Water Quality Standards and water discharge regulations. The City should continue to implement the City's Water Quality Strategic Action Plan and comply with the City's Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP), which includes measurable goals for addressing stormwater pollution as part of the City's federally-mandated Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. These Plans include strategies for community educational initiatives, revisions to regulations and policies to account for water quality and quantity management, community/volunteer projects for non-point pollution program projects, and the adoption of a stream buffering protection ordinance.

Funding Improvements

The City of Springfield and Greene county should identify a dedicated, long-term funding source for operating expenses, including MS4 compliance, infrastructure repair/replacement, and capital projects to mitigate flooding and improve water quality. Funding for the City's stormwater and water quality programs are currently provided through the City's General Fund, Clean Water Enterprise Fund, and 1/4 cent Capital Improvement Sales Tax. The 2013 Stormwater Management Task Force recommended annual funding of $11 million to meet the City and County stormwater needs.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green Infrastructure initiatives, which have a higher net benefit than corresponding wastewater initiatives, will more effectively achieve the goals of the Clean Water Act, which ultimately saves sanitary sewer ratepayers money. The 2021 Supplement to the City's Sanitary Sewer Overflow Control Plan (OCP) includes a green infrastructure component to invest $37.5 million in green infrastructure projects and programs from 2021-2035. Investing in green infrastructure will not only provide water quality and other environmental benefits, but can also support beautification, placemaking, and economic development goals. A green infrastructure strategy should be created that is based on watershed modeling and industry-best practices to maximize the water quality benefit of investments.

Low Impact Development

The City should continue to identify and implement low impact development (LID) and green infrastructure capital improvement projects to support water resource protection, such as the recent Fassnight Creek project at the Springfield Art Museum.

Removing Barriers to LID

When the City conducts an update to its Land Development Code in the near term, opportunities to remove barriers to LID should be identified and revised. The City should use the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "Revising Local Codes to Facilitate Low Impact Development" guide to help identify conflicting codes that prevent development and property owners from incorporating LID on their sites. The guide provides recommendations on how to educate the community, overcome misconceptions about LID, identify code-related LID obstacles, and incorporate LID incentives.

INTEGRATED PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The City, County, and City Utilities should continue to work together to advance the Springfield-Greene County Integrated Plan for the Environment. Future efforts should include jointly participating in technical studies, public outreach, and interagency communication. One of the key components of the plan is the understanding that if the City is going to meet the goals of the Federal Clean Water Act, it must address stormwater sources of pollution as well as wastewater-related solutions.

Integrated Planning analysis confirms that investments made in green infrastructure yield a greater net benefit to water quality than a similar level of investment in sanitary sewer overflow reduction. Direct investment in the sanitary sewer system is the fundamental basis of the OCP; however, the goal of the Amended Consent Judgment and ultimately the Clean Water Act, is to improve the quality of the City's lakes and streams.

3.4 PROTECT DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

HEALTH & WELL-BEING ✚

Continue to uphold Springfield's drinking water quality by monitoring system upgrade needs and mitigating potential threats.

City Utilities provides drinking water that meets all state and federal safe drinking water regulations to the City of Springfield. City Utilities has infrastructure improvement plans in place for the next five to eight years, including filter upgrades and improvements to water transmission mains, to ensure continued delivery of safe drinking water to the City.

Operations, maintenance, and capital improvement projects are funded and managed by City Utilities through revenues collected from Utility Customers as well as Federal and state grant and loan programs.

In the 2019 Water Quality Report, Missouri's DNR identified that the City's surface and groundwater drinking water supply is at risk from biological contaminants, land use activities, lead and copper concentrations, and industrial contaminants. In coordination with Greene County, the City should continue to proactively upgrade its water system, manage stormwater runoff, protect water sources, and monitor for potential contamination.

Failing Septic Systems

This includes addressing septic systems in rural Greene County, which were identified as a threat to drinking water quality due to the karst topography in the area. Septic systems in rural Greene County should continue to be removed when possible and as new sanitary sewer customers connect to the City's system within the large Urban Service area.

Additional strategies the City could explore to protect drinking water supplies include, but are not limited to, enhanced water protection management plans, cover crops for water resource protection, land purchase for conservation, and land acquisition loan programs. The City should also pursue funding from the EPA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Set-Asides program to support future drinking water supply efforts.

Springfield

PWSS No. 5010754, McDaniel Lake Intake
Greene County, Map 2 of 4
5 intakes, 1001 potential contaminant sources

Prepared by: CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI · Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Map Update: Mar 05, 2015

Surface Water System
- ⊙ System Intake
- ⬭ Drainage Basin
- ⬭ 5 Mile Upstream Limit
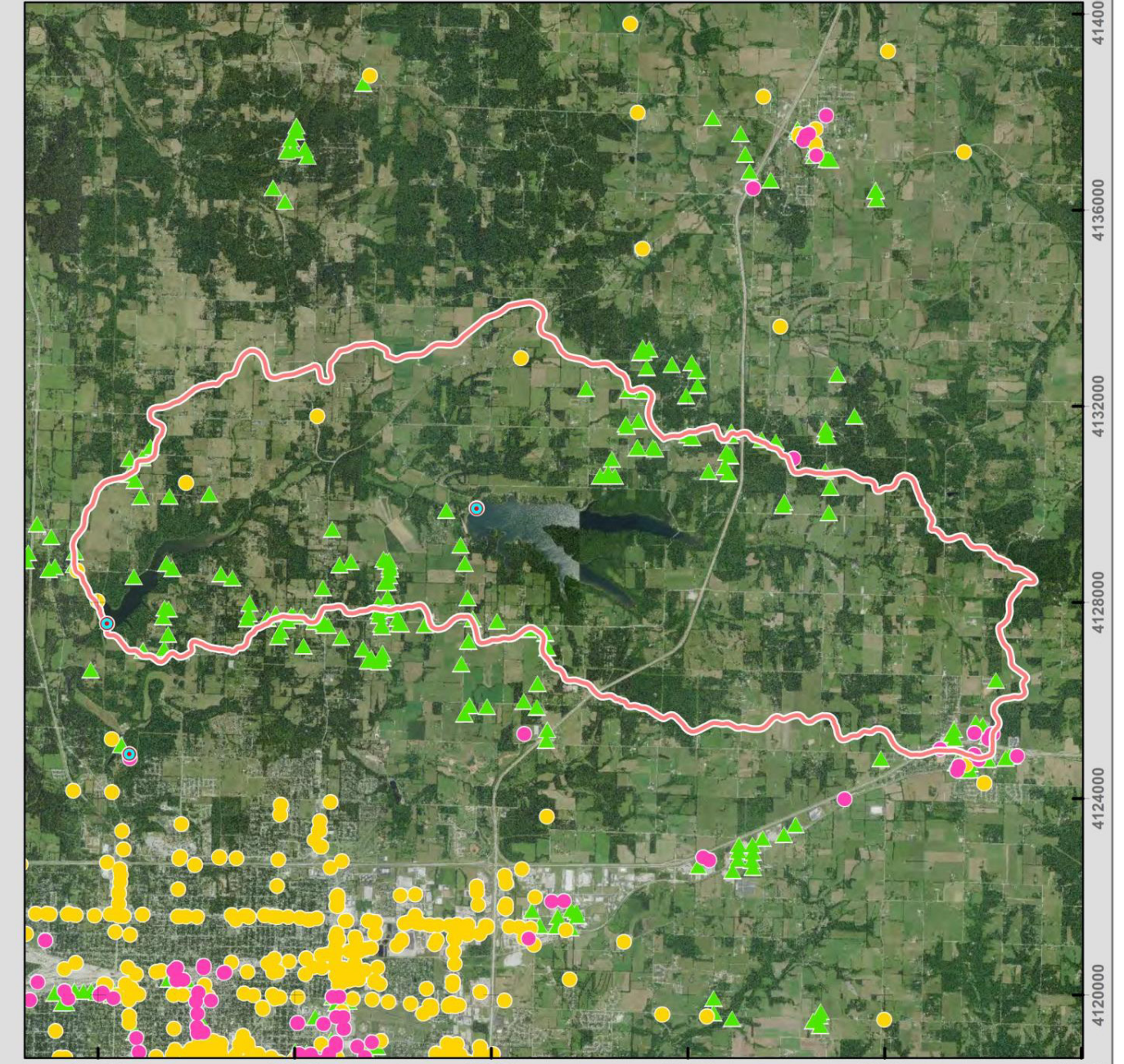
Potential Contaminant Source
- ● Database Source (Location Confirmed)
- ● Database Source (Location Unconfirmed)
- ▲ SWIP Field Data

Source: City of Springfield Source Water Protection Plan, February 2018 Section 1: Contact Information for Water Supply (cityutilities.net)

Partnerships play an important role in addressing region-wide issues and receiving state and federal grant funding. Partnerships should continue to be strengthened with local and regional stakeholders to ensure the City of Springfield continues to provide sufficient capacity for future growth and economic development. Stakeholders and partnerships should not be just from one sector of the community but from all that benefit from future infrastructure and community facility projects.

4.1 SPEARHEAD COORDINATION & PARTNERSHIPS

Take the lead in strengthening existing partnerships while seeking opportunities for new partnerships when pursuing public infrastructure and community facility improvements.

Understanding the value of partnerships, the City should continue to be proactive and take a leadership role in strengthening existing partnerships while exploring opportunities for new ones. The City has established partnerships with various governmental and citizens groups throughout the region including Greene County, Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT), Watershed Committee of the Ozarks, Ozark Greenways, James River Basin Partnership, Community Partnership of the Ozarks, City Utilities, and the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIPS

The City should also explore opportunities to enhance public-private partnerships to strengthen relationships with the business community and other stakeholders, establish a better understanding of infrastructure needs, and increase revenue sources for projects.

An example of an on-going public-private partnership is the Neighborhood Works program, which sets aside Public Works sales tax revenue for projects to improve neighborhoods. The City should also support the Neighborhood Advisory Council in forming a program that would allow private sector contributions in capital improvement projects to leverage public funds and expand impact. Through partnerships with local businesses and economic development groups, the City can ensure infrastructure and community facility projects align with the City's economic development plan.

The City should explore opportunities to establish interagency coordination procedures for infrastructure and community facility planning and funding, similar to the process that occurs between the City's Public Works Department, MoDOT, and Greene County to cost share transportation projects.

4.2 EVALUATE MANAGEMENT

Evaluate how infrastructure and community facilities are managed to improve efficiency.

To ensure the City's infrastructure and community facilities are being managed effectively and efficiently, an evaluation of City Utilities and City of Springfield management practices should be conducted. This evaluation should examine the current distribution of management responsibilities within Springfield's local government, which should be reorganized where needed to ensure management of infrastructure and community facilities by the most appropriate department. This evaluation should identify best practices, lessons learned, and opportunities to improve infrastructure and community facilities. An energy audit should also be conducted of each of the City's departments to establish specific recommendations for reducing energy use and identify viable sources of renewable energy.

Other factors the evaluation should review include:

- Staff capacity
- Staff absentee rates
- Staff turn-over
- Staff work time and overtime
- Operational capacity
- Work order tracking
- Corrective maintenance tracking
- Deferred maintenance
- Proposed system expansion
- Development and impact fees
- Safety record keeping
- Energy use for performance and facility maintenance (including use of equipment)
- Inventory of components and estimated costs for future replacement of components
- Environmental discharge and non-compliance record keeping

Caption: Approximately 3,714 linear feet of new sidewalk were constructed in February 2020 in the Delaware neighborhood, thanks to the City's Neighborhood Works capital improvement grant program.

4.3 MONITOR EXPANSION NEEDS

Monitor needs to expand community facilities and services as Springfield's population increases.

As the City of Springfield and surrounding area continues to grow, infrastructure and community facilities must be expanded and enhanced to accommodate the additional population and need for services. City staff and the CTOC should identify, prioritize, and recommend capital improvement projects to City Council to ensure continued provision of quality infrastructure and community facilities that align with the vision and goals of *Forward SGF*.

As previously discussed, an Infrastructure Expansion Strategy should be developed that aligns with the Growth Area Strategies outlined in **Chapter 6: Growth Areas and Annexation**. City departments and staff currently evaluate and plan for expansion based on a variety of factors including annexation agreements and projected growth areas. The following figure depicts the City's current stormwater infrastructure and sanitary sewer service areas in relation to existing Annexation Agreements. These existing expansion planning resources should be reviewed and updated based on the Growth Area Strategy contained in Chapter 6 of this Comprehensive Plan.

The following are other initiatives the City should monitor, review, and update to ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity with growth:

- The City's sewer utility is obligated to make a $300M investment in the Overflow Control Plan over the next 15 years. The utility should conduct a Master Plan of the City's sanitary sewer system that will guide system growth, prioritize investments in the wastewater treatment plants, and inform future regulatory strategies. Results of this plan will be used to guide investment strategies over the next 15-20 years.

- The City should review and revise existing ordinances and policies to better align infrastructure growth with community vision; examples include the Urban Service Area agreement, Lift Station Ordinance, Greene County Sewer agreement, annexation policy, and policies regarding cost recovery for public infrastructure.

- The City should review and analyze the current statutory authority to provide sewer service under 10 CSR 20-6010 and assess whether a change is warranted due to service area growth and regional development needs. The proper governance structure should be in place that will accommodate the goals of the community over the next 20 years.

- The City should work with regulatory agencies and other partners in the James River Watershed and Sac River Watershed to establish a pollution trading framework that will provide more flexibility to achieve regulatory compliance at a lower cost.

Existing Infrastructure and Annexation Agreements

— Stormwater Line

— Sewer Main Line

▪ Annexation Agreement Area

Graphic: City of Springfield Annexation Agreements and Existing City Provided Infrastructure (Tetra Tech 2021)

To conduct necessary maintenance, improvements, and new construction of community facilities and infrastructure systems, it is critical that the City explores an innovative and diverse range of funding opportunities. This may include art grants for beautification projects, transportation grants for riverwalk paths on a levee system, public-private partnerships, or fostering community relations with large community stakeholders, like hospitals and higher education institutions. The following identifies strategies the City can explore to obtain a wider breath of funding sources to generate the needed revenue for capital improvements and community facility enhancements.

5.1 EXPLORE FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

Explore funding alternatives to further diversify the City's revenue sources for infrastructure and community facilities.

To increase the City's sources of revenue, funding alternatives should be explored through the development of revolving loan funds or grants that may be "outside the box" of the project. For example, a pedestrian walkway project could include unique pervious pavers designed as a mosaic by a local artist. This multifaceted project could incorporate green infrastructure grants, art community grants, water quality grants, and transportation grants. Most grants require matching funds, which should be identified by the City. Matching funds in this particular example could include contributions from local art non-profits, community or humanity non-profits, and even private developers or property owners as it would benefit the character of project area. Phasing projects in incremental steps can also help in acquiring the necessary revenue as opposed to seeking funding for the entire project at once.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Another alternative funding source available to the City is public-private partnerships which has recently been implemented by City Utilities. In August 2019, City Utilities and Century Link entered into a public-private partnership for a $140 million expansion of broadband services offered through City Utilities SpringNet division. This partnership will provide access to high speed internet services at an affordable price, while reducing the initial capital investment costs to City Utilities.

STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Funding for stormwater infrastructure projects was identified as a critical need during the *Forward SGF* public engagement process. As previously discussed, there is currently not a dedicated, long term funding avenue to improve and adequately maintain the City's critical stormwater infrastructure. Efficient and effective stormwater infrastructure is needed to reduce flooding risks and improve regional water quality.

Funding Additional Capacity to Support Infill

The City's aging sanitary sewer infrastructure is also in need of repair, replacement, and upgrade to adequately meet the City's needs. Much of the City's existing sanitary sewer collection system is more than 50 years old and was designed to meet the capacity requirements at that time.

Downtown Growth

As an example, City staff evaluated a portion of the sanitary sewer system located near Missouri State University. This portion of the sanitary sewer system was originally designed for single family housing units which have since been converted to multi-resident apartments. It is estimated that an additional 4,000 users were added to this portion of the sanitary sewer system, increasing the volume of sanitary sewer discharge by an estimated 400,000 gallons per day, which requires additional capacity within the collection system.

Privately-owned Sewer Laterals

The City should also develop a strategy to work with property owners to address privately-owned sewer laterals to reduce inflow into the sanitary sewer system. This is often an issue in older, more impoverished neighborhoods where the unanticipated expense can be unaffordable, leading to problems like surfacing sewage, declining property values, and increased operations and maintenance costs for the sanitary sewer system.

State and Federal Grants

The City should consider Clean Water State Revolving Fund loans as well as Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program Grants available from the State of Missouri in coordination with the Federal EPA. These loan and grant programs can support a variety of infrastructure projects, including planning and community outreach, urban runoff, failing septic system management, and utility expansion.

Other known federal grants that can assist in larger infrastructure programs include Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, U.S. Economic Development Agency Public Works Grants, and State of Missouri grants and loans. Through volunteer, education, partnership, and stewardship opportunities, the City can gain needed advocacy and support from community members and regional stakeholders.

Watershed Initiatives

A key component of securing funds through these programs is watershed-wide partnerships and cooperation between stakeholders. The City should continue to enhance and participate in regional watershed groups and work together with regional partners to explore additional funding options. The City should also review the current structure of development and impact fees to ensure the costs of infrastructure expansion and capacity enhancement projects are being appropriately allocated.

ENTERPRISE FUNDS

Unlike tax supported functions, City departments that utilize enterprise funds have a different business plan, risk factors, and investment potential for retained earnings. The City should conduct a financial analysis of the investment strategies used for retained earnings located in the City's enterprise funds and make some risk-based decisions that optimize their return on investment.

GRANT AVENUE PARKWAY (GAP)

In 2019, the City of Springfield received a $21 million federal BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) grant to design and build the Grant Avenue Parkway (GAP). Once complete, the Parkway will create an off-street pedestrian and bicycle pathway along Grant Avenue between Sunshine Street and College Street, in the heart of Springfield. The 3-mile stretch will connect downtown Springfield with the Wonders of Wildlife National Museum and Aquarium (WOW) – linking authentic Springfield experiences for both residents and visitors. The Parkway route will further connect parks and recreation amenities, neighborhoods, schools, and fill a vital gap in the Ozark Greenways trail system.

As a complement to the GAP infrastructure project, the City created a GAP Corridor Plan and adopted new zoning regulations to guide development decisions in the surrounding neighborhoods and public spaces along the Grant Avenue corridor. The GAP is truly more than just a street project. The Parkway is an opportunity for the City to invest in a public amenity that, with the proper planning and development tools in place, can also be used to spur private investment. The intent of the GAP Corridor Plan is to promote reinvestment and redevelopment that leverages the new Parkway as an asset.

If redevelopment and reinvestment occurs as desired and in line with the revised development regulations, the corridor would add hundreds of new residential units and thousands of square feet of commercial space. This will require improvements to the City's existing infrastructure to ensure adequate capacity. New funding mechanisms are needed to provide for those improvements. New funding mechanisms are needed to provide for those improvements. The City should promote the planning and identification for the future extension of the Parkway along Grant Avenue north toward Kearney Street with a connection to Doling Park. The City should continue to prepare corridor and area plans in other areas of the community to be "shovel ready" when funding opportunities or partnerships arise to implement similar projects.

Opportunity Nodes: Madison Street Placemaking Plan

5.2 BENCHMARK FUNDING

Research comparable communities to use as benchmarks for Springfield's funding distribution for infrastructure and community facilities.

To gain an understanding of successful and efficient strategies for community facility and infrastructure funding, the City should research comparable communities to use as benchmarks for Springfield's funding distribution. In search of comparable communities, the City should review factors like similar natural and built environment, population number and demographics, current and projected economic status, the culture of a community, and the holistic health of a community. Funding structures, sources, and partnerships should then be examined of each comparable community for potential implementation in Springfield. The City should also reach out to these communities for direct input and guidance on how these communities overcame funding and project hurdles.

5.3 RESEARCH COMMUNITY FUNDING PRIORITIES

Conduct community outreach to research the priorities of community members for the allocation of municipal resources and funds.

By conducting community outreach, the City of Springfield can better identify what community members desire and where to allocate funds. The City should conduct surveys, virtual or in person community charrettes, and have open community meetings to research the priorities of community members. Prior to conducting any survey, the City should clearly identify infrastructure and community facilities that require repair and why the projects are important. The level of service evaluations previously discussed in this chapter are key communication components to present to the community for consideration.

The direct involvement of residents and stakeholders in projects has proven to result in greater community support for infrastructure and community facilities projects and sense of ownership. Outreach efforts should also be used to educate the public on why the proposed projects were selected or what regulatory demands the community must meet to remain in compliance/eligible for programs. By maintaining open communication and providing educational opportunities about community-funded projects, the City will strengthen community buy-in.

GOAL 6: *Foster public ownership and community identity towards Springfield's infrastructure and community facilities as they continue to support the beautification of the City.*

DECORATIVE TRAFFIC SIGNALS

By fostering a sense of ownership and community identity, residents will feel empowered to take action and help improve the community's character. This helps improve sense of place and fosters the community's collective vision for the future. To achieve this, the City of Springfield should educate residents, businesses, leaders, and even tourists on the importance of the City's infrastructure.

6.1 EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY & LEADERS

Educate elected officials and the public on the importance of the City's infrastructure and its maintenance.

Education is key for any project success, which is not to the end of project construction but includes ongoing maintenance, repair, and expansion. The City should develop an educational series for both citizens and elected officials that covers the basic considerations regarding public infrastructure, including funding, planning, and life cycle maintenance.

Local and state officials should be educated on project development and ongoing maintenance initiatives. This is crucial for future funding support by local and state officials as they already understand the importance of specific infrastructure and community facility projects.

EDUCATIONAL TOOLS

In coordination with regional partners, the City should develop educational tools that demonstrate the connectedness between the City's infrastructure and the health of neighborhoods and businesses. The importance of sustainability and protecting natural infrastructure should also be addressed to improve the community's sense of environmental stewardship. These tools could be used to reinforce the understanding that infrastructure decisions are made incrementally over a long period of time and the types of benefits they bring to the community.

Current examples of on-going public education efforts include hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences provided by informal education partners at the Watershed Center at Valley Water Mill Park, the City's landfill, and the wastewater treatment plant. City staff could also set up interactive booths at small festivals or community wide events, which would help create opportunities for face-to-face interaction between community members, city staff, and elected officials. This would foster trust and potential partnerships between the public and municipal government, as well as increased community buy-in. Innovative applications, like ArcGIS StoryMaps, could be used to provide an engaging and fun online learning experience.

6.2 BEAUTIFY THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE

COMMUNITY PHYSICAL IMAGE	⦿
ARTS, CULTURE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION	🏛
HEALTH & WELL-BEING	✚

Leverage infrastructure as a strategy for City beautification and placemaking.

Springfield citizens are looking for a bold vision to direct the City's development. Lack of beautification within Springfield was identified as one of the greatest issues facing the City during the community outreach process. Community members expressed desire to improve the appearance of the following areas:

- Commercial areas
- Primary roadways
- Routes leading to the airport
- Key gateway points into the City

Investments into the beautification of the City will be essential in strengthening positive community identity, sense of place, and resident pride. Beautification will also foster a positive outward image that can be used to increase tourism, promote economic development, and attract new professionals and families to Springfield.

ICONIC PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
Source: Millenium Park Foundation

GATEWAY SIGN FOR COMMERCIAL AREA
Source: Arrow Sign Company

6.3 MULTI-PURPOSE INFRASTRUCTURE

Promote multi-purpose infrastructure that add to the City's character and quality of place.

Community infrastructure can play a major role in fostering positive community identity and quality of place. Infrastructure like streets, sidewalks, underpasses, waterways, and stormwater management systems can be designed in an innovative manner that extends beyond their primary function and serves to beautify. Examples include crosswalk art, painted utility boxes, underpass trails and public art, green infrastructure, artistic traffic signals, decorative lighting, gateway signs, and iconic bridges.

Well-designed infrastructure can activate spaces, creating destinations that attract community members and spark excitement. While more costly, investments into quality and attractive infrastructure can significantly improve the City's economic vitality, desirability as a place to live, and quality of life, setting Springfield apart from other communities in the region.

MORE THAN "VALUE ENGINEERING"

Moving forward, the City should instill a progressive attitude towards infrastructure improvements that takes on larger risks to implement transformative and sustainable projects. This means moving away from "value engineering," or completing projects at the lowest cost for functional purposes without beautification components. The City currently has a series of visionary projects underway, including the **Grant Avenue Parkway** and **Renew Jordan Creek**, which are excellent examples of recent efforts to transform Springfield through a bold vision while leveraging infrastructure as an economic development tool.

Functional Infrastructure that Contributes to Neighborhood Form

Infrastructure is a vital component of all communities, enabling commerce, sanitation, transportation, and other core functions to occur. The initial buildout costs of infrastructure are high, which can encourage governments and agencies to remove all features that do not contribute to the primary utilitarian value. This overlooks the ways that infrastructure can provide multiple benefits, like parking lots with permeable pavers that reduce flood risk and improve water quality or a roadway intersection with plazas for people to gather. Multifaceted infrastructure projects can lead to cost savings or greater value creation in the long run if there is an efficient marriage of multiple features that would otherwise have been separate projects.

FOSTERING COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP

Through beautification initiatives, the City should cultivate a culture of community stewardship towards City infrastructure and community facilities. When greater public investments are made in infrastructure, its perceived value and appearance heightens. Residents and visitors are therefore more likely to treat the public infrastructure and surrounding privately-owned assets with respect. People often are encouraged to become stewards of a place they enjoy and see value in, supporting its continued operation and upkeep. Public investments can also effectively prompt private investments that reflect higher quality of development and placemaking efforts. A good example of a project like this is the Main Street Streetscape in Greensburg, Kansas.

Equity and Engagement

Equity and community engagement should guide future infrastructure improvement projects, promoting active community involvement and equitable distribution of investment. There are countless opportunities for the community to become involved with and enhance infrastructure and community facilities. Examples include landscaping at community facilities, park and neighborhood clean-ups, and neighborhood branding.

Grassroots initiatives should be encouraged and supported by the City, working with local groups, artists, and neighborhood associations to identify stewardship opportunities. Such opportunities should be incorporated during maintenance, improvements, or final design touches on new construction of infrastructure and community facilities. Neighborhood names or other branding/design elements should also be incorporated into new infrastructure to foster a sense of uniqueness, pride, importance, and ownership. The Underground at Ink Block in Boston, Massachusetts is a great example of a cooperative effort to beautify public infrastructure.

MAIN STREET STREETSCAPE

After much of Greensburg, Kansas was destroyed after an EF-5 tornado in 2007, one of the first infrastructure projects the City embarked on was to rebuild their main street streetscape in Downtown. Completed in 2009, the streetscape combines decorative brick sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, and stormwater management features integrated beneath its planters and green areas. While the primary function of this project is pedestrian safety and mobility, all the features combine in a way that beautifies the area, improves drought and flood resilience, and creates a highly attractive environment for business owners and shoppers alike. In Greensburg, City staff have created a true sense of place in an area where memorable features and community focal point had been lost.

UNDERGROUND AT INK BLOCK

Constructed in 2017, the Underground at Ink Block is an 8-acre park built under a large section of highway overpasses on the edge of Downtown Boston, MA. This previously unused public space is now home to a landscaped boardwalk, a dog park, bike storage, commercial parking, murals, sculptures, and regularly programmed events like fitness classes and festivals. The project involved the coordination with the State's Department of Transportation, a local citizen's advisory committee, City Hall, Boston Planning and Development Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, and private design, engineering, construction, and real estate partners.

Photo Credit: Springfield, MO Convention & Visitors Bureau