

Springfield Strategic Plan

Housing Planning Committee

Vision, Themes, Input, and Inter-relationships

The Vision of the Housing Planning Committee is:

Housing will be safe, available, affordable and sustainable for the citizens of our city, county, and region.

The Housing Planning Committee was comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders with varying areas of expertise, specialization, and perspectives. In order to capitalize on the strengths of the individual participants, sub-committees were not utilized. Every participant was involved in the development of this plan which is framed with three focus areas:

- New construction
- Urban living and development
- Affordability

The Plan also emphasizes two overarching focus areas:

- Energy efficiency
- Application of researched best practices

The Plan is a blueprint to achieve the vision by the attainment of one major short term goal and seven long range goals:

Major Goal (short term)

- Establishment of a Housing and Neighborhoods Office

Long Term Goals

- Promote diversity of housing types in development and re-development patterns
- Initiate and implement meaningful regulation/certification reform
- Develop and establish a local “Angie’s List” format for voluntary scoring of rental housing
- Expand incentives and means for funding effective efficiency improvements of the area’s housing stock
- Identify a two-year pilot program to evaluate advantages and disadvantages of broader rental registration and inspection program
- Pursue and expand assistance programs for residents to obtain and maintain housing that is affordable
- Encourage consortium and other private models to expand availability of affordable housing

In the development of the Plan, the committee considered cross chapter themes related to regionalism, sustainability, poverty and civic engagement with an emphasis on the development of achievable solutions inter-related to the other planning committees of the Springfield Strategic Plan.

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5): Year One

Major Goal: Establish a *Housing and Neighborhoods Office*. This office would be comprised of local government, non-profits, public and private entities acting as a coordinating body for the purpose of identifying unmet housing and neighborhood needs and implementing solutions.

This is critical because the office will serve the region as a center and the source for data collection, resource library, rental rating system, and problem solving on a regional broad-based level. Promotion of diverse housing types and redevelopment patterns should also be done on city, county, and regional levels as well as collaborations to promote regulation/certification reform. And expansion of both low-income assistance programs and energy efficiency incentives should also be regional in scope.

Assumptions:

- Wide-ranging policies, ordinances, and procedures affect the various components of the overall housing picture, including: new construction, existing housing stock, urban, suburban and rural housing, rental housing, multifamily, affordable housing, and homelessness.
- Multiple organizations (non-profit charitable organizations, not-for-profit trade associations, for-profit businesses, colleges and universities, etc.) hold different pieces of the solution to various housing challenges facing the community. Some current efforts include duplication of services while other needs go unmet. This would include food pantry services, rent and utility assistance, clothing banks and the like. Consolidating where applicable would streamline intake and access for needy families/individuals.
- Whenever possible, private-sector “bottom-up” solutions should be fully explored and attempted; and are generally preferable to government initiated and managed “top-down” solutions.
- A new Housing and Neighborhoods Office would provide the most efficient and effective means of achieving the seven long term goals of this plan. However, each goal should stand on its own merits, and not be purely contingent on other goals within the plan.

Objective: To create of a process for dispute resolution where one or more impartial third parties will intervene in a housing conflict to assists in negotiating a consensual and informed agreement, thereby keeping eviction rates and court costs to a minimum.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- Legal Services of Southern Missouri

Objective: To provide a centralized access point for housing related data designed to assist policy makers, housing/community development professionals, planners, researchers, developers and people seeking to buy or rent a home.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- Neighborhood organizations & associations
- HBA, SAHA, GSBOR

- Local governments

Objective: Offer a “housing resource” library

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office in coordination with partner organizations

Objective: Create a voluntary reporting and scoring system modeled after “Angie’s List” that will provide unbiased information regarding rental properties to the public on topics such as safety and utility history.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office in coordination with partner organizations

Objective: Develop and implement a centralized coordination point for life skills and financial literacy training to address common issues resulting in tenant eviction.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office in coordination with partner organizations

Proposed Performance Measure(s): An Annual Report from the Housing and Neighborhoods Office to the community, stakeholders and financial backers. The report will measure increased availability of resources, decrease in duplication of efforts, record of services and resources accessed.

Estimated Cost to Achieve Goal: approx. \$75,000 / yr

One-Time Cost: \$10,000 startup

Ongoing Cost: \$75,000 annual

Proposed Funding Source(s): Initial public funding start-up funds (either via local general revenue or by federal or state grants) with a five-year phase-out or phase-down as private dollars are raised from partner organizations and businesses to replace the annual, ongoing costs.

A financial planning committee or advisory board will be established for the purpose of raising private dollars from a wide variety of sources for ongoing operations.

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5):

Long Term Goal: Promote diversity of housing types in development and re-development patterns.

Assumptions:

- Development of housing types, location and price point are principally driven by market demands.
- Builders and developers who seek to build, develop and re-develop in ways that are new or different should not face unnecessary barriers.
- Development and re-development patterns and housing types should be determined by market demand and sound municipal planning methods.
- The focus of city staff, planners, etc., should be on removing barriers to innovative concepts in construction and development rather than deferential treatment to any particular trend or style. Those types of barriers include: outdated codes that lack direction for using the latest innovative green building products and technology; rigid zoning regulations that make mixed use developments “walkable communities” work through a “planned development process; lack of experience with use of form-based zoning; etc, etc.

Objective: Remove barriers to innovative design concepts

Responsible Groups:

- Planning & Zoning Commission
 - Housing and Neighborhoods Office
 - HBA, SAHA, GSBOR
 - City & County Departments:
 - Building Regulations
 - Public Works
 - Planning & Zoning

Objective: Allow trade-off incentives to make new or innovative concepts financially feasible.

Responsible Groups:

- Planning & Zoning Commission
 - Housing and Neighborhoods Office
 - HBA, SAHA, GSBOR
 - City & County Departments:
 - Building Regulations
 - Public Works
 - Planning & Zoning

Proposed Performance Measure(s): Annual online survey to builders, developers, trades and trade associations evaluating impressions of key performance criteria and outcomes. Year-over-year survey participation and improvement or decline should be measured and reported annually to the city manager.

Estimated Cost to Achieve Goal: < \$500

One-Time Cost: \$ _____
Ongoing Cost: \$ _____

Proposed Funding Source(s): City Budgets / Reallocation of resources (if any are needed).

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5):

Long Term Goal: Initiate and implement meaningful regulation and certification reform

Assumptions:

- In general, the building and development industry is highly regulated.
- When possible, new regulatory reforms should be focused on reducing barriers to quality construction and development. In the rare case that new regulations become necessary, every effort should be made to use the new regulations as a way of reducing or eliminating other, outdated regulations. The goal should be to make the process simpler and more efficient, not more complex and costly.
- Where federal or state requirements exist, it is within the purview of local government to require proof of compliance with those laws in order to conduct business within the local jurisdiction.
- Conflicting interpretation of codes and regulations from one jurisdiction to another (or within a single jurisdiction) increases costs, decreases efficiency, negatively impacts the likelihood of projects being initiated and/or completed, and hinders overall economic growth and prosperity of the community.

Objective: Restructure zoning requirements to allow for a greater mix of blended housing options

Responsible Groups:

- Planning & Zoning Commission
- Engineers & Architects, SCA, HBA, trades, etc.
- City & County Departments:
 - Building Regulations
 - Public Works
- Planning & Zoning

Objective: Seek consistent interpretation of regulations and codes between and within area jurisdictions, based on regular input and feedback from the affected industries.

Responsible Groups:

- Planning & Zoning Commission
- Engineers & Architects, SCA, HBA, trades, etc.
- City & County Departments:
 - Building Regulations
 - Public Works
- Planning & Zoning

Estimated Cost to Achieve Goal: < \$500

One-Time Cost: \$ _____

Ongoing Cost: \$ _____

Proposed Funding Source(s): General Revenue (if any)

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5): Year 2

Long Term Goal: Develop and establish a local “Angie’s List” format for voluntary scoring of rental housing, allowing prospective tenants to “review” landlords, and landlords to respond to scoring.

Assumptions:

- A voluntary scoring system would provide a competitive advantage for those landlords who choose to utilize it.
- Transparency and accountability provide the greatest opportunities for improvement.
- Market forces, facilitated by this program, allows for better utilization of quality rental properties and creates better incentive for landlords to improve existing properties.

Objective: Allow tenants to rate properties on several key health and safety issues, such as code compliance and safety.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- Participating tenants
- City Utilities (utility information)

Objective: Allow landlords to respond to ratings by tenants in accuracy, reliability of tenant (based on on-time rental payments and condition of property at the end of rental term) and respond to statements about property quality, corrective actions and landlord issues.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- Participating landlords

Proposed Performance Measures:

Number of properties/landlords rated and the number of ratings

Overall scoring average of properties/landlords scored

Number of issues corrected by landlords after identification of tenants

Estimated Cost to Achieve Goal:

One-time Cost: \$10-15,000

Ongoing Cost: \$1000 per year, based on time of Housing and Neighborhoods Office to review submissions for content.

Proposed Funding Source:

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5):

Long Term Goal: Expand incentives and means for funding effective efficiency improvements of the area's housing stock.

Assumptions:

- The aging rental units and owner-occupied homes of Springfield present a substantial opportunity for energy and water conservation, as well as, a significant challenge to the maintenance of efficient and healthy homes
- Tenants can be less financially stressed if the units that they rent are efficient and healthy environments, thus assisting them to become more stable rent payers. This financial stability can also be realized by owner-occupied residences across the full range of housing options.
- Citywide, the overall efficiency that can be realized through aggressive conservation can yield significant demand-side management impacts, thus reducing pressures to expand the capacity of utility infrastructure. Additionally, this reduces the costs of maintaining that infrastructure.

Objective: Work with federal, state and local programs to bring energy efficiency and water conservation incentives to the citizens of Springfield. Funding sources could include US EPA, MO DNR, MO Department of Conservation, HOME and CDBG and should be the responsibility of City Utilities.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing & Neighborhoods Office
- City of Springfield & City of Springfield Administrative Officials
- County Offices
- City Utilities

Proposed Performance Measures:

In partnership with City Utilities:

- Track the amount of money available and spent on funding improvements.
- Track the amount and value of the utility savings.
- Track the reduction in infrastructure expansion and maintenance costs from projections.

Estimated Cost to Achieve:

- One-Time Cost: Staff time.

Objective: Add efficiency and pursuit of funding to the city and county's legislative agenda as a priority.

Responsible Groups: Springfield City Council
County Commission

Estimated Cost to Achieve:

- No cost beyond pursuit of existing agenda.

Objective: Within one year, develop a local Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing district. These (PACE) bonds make available clean energy investments affordable to area commercial and residential property owners. The PACE Act was signed into law by Governor Jay Nixon on July 12, 2010. To take advantage of the new program, preparations must be made on the local level to implement PACE funding for conservation.

Responsible Group(s)/Stakeholders:

Housing & Neighborhoods Office
City of Springfield
Greene County
Other Local Jurisdictions
Homeowners, Landlords & Tenants
Utility Providers

Proposed Performance Measures:

- Establish PACE advisory committee by March 2011.
- Track applications, the amount of projects funded and the projected savings.
- Project audits to evaluate installation and effectiveness over time.

Estimated Cost to Achieve:

- \$15,000 + Staff time to administrate initial study and advisory committee.

Proposed Funding Source(s):

- Self-Funded via Micro-Bond / Revenue Bonds
- Administrative expenses recovered as a portion of the incremental annual property tax.

Objective: Research & pursue other supplemental conservation methods for financing and / or rebating residential conservation improvements. Based on research of best practices, develop a program that incentivizes investments in energy efficiency and weatherization projects.

Responsible Group(s): Housing & Neighborhoods Office
 Utility Providers

Proposed Performance Measures:

- Study and implement conservation and cost recovery program which could include a program like City Utilities' "Pay as You Save" program.
- Run pilot program within an identified neighborhood or utility service area.
- Deploy program by May 2013.

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5):

Long Term Goal: Identify a two year pilot program to evaluate advantages and disadvantages of rental registration and inspection program. A large number of rental units exist that do not meet safety and habitability standards.

Assumptions:

- No member of the community should have to live in housing that fails to meet basic life safety and health standards.
- Inspected rentals will provide safer, more structurally sound properties.
- Inspected properties will help eradicate neighborhood blight; foster investment and increased property values.
- Registration and inspection will encourage rental property owners to operate their businesses more professionally.

Objective: To provide safer, more structurally sound rental housing by requiring adherence to building codes and updated electrical, plumbing, and heating code compliance.

Objective: Establish a rental and inspection registration pilot program in the West Central Neighborhood which would apply to rental units in structures. The inspection program would concentrate on code and health issues.

Responsible Groups:

- City of Springfield
- Building Regulations
- Licensing Division
- Health Department
- Housing and Neighborhood Office

Proposed Performance Measure(s):

- A decrease in Police and Health Department calls for services.
- An increase in property values
- An increase in number of building permits to make improvements.
- Number of failed units identified and brought back up to standard

Estimated Cost to Achieve Goal: \$ _____

One-Time Cost: \$ _____

Ongoing Cost: \$ _____

Proposed Funding Source(s):

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5):

Long Term Goal: Pursue and expand assistance programs for residents to obtain and maintain housing that is affordable

Assumptions:

- Financial assistance, education and service programs will have the greatest impact on all residents looking for housing that is affordable.
- For each program or service conduct a thorough market assessment of need and monitor and evaluate program/service impact.
- There is a large number of substandard properties within the housing stock.
- A shortage of opportunity exists in the current housing market that makes it difficult for individuals and families to transition from one housing type to another.

Objective: Add a rent-assistance component that provides modest subsidies in certain situations to reduce monthly payments and retain reliable residents.

Responsible Groups:

- May or may not be administered by Housing Office
- City/County

Objective: Expand support for mortgage, owner-occupied rehabilitation, and rental property (for low-income residents), buy down programs (i.e., the Council of Churches' program).

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- Financial Institutions
- Mortgage Companies/Mortgage holders
- Landlords
- Community Land Trusts
- Community organizations

Objective: Expand usage of CDBG, HOME, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and other programs to facilitate projects that build, buy, or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or home ownership.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- Community Organizations
- Financial Institutions
- City/County/State

Objective: Expand use and availability of transitional housing options (i.e., homeless to subsidized, subsidized to market-rate, etc.).

Responsible Groups:

- Community Organizations

- City/County/State
- Housing and Neighborhoods Office

Proposed Performance Measure(s):

Estimated Cost to Achieve Goal: \$ _____

One-Time Cost: \$ _____

Ongoing Cost: \$ _____

Proposed Funding Source(s):

Five-Year Goals, Performance Measures, and Budgets

Year (1-5):

Long Term Goal: Encourage consortium and other private models to expand availability of affordable housing

Assumptions:

- The ability to influence affordable housing development is shared by the city, county, neighborhood organizations, private developers, non-profits, and private sector partnerships.
- Significant underutilized and/or untapped resources exist in the private and non-profit sectors to address the challenge of affordable housing.
- The city and county have the ability to allocate community resources (such as CDBG funds) to affordable housing developments.
- The city and county are requested to provide letters of support for certain affordable housing developments that utilize state and federal tax credit funding.
- The city and county have the ability to influence funding of affordable housing by using political capital.

Objective: To encourage businesses, private investors, social capital, sweat equity, banks & other local lenders to work together to create more quality affordable housing in our community. [KEY: Seek more bottom-up (as opposed to top down) solutions to address affordability]

Responsible Groups:

- Financial Institutions
 - Area affordable housing developers
 - OACAC
 - Not for profits
 - Housing Collaborative,
 - City and County planning and zoning

Objective: To create an objective rating system to evaluate affordable housing proposals which would prioritize affordable housing developments that not only provide quality affordable housing but additionally encourage collaborations to provide support services to families such as lifeskills, affordable child care and other educational opportunities such as budgeting and parenting classes.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- OACAC
- Area affordable housing developers
- Housing Collaborative
- Churches
- Not for profits
- City and County planning and zoning

Objective: Expand use of Community Land Trusts (as used by UNA) modeled after successful CLTs across the country.

Responsible Groups:

- Housing and Neighborhoods Office
- OACAC
- Area affordable housing developers
- Housing Collaborative
- Churches
- Not for profits
- City and County planning and zoning

Proposed Performance Measure(s):

Estimated Cost to Achieve Goal: \$ _____

One-Time Cost: \$ _____

Ongoing Cost: \$ _____

Proposed Funding Source(s):

Inter-relationships, Themes, and Volunteer Hours Invested

This community planning process is placing an emphasis on analyzing the inter-relationships of the various plan topics (chapters). Each committee is asked to address how its plan recommendations inter-relate with the other planning topics. Please include a brief narrative that addresses how your committee's recommendations relate to the following planning topics:

- **Arts, Culture, and Tourism:** The issues addressed in this planning chapter are related only indirectly to the topic of Arts, Culture, and Tourism.
- **Early Childhood Development:** Safe and affordable housing is important to a child's developmental progress. In some cases older housing can pose particular health concerns (lead paint, etc.) for the very young. These health considerations have been demonstrated to have an affect on early childhood development.
- **Economic Development:** Housing is a key component of the economic development picture. Workforce housing is a critical consideration when employers consider a community in which to relocate. Home construction itself generates a considerable portion of the region's job base, and construction projects have a high multiplier effect in terms of ripple economic impact, compared to most other industries.
- **Education and Workforce Development:** A healthy home is a key component to a child's ability to thrive educationally. Construction and sales of housing represent thousands of jobs and job opportunities throughout the region.
- **Global Perspectives and Diversity:** The issues addressed in this planning chapter are related only indirectly to the topic of Global Perspectives and Diversity.
- **Growth Management and Land Use:** Land use decisions directly impact the availability and cost of housing. In a growing community additional housing is needed and it must go somewhere. Market forces demand that a significant portion of new housing be built in mid to low density areas, often requiring the development of previously undeveloped land. Land use decisions with regards to quality of life, greenways, and other in-demand amenities, properly planned and coordinated, can lead to increased demand for housing as well.
- **Housing:** This is our planning chapter.
- **Internal Organization:** Particularly when it comes to those segments of the housing sector of the economy that require government authorization or that are regulated by local governments, positive, healthy, mutually respectful and beneficial working relationships with city staff and departments are critical. Efficient and friendly customer service from city staff and departments can have direct positive impacts on the area's economy and quality of growth and development.
- **Natural Environment:** Environmental considerations often drive land use decisions, internal organization question and other issues directly related to housing. Part of the reason the population in the Ozarks continues to grow is because of the quality of life people have come to expect here. A significant part of that is the quality of the natural environment. The positive

economic impact of this population growth (while not without its challenges), is considerable. Yet growth can be accompanied by harmful environmental impacts. Through effective planning, this region has generally, thus far, managed to grow at a healthy pace while still maintaining clean air and water and a healthy overall natural environment.

- **Public Health:** The issues addressed in this planning chapter are related only indirectly to the topic of Public Health.
- **Public Safety:** The issues addressed in this planning chapter are related only indirectly to the topic of Public Safety. As we grow, we need additional public safety resources, but the tax base and economic development impact that generally accompanies growth also brings along resources that should be directed to providing these fundamental functions of government.
- **Recreation and Leisure:** The issues addressed in this planning chapter are related only indirectly to the topic of Recreation and Leisure. Parks and recreational activities are a significant part of what makes this area an attractive place to live. This contributes to a growing, vibrant region and economy.
- **Transportation:** As the population grows, transportation infrastructure (along with water, sewer and utility service) drives where that population will congregate and locate. As housing patterns morph over time, different demands are placed on transportation infrastructure and new needs can arise. Transportation and housing are closely related topics.

We firmly believe our vision, that “housing will be safe, available, affordable and sustainable” is achievable through this Plan. This report represents over 460 hours of research, discussion, and planning by a diverse group of constituents, all passionate about these issues. We also believe attainment of each goal of the Housing Plan will foster, support, and help ensure the goals in all other areas of the Springfield Strategic Plan.

It has been an honor and a privilege to contribute to this important process; we appreciate this opportunity.

Co-Chairs: Bob Horton and Matt Morrow

City Council Liaison: Doug Burlison

Participants:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Ben Stone | Randy McCoy |
| Chuck Marinec | Tim Rosenbury |
| Dana Elwell | Tom Dornan |
| Debbie Shantz | Vern Morgan |
| Jan Sederholm | |
| Jeff Barber | |
| Jeff Kester | |
| Jennifer Kennally | |
| Michelle Garand | |