May 16, 2011

News Release

For Immediate Release

City Again Seeking Volunteers to Assist With Sign Removal

The City of Springfield is again seeking volunteers to assist with beautification and sign removal in public right-of-way along City roadways. About 25 Springfield residents volunteered for the program when the City first requested assistance last fall.

Two information and training sessions will be held in June. Both sessions will be at 5:30 p.m., in room L45 of the Busch Municipal Building at 840 Boonville Ave. The sessions are scheduled for Monday, June 6, and Thursday, June 23.

Section 98-7 of the Springfield City Code prohibits the placement of advertisements within the right-of-way of any public thoroughfare. The ordinance is designed to ensure visibility for drivers and to reduce litter in areas where Springfield Public Works mows grass. Public right-of-way is usually defined as the area from the street curb to the outer edge of a public sidewalk. Signs and advertisements on utility poles are also prohibited by City code.

This ordinance is difficult to enforce, and signs are typically removed only on a complaint basis or when Public Works employees mow grass in a right-of-way. For this reason, the City will seek volunteers interested in beautification to help spot and remove illegal signs in the right-of-way.

Volunteers will receive training by City staff, and will be able to conduct their work on their own time. The City will not ask volunteers to remove out-of-reach signs; signs related to the sale or lease of property; political signs; signs advertising on-premises businesses; or any signs on private property. Instead, these will be referred to City staff for further enforcement.

Signs that may be removed by volunteers include any off-premises business or activity advertised in the right-of-way or on telephone poles. As they keep an eye on beautification, volunteers may also report other concerns such as broken curbs, potholes, graffiti, dead animals, trash and tall weeds. Volunteers assisting the City must be at least 18 years of age and are required to sign a release form.

For more information, contact: Collin Quigley, Assistant City Manager, (417) 864-1116.