



# LEGISLATIVE 2025 PRIORITIES

City of Springfield • City Utilities of Springfield • Greene County  
Missouri State University • Ozarks Technical Community College  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce • Springfield-Greene County Library District  
Springfield Public Schools • Springfield Regional Arts Council  
Springfield Regional Economic Partnership • Visit Springfield, Missouri

# Springfield Metro Partnership Legislative Guiding Principles

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## Economic Development

The Springfield Metro Partnership supports proven tax credit programs that are used to stimulate employment and leverage private investment. We oppose efforts to reduce the effectiveness of programs that significantly impact job creation and result in a positive return on investment for the state.



Voluntary annexation is a key component to ensuring the future growth, health, and vibrancy of a community. As a result, the Partnership supports legislation that enhances the ability of cities to grow using the 'voluntary' annexation process.

The Partnership supports efforts to increase the availability of development-ready commercial and industrial building sites to foster local and statewide economic growth.

## Elementary and Secondary Education

Quality education at all levels is a critical component to the health of the region. We support continued full funding of the state's K-12 foundation and transportation formulas.

Expecting academic rigor and accountability of our schools is key to providing students the skills necessary to compete in a global workforce. The Partnership supports the implementation of high and rigorous standards that develop the full potential of every child and opposes legislation that erodes the authority of local school boards or diverts resources from public schools to non-public schools.

The Partnership also supports investing in early childhood education, libraries and continuing education opportunities based on the public return on investment.

## Higher Education

The Partnership encourages the General Assembly to eliminate the core funding disparities that result in Springfield area higher education institutions receiving less funding per student than other institutions throughout the state. The Partnership supports funding public higher education institutions at the highest possible levels, including a 3 percent core funding increase for all public colleges and universities because of the positive impact they have on all facets of life in Missouri, including economic and workforce development.

The Partnership supports funding for capital priorities at Ozarks Technical Community College and Missouri State University. Funding these projects aligns higher education funding with the state's workforce priorities while meeting the needs of employers.

## Environment

The Partnership encourages environmental standards that provide a balance between protecting our area's natural resources and ensuring regional economic growth. We support innovative strategies for meeting environmental mandates that require community affordability to be addressed within the evaluation process.

## Libraries and the Arts

The Partnership supports the role of the arts, libraries, and cultural organizations as contributing to the economic health, educational growth and tourism of our region.

We support funding from the Non-Resident Professional Athletes and Entertainers Tax and the distribution of those funds as intended, without budgetary constraints or withholdings, including allocation to the Missouri Cultural Trust.

The Partnership supports current local policies and procedures regarding access to material for library users.



## Local Funding

Passed in 2021, Senate Bills 153 and 97 have enabled Missouri to collect existing online use taxes without requiring a statewide vote, safeguarding local brick-and-mortar businesses from unfair out-of-state competition. The Partnership supports amending state law to grant local jurisdictions the same ability to adopt and collect existing online sales tax, ensuring additional protections for local businesses and local revenue opportunities.

The Partnership supports efforts to improve public safety due to its impact on the economic growth of the region.

The Partnership supports capital investments in local quality of place enhancements, including regional trail systems, the Springfield-Branson National Airport, Lake Springfield developments, a convention center, and safety and capacity upgrades to I-44.

## Transportation & Infrastructure

Transportation and infrastructure are critical to the economic success of our region and state. The Partnership encourages legislators to partner and collaborate with local leaders, public officials, transportation planning organizations, citizen groups and other stakeholders to provide predictable and long-term funding for transportation investment. We support efforts to find alternative sources of funding for transportation infrastructure to ensure continued and robust investment.

We support efforts to accelerate the construction of projects when local communities are willing to assist with the financing of transportation improvements.

The Partnership supports continued restored funding for Springfield's public transit system to address the significant increase in costs to operate the transit system.

The Partnership opposes the transfer of state-owned roadways to local ownership and maintenance.

The Partnership supports the expansion of broadband throughout the state.

# Springfield Metro Partnership 2025 Legislative Priorities

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## Education and Workforce Development

Missouri's prosperity in the global economy is directly linked to our ability to attract and retain a skilled workforce. The Partnership encourages investment in all levels of education, including full funding of the foundation formula and equitable funding and critical infrastructure investments for public universities and community colleges.

The Partnership encourages robust investment in Missouri One Start, the state's workforce development system, and the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant to help meet employers' current and future needs.

The Partnership supports increasing the income eligibility for the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant from \$80,000 to \$100,000 for taxpayers who are married filing jointly and from \$40,000 to \$50,000 for all other taxpayers, adjusted annually based on inflation.

The Partnership supports innovative solutions to current workforce barriers, including childcare, transportation, housing availability and mental health services.

## State Investments and Financial Future

Maintaining a balanced state budget without placing undue tax burden on citizens or reducing the effectiveness of essential state programs is key to Missouri's success. The Partnership supports strategic investments in programs and projects that support regional and statewide growth, including workforce and economic development efforts.

The Partnership encourages a fiscally responsible approach to state budgeting that ensures any broad-based tax reform measures include a corresponding and reliable revenue replacement.

## Local Authority

There are narrow circumstances, such as a statewide crisis, in which a governor needs the ability to override local regulations. Beyond those circumstances, the Partnership opposes limiting local authority. State-mandated solutions and preemption of local laws limit the flexibility of local government. An alternative to preemption is for the State of Missouri to forge alliances with local government.

## Preserving Local Elections

The Partnership supports preserving the April option for municipal elections and keeping local elections nonpartisan.

## Travel & Tourism Industry

Growth in the travel industry is vital to the state's economy because it creates jobs and generates revenue. The tourism industry in Springfield alone generates revenue exceeding \$1 billion and supports more than 20,000 jobs. Investing in tourism marketing has a proven high return on investment.

The Partnership supports continued funding of the Division of Tourism at an appropriate level to compete effectively for out-of-state visitors and encourage in-state visitation by Missourians. We encourage opportunities to explore and reimagine efforts to enhance tourism, including a dedicated funding mechanism to provide consistent travel industry promotion. The Partnership supports continued funding and expansion of the Meet in Missouri program and the Missouri Amateur Sports Tax Credit as key incentives for the attraction of visitors, events, and conventions in local communities.

The upcoming 2026 Route 66 Centennial presents a unique opportunity to showcase Missouri to the world and drive new international visitors to Missouri. We also support increased funding for the Missouri Route 66 Centennial Committee as a way to drive new international visitors to Missouri.

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**For more information, please contact:**

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