



# LEGISLATIVE 2024 PRIORITIES

City of Springfield • City Utilities of Springfield • Greene County  
Libraries & Arts Council Alliance • Missouri State University  
Ozarks Technical Community College • Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce  
Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau • Springfield Public Schools  
Springfield Regional Economic Partnership

# Springfield Metro Partnership 2024 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 in the Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant, to help meet employers' current and future needs.

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

## Alliance for Healthcare Education Funding

The Partnership supports a one-time capital funding investment in the Alliance for Healthcare Education, a partnership aimed at improving the healthcare workforce shortage.

## Property Tax Relief Eligibility Clarification

The Partnership encourages clarifying property tax relief eligibility for seniors, as passed in Senate Bill 190, by establishing a minimum eligible age of 67 and implementing a household income cap of \$100,000.

# 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.



## 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 encourages strategic investments in programs and projects that support regional and statewide growth, including workforce and economic development efforts.

## 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 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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

## Local Funding

To ensure public safety and efficient access to justice, the Partnership supports increased funding for Greene County's criminal justice system, including the 31st Judicial Circuit courts and facilities, the statutorily set jail per diem, juvenile staff salaries and per diem, public defender services and prosecutor offices. The Partnership supports the continued collection of sales tax on out-of-state vehicles because of the impact the loss of revenue would have on local budgets.

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

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

The Partnership supports continued funding 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.



## 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, citizen groups and other stakeholders to protect 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 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.

For more information, please contact:

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