



SSGA Recommendations for Redevelopment of East Springfield and Underserved Areas
June 3, 2025

The income disparities between white and black residents in Springfield are significant and have grown since the pandemic. The disparities are larger in the underserved areas of the community. There are many actions that need to be taken to address the disparities, and one of those is public investments in the impacted neighborhoods. SSGA recommends that the City of Springfield consider the following activities to help spur redevelopment and economic development in East Springfield:

Review and Potentially Update East Springfield Plans and Studies

In the last 10-15 years, multiple plans and studies have been completed regarding East Springfield. SSGA recommends that the City Planner and OPED Director conduct a thorough review of these documents to understand their recommendations and determine if they are still relevant to the current environment. Including stakeholders from the studied communities will assist in determining the relevance of the studies. It is likely that some of the plans and studies will need to be updated to include current activities and changes to the study areas. The cost for these study updates could be funded by TIF funds if the study area is in the TIF district. Other funding sources include general revenue funds, State grants, and local cannabis taxes. Once the plans are updated, City staff should pursue formal adoption by the City Council.

Large Scale Improvements and Investments in Impacted Areas

Data and studies show that the condition and appearance of public infrastructure is a factor when businesses and residents choose a location for their home or business. The City can utilize economic development tools and resources to make significant improvements to the public infrastructure (streets, sidewalks, public spaces, sanitary/storm sewer, lighting etc.) in neighborhoods where income disparities are the greatest. Several TIF districts include these neighborhoods, and those TIF funds have available monies. These neighborhoods are also inside the Enterprise Zone, which can provide incentives for improvements to commercial and residential properties. Other funding/incentive sources include Local Cannabis Tax, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME funds, New Market Tax Credits, and CPACE. Furthermore, investors in these neighborhoods could get tax advantages by utilizing the Opportunity Zone tax exemptions. The following are hypothetical examples of large-scale improvements:

1. Large-scale improvement and replacement of the public infrastructure on commercial corridors. For example, South Grand Avenue or Cook Street between 11th Street and Dirksen Parkway.
- ② Whole-block redevelopment in areas according to recommendations from the previously mentioned plans. There are entire blocks where the City already owns most of the parcels. Funds could be used to acquire the remaining properties. Then, the City could issue an RFP for qualified firms to propose a development that is consistent with the plan and citizen recommendations. It would be especially beneficial if one of these developments included childcare facilities for neighborhood residents. Another beneficial service would be job training opportunities to be in these developments. The City could adjust their level of incentives to provide additional benefits for a development that includes these activities.
3. Provide funding for businesses to acquire property as an incentive to locate their operations in these neighborhoods.
4. Provide funding for businesses to expand or improve their buildings.



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As stated earlier, these are only hypothetical examples. Also, it is not a complete list of options. It is important to utilize planning updates and citizen input into the design of any improvements and actions.

Although these actions are under the control of the City of Springfield, the SSGA stands ready to assist in any manner desired by the City. We believe that these suggestions are transformational and will result in additional private business investments in these neighborhoods.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Ryan McCrady, President & CEO
Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance



Economic Development Maps (EDMs)

Incentive Area Lookup

Cannabis Grants Area

CBGB Census Tracts

Enterprise Zones

TIF Districts

Major Retail Hubs

Project Locator

IHDA

Tax Increment Financing Districts *Misty Buscher, Mayor - Springfield, Illinois*

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Home

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