

# Community FOCUS 2011

## A Report for Springfield and Greene County

[SpringfieldCommunityFocus.org](http://SpringfieldCommunityFocus.org)



We are proud to unveil the 2011 *Community Focus* report. For the last seven years this community report card has assessed the strengths (blue ribbons) and weaknesses (red flags) of the Springfield-Greene County community. This year's collaborative project continues the tradition of looking at our community through various lenses in order to help guide, direct, and formulate initiatives to address community issues. Additionally, efforts to track the indicators from all *Community Focus* reports have been improved with the addition of a new section that provides a snapshot of all reported blue ribbons and red flags.

Over the last several months numerous community leaders and volunteers came together to discuss the status of our community and share information in order to create this year's report. During these discussions, recurring themes emerged which signaled shared experiences throughout our community. These themes are evident throughout the eleven sections of the *Community Focus* report.

Four primary blue ribbon themes are reflected in this year's assessment. In 2004, the *Community Focus* report concluded that collaboration and the mobilization of resources were necessary to help shape our community into one that makes it a great place to live and work. Numerous examples of collaboration of resources, groups of people, individuals, and goals run throughout this year's report. The spirit of collaboration is evident and the benefit of people working together for the common good of our community is coming to bear. A second recurring theme this year is our community's willingness to address issues. We have identified those areas of concern in past reports and are addressing them. Third, our community has the ability and desire to be innovative in terms of new programs, partnerships, and concepts in order to keep our community fresh, interesting, and engaging for its current and future citizens. Finally, our community continues to look forward to ensure a better future.

Like recurring blue ribbons, several red flags also are consistent throughout this year's report. Mostly driven by the slow-to-recover economy and financial weaknesses throughout the public and private sectors, red flag themes include insufficient funding, poverty issues, economic uncertainty, and child abuse and neglect. These concerns are consistently referenced throughout the report and, unfortunately, we feel these are likely to prevail as red flags in the future.

We hope this report is received as well as in previous years and that it continues to help drive the actions of our community and its citizens to make improvements. Once again, we would like to thank the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Junior League of Springfield, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Greene-County Library District, and United Way of the Ozarks for providing resources to bring you this year's report. Without their support, this report would not be possible.

Sincerely,



Jill Reynolds, CFP  
Chair, *Community Focus*  
Steering Committee



Cristina M. Gilstrap, Ph.D.  
Facilitator, *Community Focus*



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## Community Focus 2011

*A Report for Springfield and Greene County*

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### For More Information:

The 2011 *Community Focus* report is a summary of information compiled by many individuals and subcommittees. Additional information, data and sources are available on a website dedicated to this report.

Please visit: [www.SpringfieldCommunityFocus.org](http://www.SpringfieldCommunityFocus.org)

This project was completed with support from the following organizations, whose leaders pledge to use the information in the report to guide their future decision making.

*Community Foundation of the Ozarks*  
*Junior League of Springfield*  
*Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce*  
*Springfield-Greene County Library District*  
*United Way of the Ozarks*

### STEERING COMMITTEE

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# Community FOCUS Community at a Glance

270°

Population		
Area	Population	Population Growth 2000-2010
Springfield City Limits	159,498	5.2%
Greene County	275,174	14.5%
Five-County Metropolitan Springfield Area (MSA) —Greene, Christian, Webster, Polk, and Dallas Counties	436,712	18.6%

Source: USDC, Bureau of the Census, 2010

Age		
Area	Median Age 2000	Median Age 2010
Springfield City Limits	33.5 years	33.2 years
Greene County	35.1 years	35.8 years

Source: USDC, Bureau of the Census, 2000 & 2010

Household		
Household Type	Average Household Size	Average Family Size
Springfield City Limits	2.13	2.81
Greene County	2.31	2.88
Five-County Metropolitan Springfield Area (MSA) —Greene, Christian, Webster, Polk, and Dallas Counties	2.42	2.95

Source: USDC, Bureau of the Census, 2010

## Top 20 Employers in Metropolitan Springfield Area

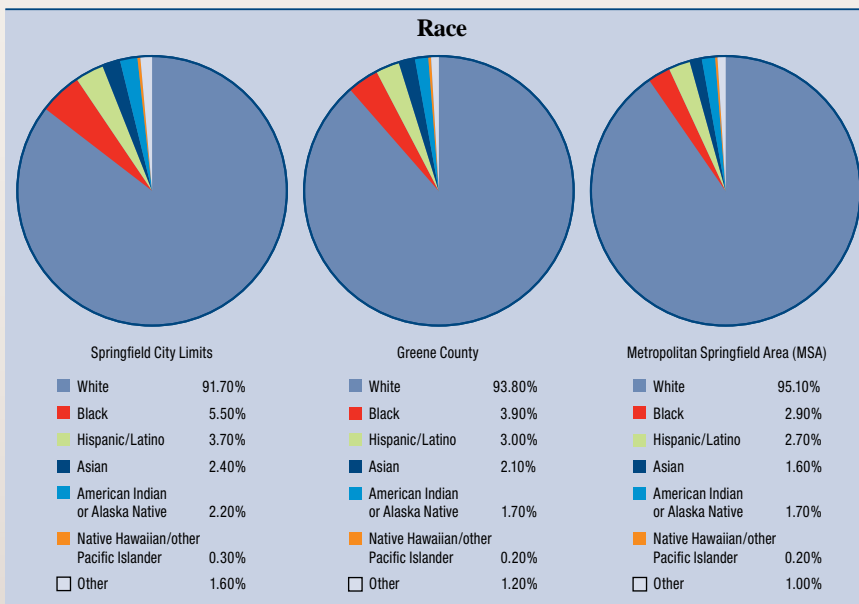
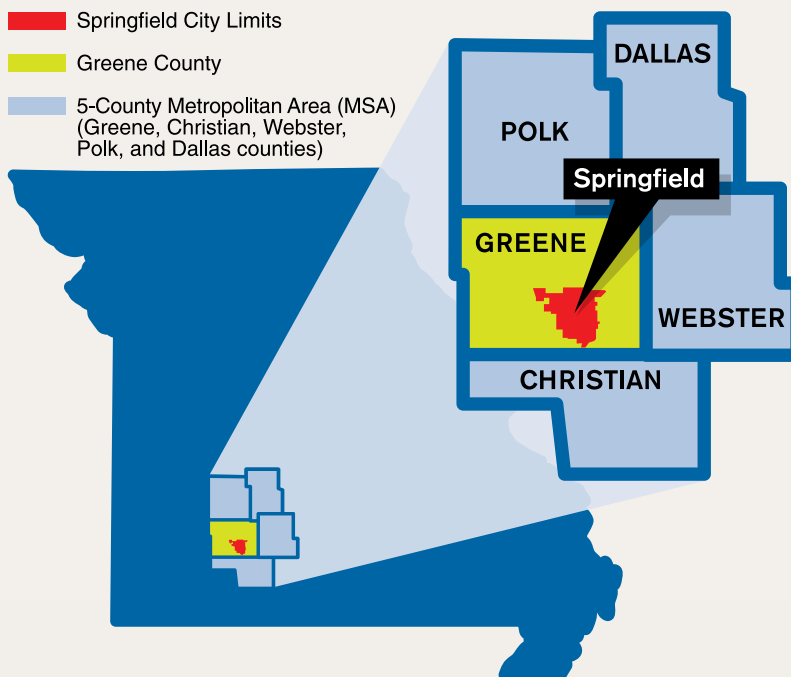
Rank	Organization	Industry
1	St. John's Health System	health care
2	CoxHealth	health care
3	Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.	retail
4	Springfield Public Schools	education
5	Missouri State University	education
6	United States Government	government
7	State of Missouri	government
8	Bass Pro Shops / Tracker Marine (HQ)	retail/manufacturing
9	Citizens Memorial Healthcare	health care
10	City of Springfield	government
11	Chase Card Services	financial
12	O'Reilly Auto Parts (HQ)	retail/distribution
13	City Utilities of Springfield	utility
14	Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway	transportation
15	Kraft Foods Inc.	manufacturing
16	General Council of the Assemblies of God (HQ)	religious
17	SRC Holdings Corporation	manufacturing
18	Ozarks Technical Community College	education
19	Prime Inc. (HQ)	transportation
20	T-Mobile USA, Inc.	telecommunications

Source: Springfield Business Development Corporation, 2011

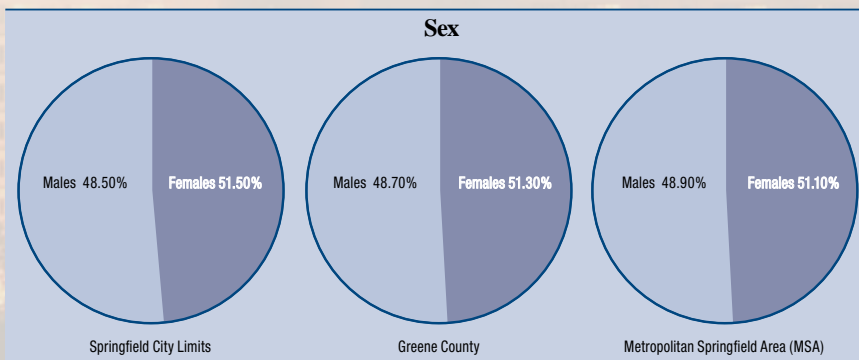
## Universities and Colleges

Rank by Enrollment	Institution
1	Missouri State University
2	Ozarks Technical Community College
3	Drury University
4	Southwest Baptist University – Bolivar
5	Evangel University
6	Central Bible College
7	St. John's College of Nursing and Health Sciences
8	Baptist Bible College
9	Everest College – Springfield
10	Cox College
11	Vatterott College
12	University of Phoenix
13	Assemblies of God Theological Seminary
14	Forest Institute of Psychology
15	Webster University
16	Bryan College

Source: Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, 2010



Source: USDC, Bureau of the Census, 2010



Source: USDC, Bureau of the Census, 2010

# Blue Ribbon and Red Flag Themes

As discussed in the first *Community Focus* report, the goal of this project is to assess the overall conditions that deserve recognition and attention in Springfield and Greene County. During the construction of this report, several areas repeatedly emerged representing consistent strengths (blue ribbons) as well as challenges (red flags) facing our community.

As you read this year's report, you will notice reoccurring themes within the twelve sections. Overall, the following topics emerged as the blue ribbon and red flag themes of the 2011 *Community Focus* report.

## BLUE RIBBON THEMES

### Collaboration

- Entities worked together to maximize resources and reduce duplication efforts
- New partnerships built to work consistently to improve the common good
- Individuals and groups organized to address a single problem together
- Spirit of collaboration used to address big community challenges

### Willingness to Address Issues

- Public policy changed to address common problems
- Various faith-based, education, and philanthropic sectors provided support to address issues
- Community issues continued to be tracked through the *Community Focus* Report

### Innovation

- Springfield-Greene County participated in new community endeavors
- IDEA Commons supported innovative progress
- Innovative arts and educational collaborative programs/partnerships formed to improve quality of life and attract people to our community
- Social capital integrated into community planning
- Private sector resources committed to improve public issues through innovative endeavors

### Looking Towards the Future

- Future initiatives planned and developed to continue to improve our community
- Profit and non-profit organizations collaborated to actively gather community information and reports
- Future community programs driven through citizen efforts

## RED FLAG THEMES

### Insufficient Public Funding

- Recession negatively impacted public funding
- Tax base did not support public infrastructure needs
- Collaboration efforts impacted by federal, state, and local budget reductions
- Need increased as public funding decreased

### Poverty

- All facets of community impacted by poverty
- Growing concern of poverty levels in Springfield and Greene County
- Difficulty impacting increasing cycles of generational poverty versus situational poverty
- Definition of poverty changed with higher levels of working poor than in past
- Unequal access to resources for those in poverty
- Increased concern for acute impact of poverty on children
- Less citizen participation as poverty levels increased

### Economic Uncertainty

- Investment and economic development needed to address issues hindered by economic uncertainty
- Trickle-down effect of national economic uncertainty on our community more than in the past
- Unemployment and reluctance to hire directly impacted by economic uncertainty

### Child Abuse and Neglect

- Despite attention in the past, child abuse and neglect rates continued to increase
- Greene County had the second highest rate of child abuse and neglect in the state
- Progress to address child abuse and neglect slow due to efforts that addressed other red flags facing our community
- Significant impact of child abuse and neglect on personal and community well-being such as education, unemployment, homelessness, and health

## Snapshot of Blue Ribbons, Red Flags, and Emerging Issues by Year

2011	ART AND CULTURE	BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS	CITIZEN PARTICIPATION	COMMUNITY HEALTH	EARLY CHILDHOOD*	EDUCATION
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arts Organizations</li> <li>Facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job Growth and Low Unemployment</li> <li>Recognition for Community Accomplishments</li> <li>Low Cost of Living</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteerism</li> <li>Growth in Non-Profit Sector</li> <li>Vision 20/20 Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Care Resources</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Academic Performance Compared to State Average</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operating Revenues</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fluctuation of Voter Turnout</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to Care</li> <li>Child Abuse and Neglect</li> <li>Communicable Diseases</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher Salaries</li> <li>Budgetary Issues</li> <li>Students Living in Poverty</li> <li>Dropout Rate</li> </ul>
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Efforts</li> <li>Creamery Arts Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steady Job Growth and Low Unemployment</li> <li>Low Cost of Living</li> <li>Diversity of Businesses/Entrepreneurship</li> <li>Bustling and Thriving Downtown</li> <li>Atmosphere of United Collaboration</li> <li>Conscious Effort to Develop Tomorrow's Workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteerism</li> <li>Community Giving</li> <li>Commitment to Address Community Issues</li> <li>Strong Voter Turnout</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Care Resources</li> <li>Springfield-Greene County Health Department</li> <li>Health Education – Allied Health Program</li> <li>Resources for Children and Adolescents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growing Community Awareness and Attention on Early Childhood Needs</li> <li>Mayor's Commission on Children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved Student Achievement Through Teacher Training and Preparation</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operating Revenues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income and Wages Lag Behind Comparison Cities</li> <li>Families in Poverty</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to Care</li> <li>Child Abuse and Neglect</li> <li>Mother Smoking Rates</li> <li>Communicable Disease</li> <li>State Budget Cuts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effects of Poverty on Children</li> <li>Childcare Availability and Cost</li> <li>Kindergarten Readiness</li> <li>Child Abuse and Neglect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher Salaries</li> <li>Budgetary Issues</li> <li>Dropout Rate</li> </ul>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns Regarding Aging Population</li> </ul>		
2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Efforts</li> <li>Facilities</li> <li>Quality and Attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job Growth and Low Unemployment</li> <li>Cost of Living</li> <li>Economic Diversity</li> <li>Downtown Revitalization</li> <li>Atmosphere of Collaboration</li> <li>Development of Tomorrow's Workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making a Difference through Resources and Volunteerism</li> <li>Involved Community</li> <li>Concern for Future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allied Health Education and Research</li> <li>Public Health Focus</li> <li>Economic Impact of Health Care</li> <li>Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isabel's House Crisis Nursery</li> <li>Community Education Using Five Promises</li> <li>Early Childhood Centers</li> <li>State-Wide Early Childhood Coordinating Board</li> <li>Community Awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Academic Performance Compared to State Average</li> <li>Community Collaboration</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human Resources</li> <li>Funding</li> <li>Regional Outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income and Wages</li> <li>Families in Poverty</li> <li>Minimal Ethnic Diversity</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to Care</li> <li>Child Abuse and Neglect</li> <li>Health Care Policy Priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effects of Poverty on Children</li> <li>Childcare Cost</li> <li>School Readiness/Early Literacy</li> <li>Child Abuse and Neglect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher Salaries</li> <li>Budgetary Issues</li> <li>Dropout Rate</li> <li>Students Living in Poverty</li> </ul>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obesity and Other Lifestyle Choices</li> <li>Preparedness/Pandemic Training</li> <li>Medical Home</li> </ul>		
2009				**SPECIAL EDITION OF COMMUNITY FOCUS REPORT		
				**SPECIAL EDITION OF COMMUNITY FOCUS REPORT		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audience Development</li> <li>Sustainable Funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waning Public Support for Economic Development</li> <li>Emerging Doughnut Effect</li> <li>Stalled Job Growth and Increasing Unemployment</li> <li>Future Downtown Development</li> <li>Funding Challenges for Developing Tomorrow's Workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trust in Institutions and Government</li> <li>Sense of Alienation</li> <li>Voter Turnout</li> <li>Means to Mobilize Community Action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childhood Obesity</li> <li>Senior Population</li> <li>Workforce Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe Housing</li> <li>Kindergarten Readiness and Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Childhood Education</li> <li>College Attendance After High School Graduation</li> <li>Shifting of Funding Responsibilities to Local Communities</li> </ul>
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Efforts</li> <li>Emerging Arts Organizations</li> <li>Tracking Economic and Educational Impact of Arts and Culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low Cost of Living</li> <li>Downtown Redevelopment</li> <li>Higher Education Creates Framework for Economic Growth</li> <li>Community Engagement on Tough Issues</li> <li>Workforce Development</li> <li>Economic Diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteerism</li> <li>Charitable Giving</li> <li>Strategies to Increase Citizen Involvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health Care Infrastructure</li> <li>Smokefree Air Act of 2011</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration</li> <li>Growing Support from Public Officials</li> <li>Continued Response to Red Flags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease in Springfield Public Schools' Dropout Rate</li> <li>Community Collaboration</li> <li>College Attendance After High School Graduation</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audience Development</li> <li>Sustainable Funding</li> <li>Organizational Capacity Building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Income and Wages</li> <li>Effect of Poverty on Economic Development</li> <li>Public Sector Declining Budgets</li> <li>Fragile Support for Economic Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voter Turnout</li> <li>Stratification of Participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicable Diseases</li> <li>Chronic Disease Risk Factors</li> <li>Impact on Aging Population</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher Salaries</li> <li>Remediation of First-Time Freshmen</li> <li>Achievement Gap</li> <li>Funding Volatility and the Shifting of Funding Responsibility</li> </ul>

# Blue Ribbons Red Flags Emerging Issues

	HOUSING*	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY	RECREATION, SPORTS AND LEISURE	TRANSPORTATION
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air Quality</li> <li>Community Efforts to Promote Environmental Stewardship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Safety Personnel</li> <li>Public Safety Priority by City Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional/Collegiate Teams</li> <li>Springfield-Greene County Park System</li> <li>Recreation and Leisure Facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Transportation</li> <li>Paratransit Services for the Disabled</li> <li>Respect Red Program</li> <li>Springfield-Branson Regional Airport</li> <li>Roadway Improvements</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Quality</li> <li>Hazardous Waste Disposal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drug Arrests for Those Under 18 Years of Age</li> <li>High Rate of Domestic Violence</li> <li>Increase in Property Crimes</li> <li>Growing Methamphetamine Production and Use</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing Initiatives</li> <li>Homeless Services</li> <li>Collaborative Efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactive Efforts to Address Challenges</li> <li>Air Quality</li> <li>Water Quality</li> <li>Solid Waste Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Safety Personnel</li> <li>Decrease in DWIs and Crimes Against Persons</li> <li>Law Requiring Cold and Allergy Medicines Moved to Pharmacy Counters</li> <li>Juvenile Offenses Decline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks, Open Space and Greenways</li> <li>Springfield-Greene County Park System</li> <li>Springfield Cardinals</li> <li>Springfield-Greene County Library District</li> <li>Increase in Bicycle Trails and Lanes</li> <li>School Parks Are Reaching Communities Program (SPARC)</li> <li>Recreation and Leisure Activities and Facilities</li> <li>Caves</li> <li>Waterways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Transportation</li> <li>Paratransit Services for the Disabled</li> <li>Roadways and Commute Time</li> <li>Road Safety</li> <li>Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)</li> <li>Pedestrian-Friendly Changes</li> <li>Bicycles as Transportation Improvements</li> <li>Springfield-Branson Regional Airport</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of Funding for Affordable Housing Needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stormwater Management Funding</li> <li>Solid Waste Management Funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic Violence</li> <li>Methamphetamine Production</li> <li>Alcohol-Related Accidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Securing Green Space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springfield Public School Bus System</li> <li>Paratransit Services for Elderly</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Affordable Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactive Efforts to Promote Clean and Healthy Environment</li> <li>Water Quality</li> <li>Green Building</li> <li>Initiatives to Access Environment and Health Issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Mobilization</li> <li>9-1-1 Sales Tax</li> <li>Crime Lab Grant</li> <li>Juvenile Offenses Decline</li> <li>Ice Storm Response</li> <li>Police Outreach</li> <li>Methamphetamine Lab Reduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parks, Open Space and Greenways</li> <li>Partnerships</li> <li>School Parks Are Reaching Communities Program (SPARC)</li> <li>Professional/Collegiate Teams</li> <li>Recreation and Leisure Activities and Facilities</li> <li>Caves</li> <li>Waterways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Transportation</li> <li>Paratransit Services for the Disabled</li> <li>Roadways and Commute Time</li> <li>Road Safety</li> <li>Bicycles as Transportation</li> <li>Pedestrian Transportation</li> <li>Springfield-Branson National Airport Improvements</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Housing Office and Trust Fund</li> <li>Foreclosures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stormwater Management Funding</li> <li>Solid Waste Management Funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Methamphetamine Use</li> <li>Rising Crime Rates</li> <li>Police Response Time</li> <li>Police Staffing</li> <li>Inadequate Jail Space</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paratransit Services for Elderly</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Energy Conservation Efforts</li> <li>Ethanol Plants</li> <li>Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)</li> <li>Water Quantity</li> <li>Air Quality</li> </ul>			
			**SPECIAL EDITION OF COMMUNITY FOCUS REPORT		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vacancy Rates Due to Foreclosures</li> <li>Homeless Children and Adolescents</li> <li>Shrinking Financial Resources to Address Homelessness and Housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Community Sustainability Plan</li> <li>Air Quality</li> <li>The Built Environment</li> <li>Increase Participation in Recycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shortage of Human and Financial Resources</li> <li>Inadequate Individual Disaster Preparedness</li> <li>Increase in Property Crimes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of Economic Conditions on Agencies and Resources</li> <li>Obesity</li> <li>Conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation Funding Shortfalls</li> <li>Increasing Bicycle and Pedestrian Accidents</li> <li>Lack of Transit Capacity</li> <li>Need for a Regional Transit System</li> <li>Sustainable Transportation Network</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative Efforts to Address Homelessness and Housing</li> <li>Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) Impact on Rehabilitation Efforts</li> <li>Availability of New Homelessness One Door Service</li> <li>Availability of Foreclosure Prevention Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint City/County Water Protection through the Parks/Waterways Sales Tax</li> <li>Funding for Solid Waste Programs</li> <li>Air Pollution Partnerships</li> <li>Regional Groundwater/Drinking Water Supplies</li> <li>Green Building Policy</li> <li>Multiple Use of Open/Green Space</li> <li>Brownfields</li> <li>Sustainability Plan for the City of Springfield</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addressing the Police/Fire Pension Plan</li> <li>Collaborative Efforts to Address Public Safety</li> <li>Development of Emergency Resources</li> <li>Greene County DWI and Drug Courts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springfield-Greene County Library Activity</li> <li>Caves</li> <li>Community Olympic Development Program</li> <li>Dan Kinney Park and Miracle Field</li> <li>Dickerson Park Zoo</li> <li>Botanical Center at Nathaniel Greene/Close Memorial Park</li> <li>Adopt-An-Urban Garden Program (AUGP)</li> <li>Professional/Collegiate Teams</li> <li>Trails and Greenways</li> <li>Waterways</li> <li>Parks and Open Space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Transportation</li> <li>Roadway Traffic</li> <li>Safety</li> <li>Springfield-Branson National Airport</li> <li>Sustainable Transportation Network</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shrinking Financial Resources to Address Homelessness and Housing</li> <li>Homeless Children and Adolescents</li> <li>Foreclosures</li> <li>Lack of Adequate Emergency Shelters</li> <li>Lack of a Centralized Resource Center/Data Collection Point to Address Housing Issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stormwater Management Funding</li> <li>Wastewater Infrastructure Funding</li> <li>Air Quality Awareness</li> <li>Loss of Local Control/Authority</li> <li>Regional Water Supply</li> <li>Availability of Green Space/Open Space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rising Crime Rates</li> <li>Inadequate Jail Space</li> <li>Public Safety Staffing</li> <li>Illegal Drug Use</li> <li>Alcohol-Related Accidents</li> <li>High Rate of Domestic Violence</li> <li>Inadequate Community/Individual Disaster Preparedness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obesity</li> <li>Securing Green Space and Conservation</li> <li>Economic Conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation Funding Shortfall</li> <li>Paratransit Service and Coordination</li> <li>Need for a Regional Transit System</li> <li>Funding Shortfall for All Public School Busing</li> </ul>

\*Note: Early Childhood and Housing was not added to the report until 2005

\*\*2009 was a special edition of the report with no blue ribbons or red flags identified



Springfield continues to thrive as a creative community. It has a rich cultural life and deep cultural roots. Boasting hundreds of arts and cultural attractions from museums and live theatres to galleries and movie screens, the Springfield area continues to foster accessibility to arts and cultural activities for all residents and visitors. The arts in Springfield also have become a national template of success for effective collaboration. With public funding for arts and culture on a decline locally and nationally, but a noticeable increase and interest in arts and culture offerings, organizations have found ways to work together and look for unique funding opportunities. Organizations and artists also have taken steps to increase awareness regarding the impact of their services in other sectors in the community such as education, economic development, quality of life, civic engagement, and poverty.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Collaborative Efforts

Collaboration continues to be a blue ribbon for Springfield and Greene County arts and cultural organizations since the 2005 *Community Focus* report. The establishment of the Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative (APSI) by the Community Foundation of the Ozarks in 2009 has led to numerous successful collaborative projects including:

- **2010** - Springfield being named the second community in the nation by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to work on a long-range plan for arts education with area arts organizations and the Springfield Public School District;
- **2010** - Development of the Cultural Investment Fund to help cover the down-payment costs associated with booking major performers, shows, or exhibits; and
- **2010-2011** – Continued success of “The 10 Weeks Festival” held each spring to highlight Springfield’s cultural offerings under one brand and raise money for arts in education and basic needs for children in Springfield Public Schools through the Care to Learn Fund.



*Flights of Fancy at Springfield-Branson National Airport, May 2010.*

IDEA Commons, is another product of community collaboration, bringing together corporations, the University, lofts, non-profits,

For the first time in the nation, three internationally renowned watercolor exhibits were on display in summer 2011 in partnership with the Springfield Art Museum, Springfield Regional Arts Council (SRAC), Missouri State University’s Brick City Gallery, and the Springfield-Branson National Airport’s Sky Gallery.

Missouri State University’s urban research park, the

“The arts give us a new and different perspective on the world. Things are seen in full color instead of black and white.”

**Dr. Carl Price**, Immediate Past President,  
Springfield Regional Arts Council



retail space, and promoting arts and culture as an important component of business and innovation.

The establishment of the Springfield Theatre Alliance has resulted in a new publication of live theatres in Springfield and annual media announcements of the theatre seasons. Additionally, the partnership with the Downtown Springfield Association on a program called D-Tix offers limited day-of performance tickets to plays and musicals at half the box office price.

The SRAC, Urban Districts Alliance, and Springfield-Greene County Park Board provide cohesive information on arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities with a bi-annual printed publication as well as online at [springfieldarts.org](http://springfieldarts.org) and [itsalldowntown.com](http://itsalldowntown.com).

A red flag identified in the 2007 *Community Focus* report, shared human resources has continued to be a consistent way of cutting overhead costs for arts and culture organizations. The SRAC continues to share its finance director to serve as the fiscal agent for the following groups: Missouri Film Alliance of Springfield, First Friday Art Walk, Fresh Gallery, and the Missouri Literary Festival, among others. Shared resources also are available for arts organizations via The Creamery Arts Center, which was listed as a blue ribbon in the 2005 *Community Focus* report.

### Emerging Arts Organizations

With the presence of quality fine arts, music, theatre, and communication departments available at local universities, an increase in artists, new organizations, initiatives, and festivals interested in fostering local creative culture have emerged.

- Canvas
- Eclectic Endeavors
- LemonDrop
- Men’s Chorus of the Ozarks
- Missouri State University Gerontology Exhibition
- Moxie Cinema (established as a non-profit in 2010)
- Springfield Shakespeare Project
- TAG Magazine

### Tracking Economic and Educational Impact of Arts and Culture

Arts and culture organizations have been in need of accurate data that provides detail about the creative make-up of their city in terms of economic planning and development to make a strong





Art in the Park 2010, photo by Babs Bakie

Arts and Culture Snapshot				
	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10
Arts and Cultural Organizations	43	50	56	64
Museums	3	7	9	9
Local Arts Festivals and Events**	12	19	56	43

\*\*Source: Springfield Regional Arts Council. (Note: 2009-2010 decreases in festivals/events most likely due to lack of funding and resources or combining of events to maximize benefits and attendance)

case for investing in arts and culture. The SRAC has taken strides, in partnership with the Missouri Arts Council and Americans for the Arts, to track more closely and consistently the impact of area artists and arts and cultural organizations. For 2009 and 2010, the SRAC has gathered data on attendance numbers, consumer spending, and employment.

Economic Impact of the Arts, Springfield, MO 2009 and 2010		
	2009	2010
Total Economic Impact (spending by organization and audiences, excluding admission)	\$11,448,122.00	\$16,323,833.00
Total Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs (FTE describes the total amount of labor employed)	346	431
Total Local and State Government Revenue Funds Generated (Revenue to local and state government from taxes, i.e. income, property or sales) as well as funds from license, utility, and filing fees.	\$1,224,903.00	\$2,054,028.00

Americans for the Arts Arts and Economic Prosperity Calculator

The SRAC, in partnership with the Lighthouse Child & Family Development Center, Missouri State University's Sociology Department, and Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation's (OACAC) Head Start, finished the first local study on the impact of arts in early childhood development. The results of the assessment suggested that children who participated in the



SRAC's Mini Monet program

arts education program showed improvement in fine motor skills, expressing ideas through language, cumulative development, and an appreciation of their own and others' artwork.

These studies help reveal the strong inter-relationships between arts and culture and economic development, education, quality of life, and minimizing poverty. Arts and culture also has been listed as

a key component in attracting and retaining young professionals. According to the recent findings in the Next Cities™ Dashboard Report commissioned by the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Springfield was ranked 17th out of 49 cities in the Mighty Micros category of the Next Cities™ List. Mighty Micros have city populations between 100,000 and 200,000 people. Next Cities™ are places with the assets and amenities that attract and keep a young educated workforce, which include bustling city centers and a vibrant art and music scene.

## RED FLAGS

### Audience Development\*

With a multitude of social networking options, Internet resources, and multiple cable and radio stations, the need for more effective marketing and tracking audience demographics is evident for arts and cultural organizations. Organizations are in search of new and more effective ways of cross-promoting and marketing their programs and events as well as finding the funds to do so. Specific ideas to combat this red flag are being discussed and have been identified in the new community strategic planning process.

Building an appreciation and understanding for arts and culture in area youth continues to be a challenge. Although 50 percent of arts and culture organizations reported offering free educational outreach to local and rural communities and schools during the SRAC's 2010 assessment, there needs to be a stronger emphasis on coordinating those efforts and funding regional outreach, a red flag in previous *Community Focus* reports. Current plans are underway for such coordination through the Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative (APSI), Springfield Public Schools, and the Springfield Regional Arts Council.

### Sustainable Funding\*

Despite the healthy attendance at artistic events and a positive increase in artists and organizations, the current economic climate and ever-changing cultural trends require concentration on sustainable funding for arts and cultural institutions. With only 23 percent of local arts and cultural organizations having an endowment, a collaborative development campaign is in process under the leadership of the SRAC. Also, the Community Foundation's Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative (APSI) continues to provide planned giving strategies through the newly established legacy society, Stand Up for the Arts.

A future public funding source for supporting arts and cultural organizations is also being explored through the community strategic planning process. Research conducted by the Arts, Culture and Tourism committee for the strategic planning process showed that 100 percent of the benchmark cities found in the Next Cities™ report that provided data had a local public funding model for arts and culture. This report listed Springfield as a second-tier city, which placed it in the top 50-74 percent range, for after-hours opportunities for young professionals.

### Organizational Capacity Building

There is a new focus on quality and consistent leadership amongst area arts and cultural organizations. It is difficult for small or developing arts organizations to find quality members for their operating Boards of Directors, which are necessary if organizations are to grow. Also, quality but inexpensive professional development opportunities, including management skills, grant writing, and effective fundraising tools need to be more available for arts and culture administrators.

It is also difficult for emerging and established professional artists, performers, and writers to make a full-time career in Springfield. Although university and college teaching opportunities do allow artists to support themselves while pursuing their art forms, on-going efforts need to be made to find paying jobs for the area's artists.

\* Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report

# Community FOCUS

## Business and Economic Conditions

Since 2008, the nation's economy has been in turmoil due to the worst recession in decades. As the nation slowly moves beyond the recession, what will the emerging economy look like? Our region must be prepared to take advantage of new economic conditions. Many of our region's employers are realigning their operations and the workforce must have the skills necessary to perform the jobs of the future. While the region has lost long-time employers and the significant number of traditional manufacturing jobs they provided, such as Solo Cup, the region's manufacturing industry has remained innovative and competitive by doing more with fewer employees. Additionally, these jobs are being replaced by employers new to the market, such as Expedia, with service-oriented positions requiring different skill sets and training. In conjunction with this realignment, attracting and retaining young talent through professional opportunities and quality-of-life amenities will be more important than ever.

### Blue Ribbons

#### Higher Education Creates Framework for Economic Growth

The area's higher-education institutions have a notable impact on our future economic growth. Collectively, they are making continual on-campus investments to meet the growing needs required by record enrollments. Simultaneously, these educational institutions also play an important role in revitalizing and stabilizing the community that extends beyond the campus. Examples of this include the ongoing development of Missouri State's IDEA Commons, the continued expansion of Ozarks Technical Community College, and Drury University's commitment to both the university campus and Commercial Street.

The ability to leverage higher-education programs and partnerships that focus on entrepreneurship and innovation is a key component for the region's continued prosperity. In addition to IDEA Commons, numerous programs and partnerships also exist where there is a fusion between business and education, including the Edward Jones Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Plaster Center for Free Enterprise and Business Development, the Springfield Angel Network, and the Entrepreneur Exchange. Not only does the investment in these types of programs set the stage for high-tech, high-wage job growth, but it also provides urban-like opportunities for talented young professionals who might otherwise seek to live elsewhere. However, it is important to note that while this has been identified as a blue ribbon, continued growth and progress in this area is in jeopardy due to significant funding limitations at the state and federal levels.

#### Downtown Redevelopment\*

Even during an economic downturn, Springfield's urban core has experienced significant redevelopment, continuing to bring excitement, new amenities, increased activity and investment to downtown Springfield. Major projects include Bistro Market, renovation of Park Central Square, a variety of new restaurants, and sidewalk improvements to increase the walkability of downtown. The Bistro Market, in particular, adds a major component of urban living to Springfield's center city, a grocery store, making daily life more convenient and encouraging residential growth. Recent cultural, shopping, dining, and quality-of-life improvements continue to characterize downtown redevelopment. These efforts will continue to bring vibrancy downtown to encourage downtown living and help address an emerging doughnut effect\*.

"We must strengthen our local economy and focus on job creation to ensure Springfield quickly climbs out of the economic recession. At the same time, we must challenge ourselves to address our lack of cultural diversity and our high levels of poverty to improve our long-term economic prosperity."

Jerry Harmison, 2011 Chairman of the Board,  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

#### Low Cost of Living

At 12 percent below the national average, Springfield's low cost of living means that a person's income goes further here than in other cities to purchase food, housing, utilities, transportation, healthcare, and other elements of life's necessities. In all of these areas, Springfield outperforms the nation and most other metropolitan areas as being an affordable community in which to live and do business. Especially in housing and utilities, at 23.4 percent and 16.7 percent, respectively, below the national average, Springfield's low cost of living encourages continued economic growth. In particular, some of the lowest utility rates in the nation make Springfield's business climate more competitive, bringing new jobs and investment to the community.

#### Community Engagement on Tough Issues

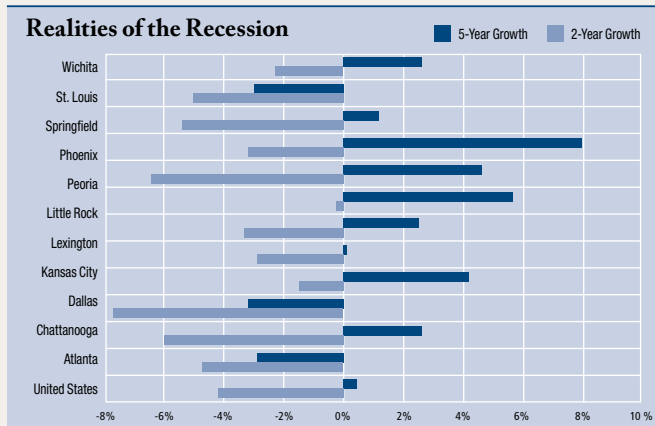
Even strong and growing communities have problems, but Springfield does not shy away from addressing them. Over the last several years, the community identified key areas for improvement to ensure Springfield's long-term economic health, which include a need for more civility in public discourse, a lack of cultural and ethnic diversity\*, systemic poverty, and a call for increased civic engagement on community issues. While there may not be short-term answers to these problems, community leaders have brought them to the forefront, and they are now part of the conversation and strategy for improving the community's economic health and quality of life. These issues directly affect Springfield's competitiveness in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy. Elevating these topics has been an important first step in addressing these challenges.

#### Workforce Development

As a regional center for higher education and workforce training, the Springfield area is supported by the strength of numerous academic institutions. Over the last several years, every college and university experienced record enrollment, with a combined student population of nearly 50,000. Likewise, Springfield R-12 is the largest accredited school district in the state of Missouri, with nearly 25,000 students. In 2009, Springfield Public School students scored an average 22.9 on the ACT, more than a point higher than Missouri's average of 21.6 and nearly 2 points higher than the United States' average. Additionally, stronger and more aligned education and workforce training systems are the focus of a newly established P-20 Council (see Education section for more information). This will allow the regional workforce systems to retool to create many learning pathways to meet the needs of a non-traditional workforce seeking more relevant skills to be competitive, and establishing life-long learning opportunities for all ages. Because of the educated workforce, Springfield can compete in a dynamic, global economy. The large number of students attending academic institutions today, acquiring knowledge, and improving their skills will provide Springfield with a workforce ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

## Economic Diversity

Springfield's economy comprises a broad mix of businesses and industries, and no one particular sector dominates. This economic diversity has helped insulate Springfield from the harshest and most long-term effects of the recession that were felt in areas solely dependent on one or two industries. Perhaps more importantly, Springfield's broad economic base positions the community well to adapt to a changing economy. Springfield attracts a variety of successful industries due to strategic advantages such as its central location in the United States, higher-education availability, low utility rates, and quality workforce.



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics series of Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2004, 2007, 2009

The effects of what has been referred to as the Great Recession of 2008 have had a profound impact on our country and our region. Historically, the Springfield region has been fairly insulated from negative economic downturn, but the extreme nature of the 2008 recession affected our local economy as well. Unlike previous recessions, local unemployment and job loss numbers did match national trends for a period of several months. But the resiliency of the area is still strong and this can be seen in the way the regional economy has begun to bounce back while national numbers lag behind.

## Red Flags

### Public Sector Declining Budgets

Even as the broader economy slowly improves, the public sector faces challenges in the years ahead. In many cases, federal stimulus funding has been exhausted and tax revenues are still significantly down, potentially forcing deep budget cuts in critical areas. Particularly in K-12 and higher education, significant cuts have already been made\*. Further cuts have the potential to have a lasting impact on the education system, its students, and the future workforce. Beyond education, other critical areas that may be negatively affected include transportation infrastructure and public safety – all vital components for establishing a business climate conducive to job growth.

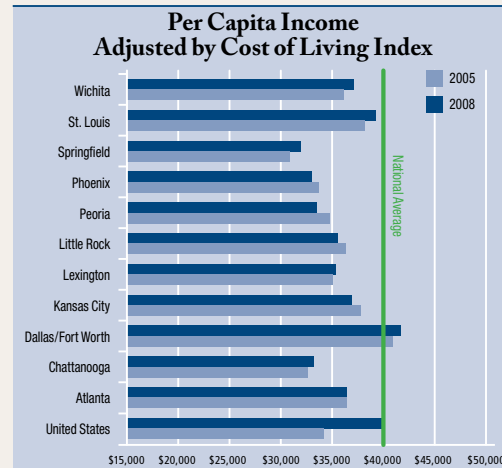
### Fragile Support for Economic Development\*

With the continued strain on public sector budgets, increased public concern exists regarding local government's role as a partner in economic development. As a result, local and state government officials have a limited ability and in some cases lack the willingness to participate in economic development. The need exists to further educate elected officials and citizens alike on how support for economic development lends itself to long-term regional economic prosperity through job creation. These investments go beyond industrial parks and include everything

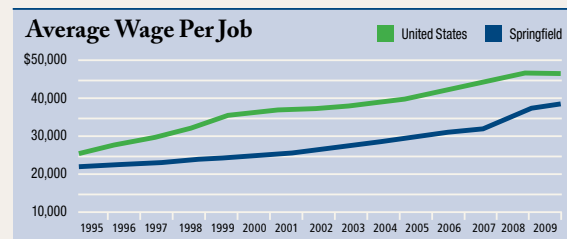
from school sidewalks to transportation infrastructure to urban research parks. Establishing a climate supportive of economic development is imperative for continued business investment.

## Income and Wages

Since identified in the 2005 *Community Focus* report, per capita income levels and average wage rates in the Springfield region have consistently fallen below the national average. This category has shown continued growth, yet Springfield still lags behind, even after adjusting for cost-of-living differences. However, some peer communities actually have lost ground in recent years due to the effects of the recession while others, including Springfield, have seen modest increases in per capita income.



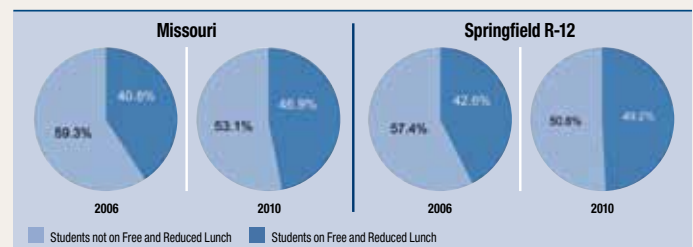
Sources: Bureau of Economic Analysis and Council for Community & Economic Research



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

## Effect of Poverty on Economic Development

The poverty levels in Springfield continue to grow and that trend has been exacerbated by the ongoing economic downturn over the last two years. Today, one of every two single mothers in the Springfield region is living in poverty and nearly 50 percent of children in the Springfield R-12 School District qualify for a free or reduced lunch. The rising levels of families in poverty bring tremendous societal challenges including increased crime, family violence, drug and alcohol abuse, financial instability, and reduced educational attainment. A continued long-term focus and community collaboration to create systemic change is vital for addressing this issue.



Source: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

\* Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 *Community Focus* Report



"Local government and public entities work best when their citizens are knowledgeable and involved. When our leaders have informed and respectful input from citizens, they can make better decisions impacting the community."

Ronald Ponds, Community Volunteer

The 2009 *Community Focus* report expressed concerns, based on a 2008 survey examining social capital in Springfield, about a general sense of alienation\* and mistrust in institutions\*, particularly governmental institutions. This general sense of alienation shows up in such things as low voter turnout and difficulty mobilizing citizens to action with traditional mass media, such as the newspaper. Results of the study suggested that area citizens trust those who are similar to them, but have few connections that allow them to bridge different groups of people. Several indicators have improved since the last *Community Focus* report and a number of creative approaches are being used to enhance citizen participation and promote bridging between groups.

The 2010 Ozarks Regional Social Capital Study capital report reveals some improvement in several areas. Compared to the original 2008 report, the current report indicates that citizens are more trusting of others (43 percent to 55 percent), believe others are fair (59 percent to 68 percent), and others are helpful (59 percent to 66 percent). Trust in local police and local news media rose substantially (86 percent to 91 percent and 66 percent to 76 percent, respectively), as did trust in local government (36 percent to 42 percent). Trust in the national government, however, fell slightly, by two percentage points. Improvements also were observed in the degree to which people feel alienated from local leaders and believe they can make a difference in their communities. It should be noted that trust is highly dependent on education and income; individuals with more education and higher incomes tend to be more trusting in institutions, including government.

## Blue Ribbons

### Strategies to Increase Citizen Involvement

A number of initiatives have helped increase citizen participation and provide the means to mobilize community action\* at the grassroots level. First, the City of Springfield, under the leadership of the city manager, embarked on a strategic planning process to envision what the city might look like 20 years from now. This process involved numerous community groups, organizations and individuals who, for more than a year, examined 13 areas of the community including such things as arts, culture and tourism, early childhood education, and transportation. Each of these areas influences a city's quality of life. More than 234 citizen volunteers, serving on 13 planning committees and the Coordinating Committee, contributed more than 3,600 volunteer hours (as of November 2010) to this process. In addition to the group meetings held throughout the city, citizens were invited to provide their feedback electronically. This substantial involvement of area citizens likely contributed to the perception that one's individual voice could be heard.

Second, the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce embarked on a diversity initiative, in part to increase Springfield's competitiveness with respect to businesses seeking to locate or relocate to the area. The area's lack of diversity and entrenched culture of poverty have been areas of concern based on an analysis done by an independent economic development consulting firm.

Recently the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, joined by other major entities in the area, has spearheaded a concerted effort to be a more welcoming community by encouraging participation in public life by diverse members of the community, and raising awareness of issues related to cultural and ethnic diversity. In addition, grassroots organizations, such as Minorities in Business, have mobilized members of the minority community to increase access to and participation in civic life.

Third, funding is currently being sought to implement a program called Study Circles, spearheaded by the Mayor and a faculty member from Missouri State University, during the next year. Study Circles involve ways in which a community's citizens can study local problems and work together to solve them. This local community mobilization effort has been implemented successfully in several communities. Once funding is obtained, facilitators from Everyday Democracy.org will help train local citizens to create and implement their own Study Circles to address issues of poverty. Study Circles provide additional ways to increase citizen participation locally and will help members of the community form bridges among groups within the community.

### Volunteerism

Volunteerism again receives a blue ribbon, with the number of volunteer hours holding steady or increasing since the 2009 *Community Focus* report. Area residents consistently give their time, expertise, and resources to help their fellow citizens, which has been particularly important during the recent economic downturn in the national and local economies. The United Way's Day of Caring annually provides thousands of hours of labor to help a variety of non-profit service organizations. University students have been essential to the area's volunteer efforts, with many local university students participating in service learning and alternative spring break programs to benefit local residents.



A United Way Day of Caring volunteer reads to children at a daycare facility.



High school students participate in a project to help Greene County senior citizens.

**Citizen Participation Volunteer Chart, 2006-2010**

Organization Name	Volunteers			Vol. Hours		
	2006	2008	2010	2006	2008	2010
St. John's Hospital	682	675	850	147,695	141,580	170,000*
CoxHealth	1,981	1,319	1,034	141,250	116,345	135,893
United Way of the Ozarks	5,482	3,004	3,315	35,395	18,024	19,890
Community Partnership of the Ozarks	7,064	10,447	6,617	26,590	40,428	37,818
Junior League of Springfield	190	235	212	19,000	29,164	30,000*
Springfield/Greene County Library			222	5,115	13,000	17,390
Springfield Conservation Nature Center		400	400	16,385	15,814	13,783
League of Women Voters of SW MO				1,645	2,534	2,500*
Retired Senior Volunteer Program of the Council of Churches of the Ozarks		1,499	1,623	247,740	190,596	181,833
Drury University				1,725	7,563	20,000*
Evangel University				10,780	9,663	7,905
Missouri State University				114,468	171,018	122,822

Source: Data Provided by Listed Organizations (\*estimated hours)

## Charitable Giving

The Ozarks, along with the rest of the country, has been rocked by the economic downturn of the last two years. Smaller non-profit organizations have been particularly hard hit and many struggle to survive. Despite this, charitable giving to organizations like the United Way of the Ozarks has held steady. Contributions to the Community Foundation of the Ozarks (CFO) reached all-time highs during the last two-year period. The CFO's Grantmakers' Challenge for Children concluded its five-year effort in 2010. Through a number of partnering organizations and individuals, the initiative contributed more than \$22 million locally to address issues related to child poverty. Since its inception in 1973, the CFO has made more than \$100 million in grants and distributions on behalf of its donors and partners, which has significantly helped buffer economic challenges for local non-profit organizations.

**CFO Grants and Distributions (in millions of dollars)**

2006	4.90
2007	7.88
2008	8.37
2009	13.26
2010	15.97

Source: Community Foundation of the Ozarks

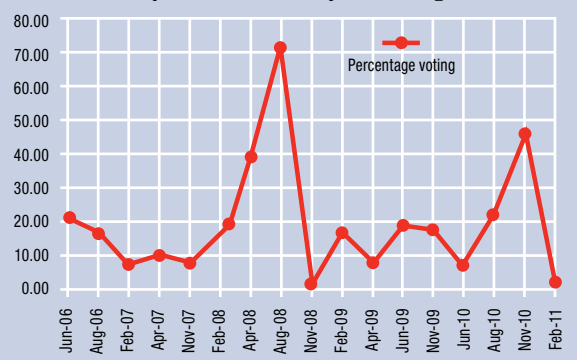
## Red Flags

### Voter Turnout

Voter turnout in elections continues to be a concern, with the percent of eligible voters who actually voted ranging from a low of 2.57 percent in February 2011 to a high of 71.05 percent in the presidential election of November 2008. Voting in the Ozarks tends to be issue-driven. For example, the 2008 presidential election energized the voting population, particularly younger voters, but participation in other elections

has been much lighter. The low turnout in February 2011 was affected by a heavy snowfall on Election Day that caused the election to be postponed for two weeks. Even so, voter participation is lower than is desirable.

**Greene County Voter Turnout by Percentage 2006 - 2011**



Source: Greene County Clerk



Female Leaders in Philanthropy (FLiP) volunteers work at the Suit Yourself Boutique.

Soldiers from Fort Leonard Wood work on a Greene County senior's home.

Some 1,800 volunteers participated in the 2010 United Way's Day of Caring 2010, which kicks off with an annual breakfast.

## Stratification of Participation

It was noted earlier that an individual's degree of trust is related to income and education. This is true as well regarding the degree of participation in local initiatives. Individuals with more education, higher income levels, and who live in south Springfield are more likely to participate in such efforts as the City's strategic-planning initiative. For example, people who did not finish high school are almost twice as likely not to have volunteered at any time during the past 12 months compared with college graduates (35 percent to 18 percent). Twenty-seven percent of people with a college degree had served as an officer or on a committee of a local club or organization in the past 12 months, but only 17 percent of those with less than a high school degree had exercised leadership in those ways.

This stratification of participation is of great concern because it suggests that those individuals who feel most alienated are exactly those who are less likely to be civically involved. It is critical, therefore, that we continue to seek new and creative ways - such as the Study Circles described earlier - of involving all citizens when addressing local issues.

\*Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report



It has been said that health is the absence of disease. Although that may be true in some cases, health is so much more. Health is reaching the optimal state of a person's potential both in physical ability and in mental and cognitive capacity. The impact of health on a community can either propel it to its full potential, play a role in stagnation, or weigh on the community by burdening its progress. As we look to build and rebuild our community, it is vital that we commit to placing health and well being as high priorities in our actions and endeavors.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Health Care Infrastructure

A variety of health care resources abound in our community and offer health services to people both within and outside the Springfield-Greene County borders. As mentioned in past *Community Focus* reports, health care resources continue to be a pillar in our community. The city of Springfield:

- Boasts two health care providers, St. John's Health System and CoxHealth, which are consistently ranked among the "Top 100 Integrated Health Care Networks" in the country.
- Offers an ever-growing federally qualified health facility at Jordan Valley Community Health Center (JVCHC).
- Hosts Ozarks Community Hospital with a successful mission of serving the underinsured and the uninsured.
- Serves as home to The Kitchen Clinic serving patients based on low-income status.
- Offers a strong mental health provider in Burrell Behavioral Health with a commitment to helping people with mental health needs since 1977.
- Enjoys a unique partnership with the Forest Institute, which has a mission of offering education and training in behavioral sciences and human services.
- Serves as the location of the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners (MCFP), which is an administrative facility that provides medical, mental health, and dental services to male offenders.

In addition to health care services, the health care sector employs a large number of people. Currently, health care providers in Springfield employ more than 20,000 individuals and more than 1,000 physicians. According to the most recent reports from the Missouri Hospital Association, the Springfield health care industry creates more than \$50 million in economic impact to our community. When hospitals invest in capital equipment, physical infrastructure, and personnel, that significant economic impact ultimately promotes growth in the community.

The 2009 *Community Focus* report identified an ongoing shortage of health care professionals through 2020\*. Allied health education and research programs continue to grow to meet that need. Most of the higher-level education facilities offer a wide range of allied health professional programs. Additionally, health care systems offer nursing programs that help meet the demand for nursing professionals.

Preventive services are more important than ever as we look to reduce the burden of chronic disease conditions on our community. The Springfield-Greene County Health Department Maternal and Child Health division has continued to improve and reach one of the most vulnerable populations through the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC). This program aims to safeguard children in lower-income homes from nutritional risk.

"The risk factors for the chronic diseases that cause the vast majority of disability and early death can be reduced by good nutrition, regular exercise, and not smoking. Our challenge is in re-engineering our community so that it is easy for all people to make the healthy choice, whether at home, school, work, or play."

Mary Ellison MA, MPH.  
Women, Infants and Children Program Coordinator

The WIC program reaches more than 86 percent of the eligible population in the Springfield-Greene County area with health assessments, nutrition and breastfeeding education and support, food packages, and referrals as needed. The unique



WIC visits provide education and resources for young families.

partnership of the Springfield-Greene County Health Department's WIC office and JVCHC has offered an opportunity for clients to establish a one-stop shop for their medical needs, increasing convenience and access to quality health care and preventive services.

The Healthy Start program involves collaboration with Jordan Valley Community Health Center, St. John's Health System, WIC, and the Doula Foundation and provides education and support to qualifying women and children from the beginning of pregnancy through delivery. St. John's Health System has seen a decrease in morbidity rates and associated neonatal intensive care admissions ranging from 2-5 percent after the first year of implementation.

Health organizations have begun to recognize the need for additional prevention programs. A partnership was formed in early 2011 among the Ozarks Regional YMCA, Jordan Valley Community Health Center, and the Springfield-Greene County Health Department when the Missouri Foundation for Health and the Social Innovation awarded funds to develop and implement prevention programming within schools and worksites throughout the community.

### Smokefree Air Act of 2011

In April 2011, the voters of Springfield passed the Smokefree Air Act of 2011, a comprehensive smokefree policy eliminating smoking from indoor workplaces and public places. Passing this ordinance will make a significant positive impact on public health in this community. Smoking and secondhand smoke have been identified as leading causes of preventable death and disease and are associated with a host of illnesses including cancer, heart disease, emphysema, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Greene



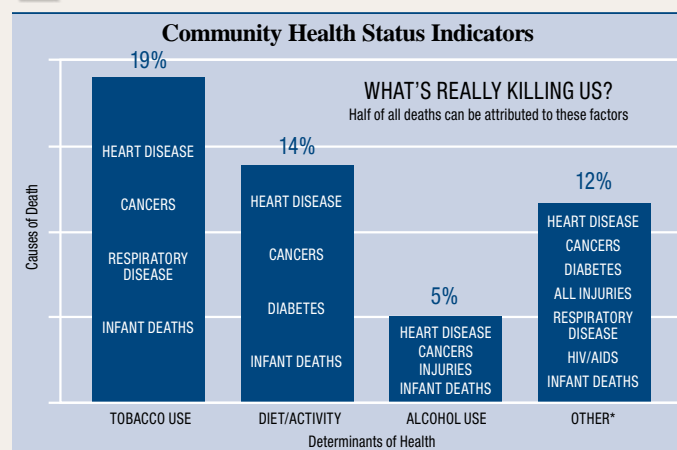
County has an adult smoking rate of 25.3 percent, which is significantly higher than the national average of 21 percent. Implementation of smokefree ordinances reduces exposure to secondhand smoke, has shown reductions in heart-attack admission rates to emergency rooms, and is a successful means of reducing the adult smoking rate. Research has shown that such policies have been associated with 3-6 percent reduction in smoking rates.

## RED FLAGS

### Communicable Diseases

Communicable diseases continue to be an area of concern since the 2004 *Community Focus* report. Vaccine-preventable diseases are of particular concern in recent years. Pertussis (whooping cough) rates rose in Greene County in 2010. This is particularly disturbing because it is a preventable illness. Pertussis and other vaccine preventable illnesses are on the rise throughout the rest of the country. While vaccination rates are relatively stable for Greene County, we need to continue to encourage parents and the community to vaccinate their children.

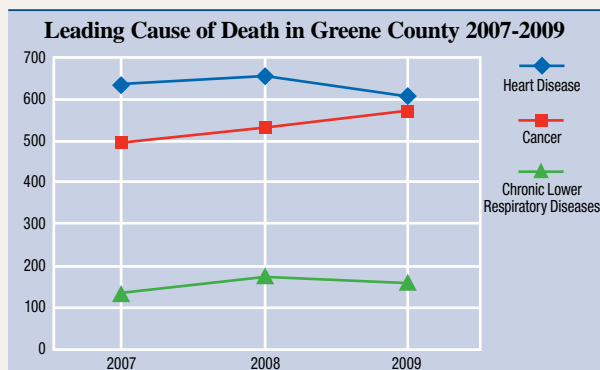
### Chronic Disease Risk Factors



Source: *Journal of American Medical Association*, 1993  
(Despite changes in percentages, determinants of health and causes of preventable deaths have not changed since 1993)

Chronic disease is complicated by the multiple factors that affect behaviors, knowledge, and motivation towards health. Tobacco and obesity are two of the most pressing risk factors causing preventable illness and death in our community.

Smoking causes illness and financial burden on our community. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than \$2 million in health-care costs are directly related to smoking in Missouri. This equates to \$586 of state and federal taxes per household used to pay for smoking-related government expenditures. In addition to the financial burden, smoking contributes to heart disease, cancer, and respiratory illness, the leading causes of adult deaths in Greene County.



Source: State of Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Missouri Information for Community Assessment (MICA), 2007-2009

Missouri is one of nine states with the highest percentage of overweight and obese adults. As of 2007, more than 29 percent of Greene County adults (ages 20 and above) are obese. Obesity increases the risk for heart disease, which is the number one killer of adult residents in Greene County.

### Prevalence of Overweight and Obese Adults in Missouri and Greene County

	Missouri		Greene County	
Year	2003	2007	2003	2007
Overweight adults	35.9%	35.7%	33.4%	39.2%
Obese adults	24.9%	29.1%	20.2%	28.6%

Source: State of Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Missouri Information for Community Assessment (MICA), 2003-2007

The tragedy of deaths

associated with chronic disease is that many of them are preventable. Prevention-based health care is vital to reversing these trends and saving lives in our community.

All these risk factors and disease-causing behaviors have not escaped our children. Unfortunately, childhood obesity\* continues to increase, as stated in the 2009 *Community Focus* report. Childhood obesity has a greater impact on children from low-income families who often face barriers such as access to facilities or environments that promote physical activity and the inability to pay for the higher cost of fresh or nutritious foods.

### Impact on Aging Population\*

Advances in public health and medical care have improved and extended the lives of adults in our country. As life expectancy increases and the baby boomer population ages, the older adult population will experience unprecedented growth. According to most recent Census data, adults over the age of 65 represent nearly 15 percent of the Springfield population. Considering that almost 80 percent of older adults have one chronic condition and 50 percent have at least two conditions, chronic disease is a major health factor confronting the community.

### Access to Health Care

The Health Commission formed in July 2009 as a community-based collaborative to coordinate the efforts of business, community, health care, and governmental leaders to address and improve the health of the community. A special focus of these efforts has been devoted to support cooperative processes that address access to care and improve health outcomes for the underserved population. The Health Commission took an in-depth look at some of the contributing factors to health outcomes and access in our community. According to the Ozarks Regional Social Capital Survey, the percentage of people that are covered by health insurance in the Springfield-Greene County area is nearly 87 percent, which is just slightly higher than the national average of nearly 85 percent. The percentage indicates that there are a number of people who are uninsured or underinsured. This problem is a source of great concern and discussion, but is clearly tied to a number of confounding factors. The Health Commission reported that one of the contributing factors to the lack of access to health insurance is associated with lower socio-economic status. This association limits a person's ability to pay for his/her medical care, reduces the ability to pay for items associated with a healthy lifestyle, and reduces access to transportation to necessary health care services.

Primary care access was discussed in the Health Commission report as well. The Health Commission suggested that there is a shortage of primary-care health services in the range of 28 to 100 primary-care providers. This factor is affected by the finding that nearly 60 percent of the available primary care medical office appointments in Greene County are used by residents outside of Greene County. Further investigation into these findings could provide insight toward creating sustainable options to address access to primary-care services, which is necessary to support the community's long-term health.

\* Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report

"The very basis of a healthy, vibrant, and productive community lies in the early years of a child's development."

Annie Busch, Co-Chair, Early Childhood Committee,  
Springfield Strategic Plan

Decreased funding from traditional sources, difficult economic times, and increases in unmet needs of young children create growing pressures for change in the area of early childhood. In response, many early care and education professionals have united to implement quality initiatives focused on improving the lives of more than 17,500 children under the age of five in the Springfield-Greene County area.

## Blue Ribbons

### Collaboration

The key to Springfield's early childhood blue ribbons is collaboration. When resources are maximized through collaboration, the needs of children and families are better met. Examples of current collaboration include:

- The creation of the Jordan Valley Community Health Center and its efforts to house various community partners like Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Parents As Teachers (PAT), and the Springfield Greene-County Library within the same building, which increases accessibility of services for families with young children.
- The Early Care & Education Collaborative of the Community Partnership of the Ozarks, along with its member agencies, serves as the starting point for collaborations in this area.



More than 1,000 children and families attended Community Wide Play Day 2011.

Using shared resources, such as staff, facilities, and funding, to maximize the return on investment for events and programs provides the Greene County early childhood community an opportunity to improve the lives of young children and families.

### Growing Support from Public Officials

Increasing awareness of the critical need for high-quality early childhood education has recently been illustrated by the inclusion of early childhood as a topic within the City of Springfield's Strategic Plan and a city/county/school systems platform in support of children and families.

As this movement gains momentum, public and private leaders will need to put these plans and platforms into action to see the desired results of creating a community that supports safe, happy, healthy, and successful children.

### Continued Response to Red Flags

Agencies and organizations throughout the Springfield and Greene County area have focused efforts on red flags identified in previous *Community Focus* reports. Most notably, the Grantmakers' Challenge for Children leveraged \$22 million from 35 partner organizations to support services focused on addressing the red flags that most affect the lives of young children in the area.

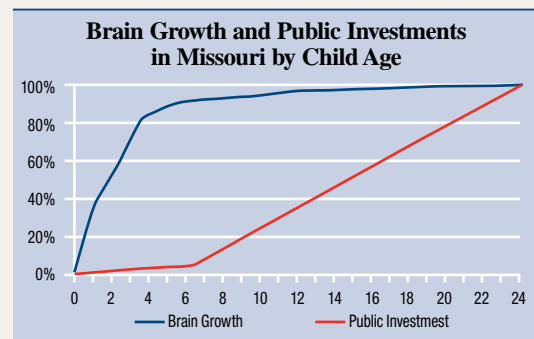
## RED FLAGS

The state of our nation's economy has had a residual effect on the area of early childhood in the Greene County area, including increased poverty, higher incidence of child abuse and neglect, and decreased funding for multiple areas related to early childhood.

### Decreased Funding in Multiple Areas Affecting Early Childhood

Over the past two years, state and local budget cuts have resulted in decreased funding to almost all service areas for children and families. For example, cutting Parents as Teachers by 50 percent means elimination of the only true universal prevention service in the area and significantly fewer children from birth to age five receiving home visits to check for proper development and cognitive learning. The earlier delays are identified, the sooner remediation can occur, thereby reducing later costs for special education. Significant cuts to Child Care Aware® of Southern Missouri and Educare result in less training and support for local childcare providers as well as changes to the resource and referral service model serving families. Children receiving Medicaid in need of mental health services often face months of waiting and those seeking dental services can face weeks of wait time, due primarily to the reduction in reimbursement for health care providers. To a child, this means living with pain.

Research shows that the greatest human brain development occurs during the first three years of life. However, public investment is minimal during that critical time and only reaches its highest point in the period of young adulthood. With budget constraints in mind, shifting available funds to invest more fully in supporting young children with prevention services will result in less expense in areas such as increased dropout rates, behavior problems, drug and substance abuse, and criminal activity. All of these have greater costs to society than the prevention efforts expended during the early years. The most recent research supported by the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis indicates an \$8 - \$17 return on investment for every \$1 invested in early childhood.



Source: Center for Family Policy & Research, 2010

### Effect of Poverty on Children

The 2009 *Community Focus* report highlighted the interconnected role poverty plays in all areas of the Springfield-Greene County community, specifically early childhood. Poverty affects homelessness and housing quality\*, health and nutrition, educational success, child abuse and neglect rates,

and school readiness. The community has acknowledged and continued to work to address the symptoms of poverty among children and families through focused programming.

According to MO Kids Count 2010, Springfield-Greene County has 5,586 (26.6 percent) of its children under age 6 living in poverty, a 59.8 percent increase over 2000 Census data. Despite the increase in the number of children in poverty, less than 40 percent of the 5,500 children are receiving Medicaid services and only 26 percent receive childcare subsidies.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse and neglect rates continue to be of concern in Greene County. In 2009 the number of substantiated cases of abuse and/or neglect decreased, but the number of hotline calls and family assessments remained very high. The community must stay vigilant in our preventive efforts to keep kids safe. The average age of a child entering Children’s Division custody in Greene County is 4.89 years. During the 2.5 years the average child is in custody, he or she will move three times. To these abused and/or neglected children, the abuse is consuming and has lingering effects.

Compared with the general population, children who have been in the system are less likely to graduate from high school or attend college, 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed as adults, more likely to experience homelessness, and more likely to have a chronic illness, such as asthma, auditory or visual problems, diabetes, or malnutrition, due to the lack of quality medical care. Children leaving foster care are at greater risk for substance abuse, early parenthood, and incarceration. These intangible losses should not be overlooked as part of the cost associated with violence against children.

State of Early Care and Education

Each week in Springfield and Greene County, thousands of children under age five are in the care of someone other than their parents. For these families, affordability continues to be a concern.

Childcare costs are a major expense for any family, often higher than the cost of college

Childcare Costs	
Average Wkly Cost of FT Childcare	In 2011
Infant/Toddler Care (Home/Center)	\$113/\$169
2+ Years Care (Home/Center)	\$94/\$106

Source: Child Care Aware® of Southern Missouri, January 2011

tuition. A Greene County family with an infant and preschooler will pay an average of \$1,191 per month for care in a center, which equates to \$14,300 per year – a dollar figure far too high for many families in the area. Close to 1,500 Greene County families receive state subsidies to help pay for childcare so they can maintain employment and/or complete education. However, Missouri’s childcare subsidies are so low – 49th of the 50 states in subsidy rate – that the difference between subsidies, actual cost, and how to pay for it, means childcare choices are sometimes based on affordability rather than quality.

Despite research showing that approximately 80 percent of the brain develops by age 3, Missouri holds childcare programs to few standards that assure even minimally healthy child

development. Therefore, quality of care is a great concern. Childcare providers are often paid minimal wages, averaging \$9.11 per hour, yet we place the responsibility of developing the brains of the area’s youngest citizens in their hands. Missouri law requires those who provide haircuts, manicures, and tattoos to complete hundreds of hours of training prior to serving the public, but no pre-employment training is required for those who provide care to young children.

Research has shown that children who participate in a high-quality early childhood experience are more successful in kindergarten, but it also shows that children who experience a low-quality childcare are more negatively affected than if they had attended no pre-K at all. In response, several agencies are collaborating to create a training consortium to provide greater access to relevant training for childcare providers, a standard measure of quality for Greene County childcare providers, and a heightened awareness of the need for these programs and initiatives.

School Readiness

As indicated in the 2009 *Community Focus* report, kindergarten readiness\* is an area where many Springfield and Greene County children struggle. Based upon the latest Readiness for Kindergarten study, released in March 2011, teachers continue to say that 20.2 percent of students enter kindergarten not socially or emotionally ready, based upon the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA).

Children who experience high-quality early childhood education are more prepared for kindergarten, and therefore, typically more successful. However, many families cannot afford to provide this needed preschool experience to their children. The Readiness for Kindergarten study determined that 86 percent of students ineligible for free or reduced lunch were prepared while only 72 percent of free or reduced lunch recipients were considered to be prepared.

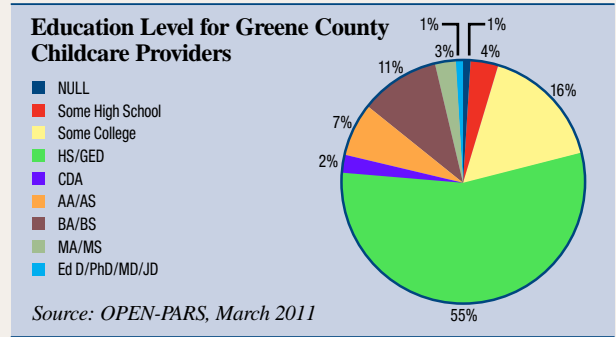
In response to this identified red flag, an active group of Springfield and Greene County early care and education professionals are collaborating to create a plan for offering voluntary universal access to high-quality preschool programs for all children in the area. Making high-quality preschool accessible to all children is critical to addressing kindergarten readiness in Greene County and will require broad-based public and private support.

Inability to Convert Public Support to Action

While political, business, and general community members acknowledge and verbally support the need for quality early childhood services, true progress will require community engagement and action to transform the established system into a more effective method of preparing our 21st century workforce and fueling the economic growth within Springfield and Greene County.

Simple offerings within the business community like flex-time, job share, work from home, and unpaid leave for family issues can lower turnover and absenteeism and increase employee morale and productivity, providing an attractive return on investment for the employer while supporting families. Given the number of children whose parents work, private-sector policies that benefit work/life balance for families are needed now more than ever.

Follow-through by political leaders to develop and implement a plan to support early childhood services is necessary. The Springfield-Greene County community must be prepared to support city and county movements toward universal access to pre-K and other needed preventative services in the years to come. Community engagement in early childhood education nurtures not only our children, but also our broader community growth and success.



\*Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report



"Research tells us each child needs a strong foundation. To close the achievement gap and assure all children develop to their full potential, we need high quality education that begins at an early age."

**Abby Lowe**, Kindergarten Teacher, Harrison Elementary,  
2010-11 Teacher of the Year, Springfield Public Schools

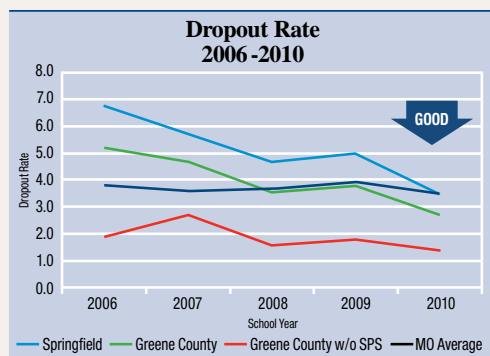
Difficult economic times, mounting accountability, and decreased funding from traditional sources created growing pressures for the eight K-12 public school districts in Greene County. In spite of the increased expectations and decreased financial resources, area districts continue to offer children and youth quality public education. Approximately 40,000 students attend the 82 schools within the eight public school districts of Greene County. Six of Greene County's eight school districts, including Springfield, received the Distinction in Performance designation from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for 2010. The region's largest district, Springfield R-12, continues to lead the state in addressing the demand for academic choice within a public school setting and offers a variety of innovative programs that provide additional learning options for students. Some of the school choice options within the community include: International Baccalaureate programs from PreK – 12; Wonders of the Ozarks Learning Facility (WOLF), an environmental science focus for 5th graders; and Project Lead the Way, a high school pre-engineering curriculum with a strong math and science emphasis. The commitment of the region's citizens to provide quality education for all students should help ensure that students are prepared for the educational, civic, and employment demands of the 21st century.

## Blue Ribbons

### Decreased Dropout Rate in Springfield Public Schools

Identified in previous *Community Focus* reports as a red flag, steady progress has been made on reducing the number of high school dropouts in Greene County. Therefore, this progress is now noted as a blue ribbon. The graduation rate in Springfield Public Schools trended upward over the past five years and is now at 83.8 percent, with the district's dropout rate standing at 3.5 percent. The district's collective efforts to help more young people obtain their high school diplomas became the Persistence to Graduation initiative, or P2G, which focuses on attendance, counseling, health services, classroom instruction and engagement, the use of consistent indicators to identify students at all grade levels at risk for dropping out, literacy needs of students with disabilities, and expanded alternative education programs and school sites.

While the decrease in the dropout rate merits a blue ribbon, there is still work to be done to bring Springfield's graduation rate above the state average of 85.7 percent, as a high school diploma is only one step toward assuring students have education and training adequate for competitive employment in the 21st century.



Source: Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

### Community Collaboration

Noted as a blue ribbon in previous *Community Focus* reports, collaboration in addressing educational concerns remains a

community strength; the recent P-20 Council of the Ozarks is a good example of this collaboration.

Growing out of a State initiative, the P-20 Council of the Ozarks was formed in 2010. The council focuses on key issues that reach across educational sectors and into the workforce, including student preparation, student success, curriculum alignment, and collaboration with business and industry. Working committees include Civic Organizations and Business, Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary, Post-Secondary, Teacher Education, and Workforce Development, all of which are in place and are developing strategic plans. Each committee consists of representatives from all facets of the community-at-large, regional education institutions (pre-kindergarten to graduate schools), and business and civic organizations throughout the region. Partners include Ozarks Technical Community College, Springfield Public Schools, area 4-year colleges and universities, the Workforce Investment Board, area Chambers of Commerce, regional business and industry leaders, as well as other regional K-12 districts. The P-20 Council of the Ozarks has three goals: develop strategies for optimal outcomes in the transition through education and into the workforce; foster collaboration among pre-kindergarten, elementary, secondary, post-secondary and graduate education institutions and the business and workforce sectors; and improve academic achievement and college success while promoting lifelong learning.

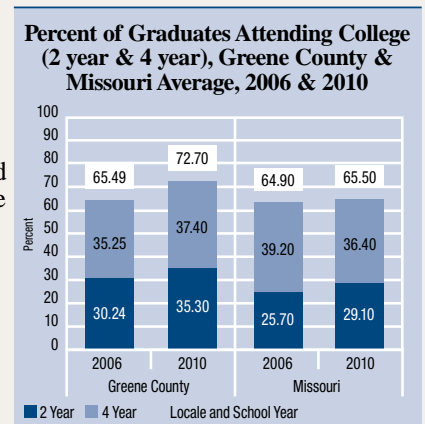
Multi-agency and institutional collaboration, as well as the community-wide focus in acknowledging the ties between education and workforce preparedness, reflect a community strength that should have a lasting impact and improve the quality of public education for current and future generations of the region's young people.

### College Attendance After High School Graduation

In the 2009 *Community Focus* report, college attendance after high school graduation was listed as an emerging issue. Now, Greene County students are enrolling in college at a higher rate than the state average. In fact, the state average has remained steady since 2006, while Greene County's numbers have increased 7 percent. This progress can be explained in part by the expansion of Missouri's A+ Scholarship and School Improvement Program.

Created in 1993 by state law, the A+ Program is designed to ensure all students who graduate from Missouri public high schools are well prepared to pursue advanced education and/or employment.

The attached financial incentive allows high school graduates to attend public community college or career/technical schools in Missouri tuition free if certain criteria are met. By 2009, all but two Greene County high schools (Strafford and Ash Grove) had earned the A+ designation. However, potential changes at the



Source: Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

state level may diminish the school improvement piece of the A+ Program and must be monitored.

## RED FLAGS

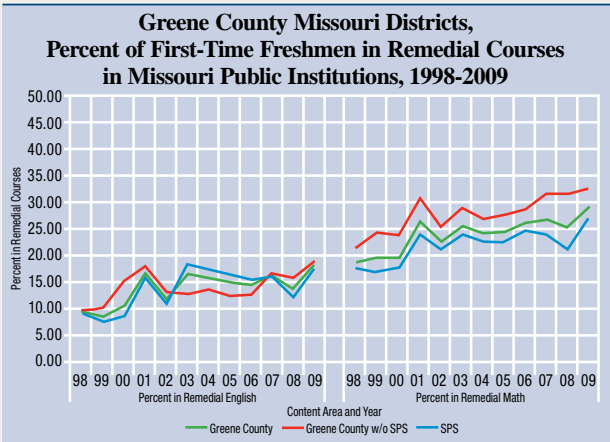
### Remediation of First-Time Freshmen

Greene County schools strive to prepare all students for advanced education and employment after graduation, yet higher education institutions are reporting an increase in new students needing remedial courses in math, English, and other subjects. Of the Ozarks Technical Community College freshmen who tested into remediation in fall 2007, just 15 percent went on to graduate within three years.

In fall 2010, nearly three-fourths of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking OTC students tested into remediation, including a large group of adult learners, typical of OTC's overall student population. Reasons for this increase in remediation may include:

- More schools participating in the A+ Program mean more students of varying abilities now have a financial incentive to attend community colleges and technical schools.
- The stressed national economy drives high school seniors who might have joined the workforce upon graduation to select college instead.

Both K-12 and higher education officials recognize the need to coordinate performance expectations and college preparation standards. As stated earlier, the P-20 Council of the Ozarks has set collaboration among all levels of education as one of its major goals. The Springfield School District, for example, is now working with OTC on exams for high school juniors that will demonstrate areas needing improvement before college admission.



Source: Missouri Department of Higher Education

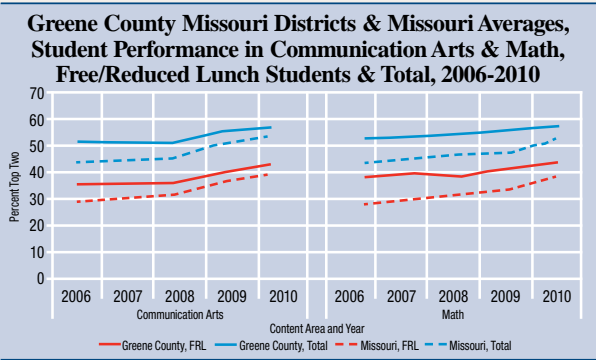
### Achievement Gap

Poverty continues to affect student achievement. A simple measure of poverty is the number of school-age children eligible for free and reduced price school lunches (FRL). In the last five years, students in Greene County who participated in the FRL program showed lower scores on communication arts and math exams than the total student population. Closing this gap will require continued community collaboration.

There are, however, bright spots. Greene County had a higher percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced in both communication arts and mathematics than Missouri students in the FRL group as a whole. So while the percentage of students living in poverty has increased across Greene County, the performance of this group has not declined.

The Springfield community is rallying to help close this achievement gap. Notable is the Enhancing Children's Healthy Opportunities (ECHO) project. Sponsored by the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, the project focused on comprehensive counseling and family wellness service at two Springfield Title 1 schools. Another is Drury University's Summer Scholars Program, which identifies promising Pipkin and Central students and encourages them to pursue higher

education through challenging summer experiences on campus. Additionally, the privately supported Care to Learn Fund also has been established to meet the physical and practical needs of students in Springfield and many surrounding districts.



Source: Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

### Funding Volatility and the Shifting of Funding Responsibility\*

The volatility in educational funding remains a red flag as identified in all previous *Community Focus* reports. The economic turbulence of the past few years only added to the annual unpredictability for local districts. In Missouri, funding comes from three sources - local property taxes, state funds, and federal allocations. The funding table shows the varying percentages local districts received from these sources for 2004 and 2010, as well as the differences. Federal stimulus funds resulted in an increase of federal funding percentages during the last few years. While the benefit and long-term impact of such funds has been debated, those federal dollars did allow local districts to continue to operate without a drastic shift of financial responsibility to local patrons. With that funding source now eliminated, and with continued decreases in state funding, local school districts face tough decisions about whether to ask their communities for increased levies aimed at maintaining adequate funding for quality public education throughout Greene County.

Greene County School Districts Percent of Revenue from Local, State, and Federal Funds, 2004 & 2010									
	LOCAL			STATE			FEDERAL		
	2004	2010	Difference	2004	2010	Difference	2004	2010	Difference
Springfield	63.9	66.6	2.7	26.1	19.5	-6.6	10.0	14.0	4.0
Willard	51.0	51.1	0.1	41.9	34.8	-7.1	7.1	14.1	7.0
Republic	47.6	48.6	1.0	46.9	37.2	-9.7	5.4	14.2	8.8
Logan-Rogersville	58.2	58.1	-0.1	33.5	30.2	-3.3	8.2	11.7	3.5
Strafford	61.5	63.5	2.0	32.0	23.4	-8.6	6.5	13.1	6.6
Fair Grove	35.2	41.8	6.6	51.4	39.8	-11.6	13.4	18.4	5.0
Ash Grove	43.9	42.1	-1.8	48.8	40.2	-8.6	7.3	17.6	10.3
Walnut Grove	37.6	38.8	1.2	55.6	44.0	-11.6	6.8	17.2	10.4
Missouri	55.2	56.1	0.9	35.5	29.0	-6.5	9.2	14.9	5.7

Source: Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

### Teacher Salaries

Noted as a red flag since the 2004 *Community Focus* report, teachers' salaries remain a concern. All area districts' average teacher salaries are below the state average. Although there remains strong support from local patrons to address this gap, economic realities have left school districts with no new funding to allocate to salary and benefits. In fact, most districts have opted to not raise salaries in order to avoid layoffs, maintain current staffing levels, and keep acceptable class size.



Springfield Public School students work on class project.

\*Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report

# Community FOCUS Housing

"A decent place to live makes a difference in a person's life. One by one, brick by brick, the community is made stronger when housing is a priority."

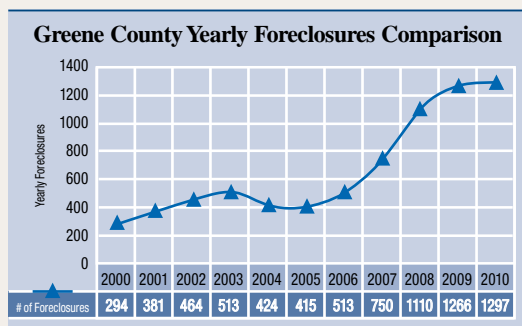
Dana Elwell, Chair, Housing Collaborative

Our community is facing an unprecedented housing crisis today. When one thinks of housing, many things come to mind. Whether it is housing for the homeless, new construction, rehabilitation of current housing stock, affordable housing, or housing that is affordable, the housing market is in a fragile state.

Three emerging issues identified in the 2009 Community Focus report have now turned into red flags — Vacancy Rates Due to Foreclosures\*, Homeless Children and Adolescents\*, and Shrinking Financial Resources to Address Homelessness and Housing\*. One must put into perspective what has happened in the housing arena to understand the blue ribbons and red flags our community is facing today in relation to housing.

## Foreclosures

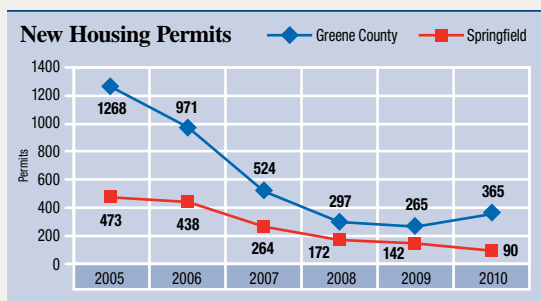
In 2010, Greene County foreclosures reached an all-time high of 1,297. Just 10 years ago, that number was only 294. According to a 2006 study by the Fannie Mae Foundation, each conventional foreclosure within one-eighth of a mile of a property results in a 1.14 percent decline in that property's value and that each foreclosure between one-eighth and one-quarter of a mile away results in a 0.325 percent decline in value. Many suffer because of foreclosure - the homeowner, the bank, the neighborhood, and the community.



Source: Greene County Recorder of Deeds

## Housing Availability

Permits for the construction of new homes in Greene County increased slightly for 2010, but still lag dramatically from when the peak of new housing construction was taking place in the mid 2000s. The City of Springfield paints a far different and more disturbing story. In the City of Springfield, from 2005 to 2010, permits dropped from 473 to 90.



Sources: Building & Development Offices of the City of Springfield and Greene County

Because of strong collaborations in the area, addressing homelessness for our region is ongoing. Recent homeless counts show there were 742 sheltered and unsheltered homeless people which is an increase from previous years'.

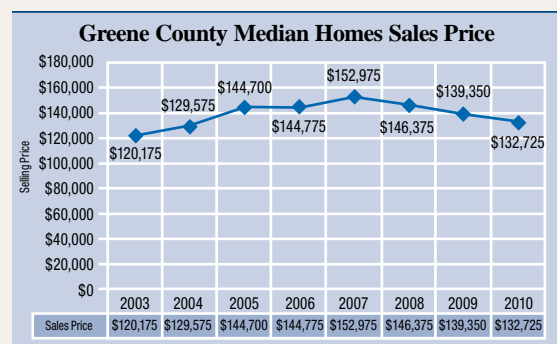
counts. A Mayor's task force appointed in late 2009 worked with the region's homeless service network, the Continuum of Care, to make multiple recommendations that address homelessness in the Springfield area.



One of Springfield's unsheltered homeless.

## Housing Affordability

Because of the volatile housing market, median sale prices for homes purchased in Greene County have decreased steadily since 2007, and are now the lowest they have been since 2004.



Source: Economic & Market Watch Reports from the Greater Springfield Board of Realtors

Homes are becoming less affordable for many reasons. Poor credit and poor rent history are creating a larger reliance on supportive services, straining the limited housing resources available for low-income families, seniors, the disabled, and the homeless.

The disconnect between income and housing costs can be further demonstrated by the fact that, according to the 2009 American Community Survey, almost 1 in 4 households has an income of less than \$15,000 per year. The Center for Housing Policy estimates that it takes a salary of \$32,806 to afford to purchase a two-bedroom home. Because the median salary for Springfield is \$30,831, this type of purchase is unaffordable for more than 52 percent of the households in Springfield. Furthermore, to afford to rent a two-bedroom house or apartment, it takes a wage of \$11.73 per hour (\$24,398.40 per year). More than 37 percent of Springfield households make less than \$24,000 per year.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Collaborative Efforts to Address Homelessness and Housing

As identified in all previous Community Focus reports, our community is fortunate to have many agencies, companies, and individuals dedicated to addressing housing needs. Through partnerships and collaborations, a continued focus is being placed on delivering not only homeless prevention services, but a new approach to wrap-around services for affordable housing and making homes affordable for interested renters and homeowners.

### Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) Impact on Rehabilitation Efforts

In 2008, the City of Springfield received a United States Department of Housing and Urban Development





*Fulbright Springs Affordable Housing Development*

Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grant to acquire and rehabilitate foreclosed homes. The purpose of this grant was to reduce the number of foreclosed homes in the City's Targeted Revitalization Area, improve the housing stock through energy-efficient rehabilitation, rent or sell these units to assist in neighborhood stabilization, and ensure long-term housing affordability. The City partnered with four local non-profits (Affordable Housing Action Board, Habitat for Humanity, Sherman Avenue Project Area Committee, and Urban Neighborhoods Alliance) to acquire, rehabilitate and recycle these units for rental and homeownership. Through this partnership, 42 properties have been acquired and more than half of these have been rehabilitated and made available as affordable housing. These units are disbursed throughout the City's revitalization area and have increased neighborhood confidence by removing vacant and blighted houses and replacing them with refurbished energy-efficient homes.



*Neighborhood Stabilization Program Rehab Property of Urban Neighborhoods Alliance*

### Availability of New Homelessness One Door Service



In times of crisis, accessing assistance should be as easy as possible. This idea was the foundation of the One Door Program, established in April 2010.

Anyone who is homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or in need of assistance can now call one number to find assistance and receive referrals. Since opening, One Door has received more than 6,000 phone calls, provided emergency hotel vouchers to more than 175 families, and provided assistance and referrals for thousands more.

### Availability of Foreclosure Prevention Services

The availability of homeownership retention programs and services available to the community from lenders, servicers, and the federal government has expanded over the last two years. These essentially give citizens the broad opportunity to remain in their homes by making reduced payments as a result of a financial crisis.

## RED FLAGS

### Shrinking Financial Resources to Address Homelessness and Housing\*

What was a red flag in the 2005 Community Focus report and an emerging issue in 2009 has now become red flag in 2011. Federal, state, and local budgets are being slashed and housing and homelessness programs are victims of those cuts. In the past, Federal Community Development Block Grant dollars have funded the City of Springfield's housing and public service projects and programs. The State of Missouri's Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, which has funded many Springfield area projects, is under scrutiny for elimination.

Because of shrinking state and federal budgets and the completion of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act assistance programs, the availability of funds for rent and utility assistance has significantly decreased. These funds are the first line of defense in preventing new households from becoming homeless.

### Homeless Children and Adolescents\*

Ensuring quality affordable housing for families will lead to stable living conditions for children. Quality affordable housing that combines energy-efficient construction and truly affordable rent will allow families to obtain housing that they can afford. Unfortunately, too many children do not have adequate housing and many become homeless. The 2009 Survey of Springfield's High Risk and Homeless Youth found that more than 40 percent of the high-risk youth surveyed had been homeless. The average age for youth experiencing homelessness alone was 15 years old.

Additionally, the number of children experiencing homelessness in the school system is also increasing. Springfield Public Schools (SPS) identifies the homeless as those living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations, living in emergency or transitional shelters, abandoned in hospitals, or awaiting foster care placement. It also includes children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings. Further, the homeless may include sharing housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason. In the 2006 Attendance, Homeless and Migrant Services Report, SPS noted 161 homeless students being served by the district. This number rose to 408 for the 2010-2011 school year.

### Foreclosures\*

Foreclosures continue to rise and are accompanied by a multitude of problems for the community at large. Foreclosures were identified as red flags in both the 2007 and 2009 Community Focus reports. While foreclosure prevention programs are available, successfully completing one is difficult because it requires specialized knowledge about the application process. Experts say it is reasonable to assume that had this process not been so complex, many foreclosures could have been avoided.

### Lack of Adequate Emergency Shelters

In the last two years, waiting lists have become common at homeless shelters in Springfield. At its peak, the list at the Missouri Hotel contained the names of more than 400 individuals. This, coupled with the estimated 200-300 individuals who routinely sleep in tents, cars and abandoned buildings, is a clear indication that additional shelter beds are needed in the community.



*Missouri Hotel*

### Lack of a Centralized Resource Center/Data Collection Point to Address Housing Issues

While the Continuum of Care is responsible for coordinating homeless assistance efforts, too few resources are dedicated to this task. With the addition of new federal regulations, approved in 2009 and expected to be enacted in 2011, these efforts will require additional work at the local level without the appropriate level of staff support and coordination. The community needs a centralized agency to collect data and coordinate homeless assistance efforts.

The housing crisis we are facing today will hopefully improve shortly and the American dream of homeownership will be back in the minds of young and old alike. As a community and region, we will keep striving for an end to homelessness. Working together we will face and conquer these housing challenges - stabilizing neighborhoods and creating safe, decent, affordable housing opportunities for everyone.

"When it comes to doing business, it's not profitable if it's not sustainable."

Matt O'Reilly, Green Business Owner

The community continues to make strides in environmental protection, particularly through unique partnerships as exemplified in the Parks/Waterways Sales Tax and Clean Air Alliance. Areas of concern include the need for sustained funding for stormwater and wastewater infrastructure needs, meeting federal water quality mandates, and potentially exceeding new air quality standards for ozone. On balance, the community generally supports the idea of maintaining environmental quality as an important and positive attribute of the region.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Joint City/County Water Quality Protection through the Parks/Waterways Sales Tax

The county-wide Parks/Waterways Sales Tax, approved by voters in 2006, has provided funding for waterways projects and stormwater programs to protect and improve water quality and has proven to be an innovative way of working together. The city, county, local watershed groups, and other entities have combined resources to cooperate on shared water quality goals. Construction projects completed or underway in 2010 include waterway improvements at Fassnacht Park, Sequiota Park, and Dickerson Park Zoo, waterway maintenance and neighborhood assistance at Springday Hills Subdivision and Legacy Trails, a low-impact development, greenway connections at Ward Branch and Cherokee Trail of Tears, and channel modifications for a future greenway at Needmore Branch. Ongoing activities include education on stormwater and water quality, classroom lessons and hands-on activities for students and teachers, rain barrel rebate program, city and county land disturbance permit programs, and water quality monitoring of streams and runoff.

### Funding for Solid Waste Programs

This blue ribbon was previously identified as a red flag in the 2009 *Community Focus* report. Springfield's Solid Waste Management Division continues to be supported by stable funding provided by the Put-or-Pay agreement, which established an agreed upon amount of tonnage to be delivered to the Springfield Sanitary Landfill. This agreement generates revenue to operate the Integrated Solid Waste Management System. In 2010, the Division added one staff position to increase the number of businesses it can assist in establishing waste reduction/recycling programs.

### Air Pollution Partnerships

The Ozarks Clean Air Alliance (OCAA), a subcommittee of the Environmental Collaborative of the Community



Retrofitted school bus

Partnership of the Ozarks, is a regional partnership encompassing 13 counties. OCAA continues to enhance and implement its Clean Air Action Plan. Since 2009, through the Ozark Center for Sustainable Solutions at Drury University, over \$2.3 million in federal funding has been received to retrofit vehicles with diesel emissions reduction equipment. Through this program, 248 school buses in 18 school districts have been retrofitted or replaced, helping to protect air quality for children and communities in our region. In addition, 165 heavy duty diesel trucks from 20 private companies and 2 municipalities have been retrofitted to reduce harmful air pollutants.

### Local Groundwater

Springfield and Greene County have been proactive in examining local groundwater reserves by expanding and updating groundwater studies performed in the 1980s. New studies will model expected groundwater drawdown with differing use scenarios and will help to determine sustainable yields. Regional water supply concerns led to the formation of the Tri-State Water Coalition. At a meeting of this group in 2010, resource managers from Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma agreed to work cooperatively toward regional solutions, using the bi-state agreement signed by Missouri and Arkansas in 2008 as a template.

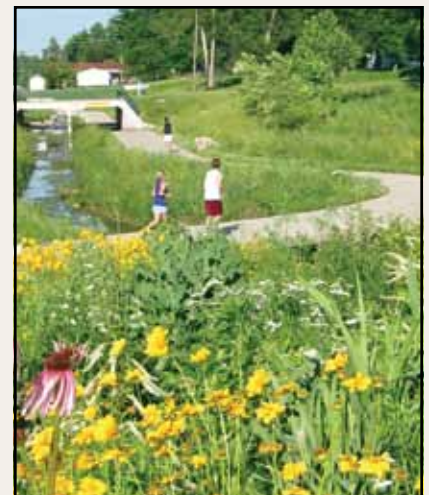
### Green Building Policy

The City Council of Springfield has adopted an ordinance that commits the city to achieving the equivalent of the LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design) Silver level of certification for all new city buildings. Several new public and private sector buildings have been constructed meeting LEED standards, such as Hickory Hills School, Arvest Bank, BKD offices, and the Watershed Center.

### Multiple Use of Open Space/Green Space

Through the cooperation of governmental entities, private developers, and citizen groups, opportunities have been identified, grant funding secured, and projects completed which maximize the multiple uses of existing green space and open space. The city and county have benefited by combining projects, including stormwater improvements, trails, greenways, recreational spaces, and park development.

Incorporating native landscapes into these projects reduces maintenance costs and adds greater value to the community environment in the long term. Examples include the upper Jordan Creek Greenway, West Meadows, and open space corridors held in partnership with Ozark Greenways.



Jordan Creek Greenway



## Brownfields

Contaminated sites are dangerous to both the environment and human health and a deterrent to future development due to sizeable cleanup costs. The City of Springfield has been successful in working with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to secure over \$3,360,000 for assessing over 130 sites for remediation through the Brownfields Program. Since the inception of the program in 1999, over \$200 million in public and private funding has been leveraged to support brownfields development. An additional \$200 million has been leveraged in the community as a result of redevelopment projects, such as Jordan Valley Park, for a total of \$400 million.

## Sustainability Plan for the City of Springfield\*

Sustainability is defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development as “progress that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” As our community grows, it must incorporate sustainable solutions that will protect our environment and resources while reducing future economic burdens. The City of Springfield has taken a step toward this goal by commissioning the Natural Environment Committee through the 2030 Strategic Plan. This committee has developed a plan with goals and objectives for integrating environmentally sustainable strategies into the community. The Natural Environment Report outlines objectives which span topics of air quality, clean energy sources, clean and adequate water supplies, storm water management, green building, and maintenance of public green spaces and urban forests.

## RED FLAGS

### Stormwater Management Funding

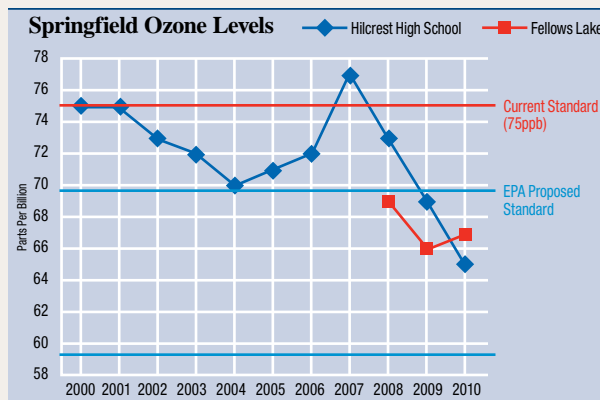
The lack of an adequate, long-term funding source for stormwater management in Springfield and Greene County has been classified as a red flag since the 2005 *Community Focus* report. Funding is needed to address aging stormwater infrastructure, flood protection, and compliance with the city and county Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits for water quality protection. The city and county MS4 permits are an unfunded mandate of the federal Clean Water Act requiring communities across the country to conduct a variety of programs and activities to reduce the impacts of urban stormwater runoff pollution on area waterways. The five-year, county-wide Parks/Waterways sales tax approved by voters in 2006 provides 1/8 cent to temporarily fund some ongoing needs, but sunsets in 2012. The national economic downturn and competing local needs have increased the difficulty of obtaining public support for a long-term funding initiative.

### Wastewater Infrastructure Funding

While the City of Springfield has developed and operated award-winning wastewater treatment plants that consistently meet or exceed all required standards, it has also worked to keep sewer rates low. The city is now faced with the effects of the economic downturn, increasing operating costs, aging infrastructure, and increased state and federal regulatory requirements under the Clean Water Act. Cash reserves, necessary for emergencies and bond requirements, are declining. The Springfield City Council appointed a citizens' Wastewater Improvements Task Force to work with city staff and an outside consulting firm to conduct a rate study and make recommendations as to the most fair and equitable manner of increasing rates to meet these needs. The Wastewater Improvements Task Force completed its work in June 2011, and recommended a wastewater rate increase, which City Council subsequently approved with modifications for industrial users.

### Air Quality Awareness

Springfield is on the verge of failing to meet several air quality standards. Local citizens are not aware of the detrimental



Source: Springfield-Greene County Health Department

impacts should this happen, nor are they aware of the steps they can take to reduce air pollution. The announcement of the standard for ground-level ozone was postponed in 2010, rescheduled for July 2011. Any reduction in the acceptable level of ozone, which is anticipated, will likely put Springfield in non-attainment of this standard as well. Non-attainment means the air quality needs to be improved to protect public health and the environment. Local communities are responsible for improving their air quality. The EPA can impose sanctions, including withholding federal highway funds, until standards are met. Meeting air standards will prevent unnecessary economic burdens associated with the non-attainment designation and protect public health.

### Loss of Local Control/Authority

A combination of reduced state revenue and political pressure has undermined the ability of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to finance and staff local air and water pollution control programs. Local governments, also strapped for funds, are therefore reducing or eliminating staffs and programs, and thus relinquishing control from the local level back to the EPA. As a result, programs such as permitting, inspections and reporting for businesses could become more difficult, with permitting delayed. Environmental quality could suffer through the loss of local protection agencies and, in some cases, less stringent federal regulations will be enforced. Loss of control could also mean local governments will lose the ability to deal with local issues in the most appropriate and cost-effective way.

### Regional Water Supply

Southwest Missouri is rapidly growing in population and the availability of adequate supplies of safe water has been recognized as a potential problem for the future. Although groundwater is plentiful under the region, significant drawdown under urban areas, such as Springfield and Joplin, has raised concern. In the western part of the region, potential contamination from past mining activities and saltwater intrusion could create water supply problems. There are several large reservoirs in the region, but these are located 30-50 miles from major population centers, so large pipelines would be needed to transport raw water. Building new reservoirs closer to population centers is an option, but with significant social, environmental, and political ramifications.

### Availability of Green Space/Open Space

More and more, green space is increasingly seen as essential to environmental protection, as well as for parks and recreational use. However, citizen demand for open and green spaces within the urban area and development pressures continue to increase. Therefore, it is very important to identify and protect potential green/open space for a variety of community needs.

\*Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report



# Public Order and Safety

We are a community that takes the notion of public order and safety seriously. Passage of the 9-1-1 sales tax, a new Crime Lab, community mobilization to reduce gang activity, positive results on the annual Springfield Police Citizen Survey, an excellent Insurance Services Organization (ISO) Rating, and emergency responses to a major ice storm were all identified as blue ribbons in previous *Community Focus* reports. And, through the combined efforts of many and the leadership of the Safety Council of the Ozarks, we remain a Safe Community as designated by the World Health Organization - only the third in the United States to receive such an award. This designation is awarded to communities that have demonstrated leadership in promoting safety, reducing injuries, and preparing their citizens for natural and man-made disasters.

However, as reported in the 2007 and 2009 *Community Focus* reports, public safety agencies in Greene County have endured serious budget reductions resulting in significant staff shortages affecting law enforcement\*. The strong foundation that had been built over the years to ensure a safe community in Springfield was in jeopardy. Fortunately, all involved in the arena of public safety came together to collaborate, innovate, and create positive change to help address problems from the use of volunteer staffing in some agencies to finding grants to offset some of the local funding streams that were reduced. City leaders worked to address the police and fire pension issue, funding was identified for additional police personnel, and fire stations went off rotational closure. A significant shortage remains in Judicial, Prosecution and Public Defender personnel that constrains advances in public safety and will be exacerbated by increases in law enforcement personnel without proportional increases in these parts of the criminal justice system\*.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Addressing the Police /Fire Pension Plan\*

City and community leaders worked diligently to address the underfunded Police and Fire Pension Fund and a sales tax was passed to generate revenue dedicated to adding monies to this fund. This was critical for two reasons: police and fire personnel were leaving the departments due to uncertainty surrounding the underfunding that exacerbated the existing staff shortages, and the shortage had a potential negative impact on the entire City budget.



Chief Paul Williams, Springfield Police Department, and Sheriff Jim Arnott, Greene County Sheriff's Office.

"Public safety is something most of us take for granted; we only miss it when it's gone. The new community strategic plan will, for the first time, contain a chapter devoted to public safety. Through the city's strategic planning process, it became apparent that public safety has a strong interrelationship with most of our community's red flag issues. Imagine trying to promote economic development and recruit employers to a city that gains a reputation as being unsafe."

Greg Burris, City Manager, Springfield

### Collaborative Efforts to Address Public Safety

The City of Springfield initiated a collaborative, multi-sector Strategic Planning Process that included a Public Safety section to chart a positive path for the future. During this process, many innovative ideas came forth that allowed community leaders to look at public safety in an expanded light, including the role technology plays in public order and safety.

In an effort to increase collaboration and stretch resources, the Greene County Sheriff's Office (GCSO) and the Springfield Police Department (SPD) are working together in many areas, including training, investigative task forces, and records management sharing. A Police-Fire Regional Training Center also is being built. Additionally, community agencies and private citizens have stepped up to enhance public safety efforts, such as Kurt Lawson's Safe and Sober Prom Initiative, Southeast Rotary's Don't Meth With Us presentations for 5th graders, and the Gang Task Force's Graffiti Reporting program, a youth-driven initiative.



Springfield Firefighters in Action.

### Development of Emergency Resources

The Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management has enhanced The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for citizens and local agencies. CERT trains volunteers to assist in the event of a disaster and to date 72 of the 584 people trained are registered CERT volunteers available should a major disaster occur. Demand for this 30-plus hour training is high. A new Public Safety Center also is being built to house the Office of Emergency Management and the 911 Center, which will further centralize emergency services and emergency call response.



### Greene County DWI and Drug Courts

These specialized courts have gained national recognition by the U.S. Department of Justice for their outcomes. Defendants have been assisted in obtaining services in residential or community-based treatment centers, and many have been able to seek employment. There has been a shift from punitive to restorative justice, and in many cases families have been able to remain together as defendants have been diverted from incarceration.

## RED FLAGS

Public Safety Snapshot			
	2008	2009	2010
Meth labs found (Springfield Police – SPD)	28	37	67
Meth labs found (Greene County Sheriff's Office – GCSO)	12	22	13
Alcohol Related Crashes (SPD)	352	377	286
Alcohol Related Crashes (GCSO)	167	199	169
DWIs (SPD)	1,503	1,411	1,200
DWIs (GCSO)	351	364	300
Crimes Against Persons (SPD)	1,068	1,197	1,328
Crimes Against Persons (GCSO)	887	1,026	1,078

Source: Springfield Police Department & Greene County Sheriff's Office

### Public Safety Staffing

A shortage of sworn Springfield Police Department (SPD) officers has been a red flag since the 2007 *Community Focus* report, although the passage of the pension sales tax, a small revival in the economy, and federal stimulus funds for 15 additional officers allowed the City to authorize two police academies for fiscal year 2010-2011. According to national standards, though, SPD staffing of officers remains below recommended levels and they continue to experience a significant shortage of non-sworn personnel due to a hiring freeze. Based on the 2010 Census, SPD is at 1.9 sworn officers per 1,000 population, as compared to 2.2 for agencies within the Uniform Crime Reporting Midwest Region. Staffing issues have undoubtedly affected police response time, a previous red flag, and although the department has not yet met its benchmark, the trend is positive.

In Greene County, a serious personnel shortage exists in the Sheriff's Office. There are only 37 uniformed deputies serving unincorporated Greene County, which translates to one officer per 1,274 citizens. In 2010, the patrol division was dispatched to 31,995 reactive calls for service, up from 28,153 in 2009.

Other justice-related agencies also are experiencing resource shortages\*. There is a shortage of judges to hear cases and public defenders are overtaxed. In the Greene County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, there is an urgent need for both prosecutors and support staff to handle the increased case load resulting from the high number of domestic violence calls, child abuse cases, and increased criminal and drug activity.

### Inadequate Jail Space

The Greene County Jail remains seriously overcrowded and a threat to public safety, a red flag identified for many years. It runs over maximum capacity almost daily, and measures are now underway to release certain detainees prematurely to free up space. To obtain adequate staffing levels for the average daily occupancy rate, an additional 53 detention officers and staff would need to be hired. As we hire more police and deputies to reduce crime, however, more criminals may end up in an overcrowded jail and the resulting number of cases needing to be handled by the Prosecutor's Office will continue to grow.

### Illegal Drug Use

A red flag since the 2004 *Community Focus* report, methamphetamine manufacturing and use continue to be a major problem for the Springfield-Greene County area. Despite efforts from law enforcement, treatment centers, and educational agencies, the number of confiscated meth labs continues to rise. Legislation to limit the sale of products with pseudoephedrine, a blue ribbon in 2005, has had limited success. Plans to introduce legislation making the sale of pseudoephedrine products only available by prescription may be of help, and SPD introduced a meth lab map, accessible via its website, to help educate the community as to the scope of the problem.

We also have seen a sharp increase in the teen abuse of prescription medications as well as the emergence of use by young people of analog drugs, including bath salts, K3, and mephedrone. At the same time, resources devoted to educating young people about the dangers of illegal drug use have declined. Springfield Public Schools had to cut its substance abuse specialists due to the ending of a federal grant. While organizations such as Community Partnership of the Ozarks have worked hard to provide substance abuse education, they, too, have been affected by staffing and budgetary constraints.

### Rising Crime Rates

Identified as a red flag in the 2007 *Community Focus* report, crimes against persons and property continue to increase, according to the Springfield Police Department. Crimes against persons, which include rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, rose 10.94 percent from 2009 to 2010; however crimes against property remain the highest volume crime category reported. During 2010, the number of property crimes reported to the SPD was 15,216, up from 14,012 in 2009.

Property crimes are most often associated with illicit drug activity and drug arrests for those under 18 years of age are also beginning to trend upwards after a period of decline.

These crimes are a serious threat to the community and the shortage of law enforcement personnel has most certainly compounded the problem.



Source: Springfield Police Department

### Alcohol-Related Accidents

Alcohol-related accidents have been identified as a red flag in several *Community Focus* reports, and while numbers have dropped from 352 in 2008 to 286 in 2010, they remain a serious problem in terms of loss of life, injury, and property loss. Local, county, and state law enforcement agencies continue to work together to reduce alcohol-related accidents through joint enforcement and education.

### High Rate of Domestic Violence

Greene County continues to experience one of the highest domestic violence rates in the state, which has been identified as a red flag since the 2004 *Community Focus* report. The number of domestic violence assaults reported by the Springfield Police Department increased from 2,318 in 2008 to 2,398 in 2010, after showing a small decline in 2009. Many factors play into this high level of domestic violence, but drug activity, including the use of methamphetamine, is one of the leading causes. Not only do the adult victims suffer from this violence, but the children involved may experience abuse, neglect, and a myriad of emotional and physical problems. Diversion programs, family violence shelters, anger-management counseling, and referrals to community support services are some of the methods being used to combat the problem. In some cases, however, arrest and incarceration are necessary.

### Inadequate Community/Individual Disaster Preparedness\*

The challenge exists of preparing our community members to be able to adequately respond to and recover from local disasters. This was cited as an emerging issue in the 2009 *Community Focus* report and a recent community survey on the state of preparedness shows both a lack of individual preparedness, as well as a need for improvement on the part of business and the faith community in adopting preparedness principles.

\* Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 *Community Focus* Report



Jerry Clark, Chair,  
Springfield-Greene County Park Board

The Springfield-Greene County recreation, sports, and leisure opportunities are an essential asset to our community's overall health. In 2009, Next Generation Consulting (NGC) ranked Springfield as one of the top 20 cities of its size for young professionals to live and work in the United States. NGC Founder Rebecca Ryan says: "The next generation is very savvy about choosing where they'll live. They look carefully at quality of life factors like how much time they're going to spend in traffic commuting, if they can live near a park or hike-and-bike trail, and whether a city's downtown stays awake after five." Recreation, sports, and leisure opportunities factored into many of the indices NGC used to determine Springfield's overall ranking.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Springfield-Greene County Library Activity

The Springfield-Greene County Library District offers 10 locations throughout the community and a bookmobile: with two destination libraries, the Library Center and the Library Station, and its three other city and five county branches. The libraries, with their comforting and thematic environments, are convenient places for study, free programs, and live music.

Springfield-Greene County Library Activity			
LIBRARY USAGE	CIRCULATION	ATTENDANCE	PROGRAMS/ATTENDANCE
2005	3,156,458	1,626,184	2,261/47,572
2006	3,232,679	1,632,927	1,979/47,043
2007	3,373,550	1,635,204	2,013 / 46,190
2008	3,626,792	1,678,868	4,640/52,473
2009	3,964,937	1,989,866	3,022/52,663

Source: Springfield-Greene County Library

### Caves

The Springfield-Greene County area's geologic setting includes many natural caves. For example, Fantastic Caverns gives visitors a unique guided experience in the world of caves. Discovered in 2001, Riverbluff Cave has been internationally recognized as the oldest fossil cave in North America.

### Community Olympic Development Program

Springfield is one of seven Community Olympic Development Programs (CODP) sites in the United States. The CODP is sanctioned by the United States Olympic Committee. It is designed to provide athletes access to the best facilities, programs, coaches, and competition in the country to enhance their opportunity to compete in Olympic sanctioned sports. The Springfield CODP currently supports tennis, ice hockey, volleyball, weightlifting, and archery.

### The Dan Kinney Park and Miracle Field

The Dan Kinney Park currently features a completely accessible playground. Future plans also include the Dan Kinney Park Family Center and the Miracle Field. The Family Center is designed to meet LEED Silver certification.

The Miracle League Field and Park Pavilion is an accessible ball field built under the guidelines established by the Miracle League Association. The field has a special playing surface allowing easy access for those using wheelchairs, walkers, or anyone who finds it difficult to walk due to health issues and/or blindness.

### The Dickerson Park Zoo

Dickerson Park Zoo is Springfield's up-close outdoor wildlife adventure with hundreds of animals from around the world – Asia, Africa, South America, Australia – and our own Missouri

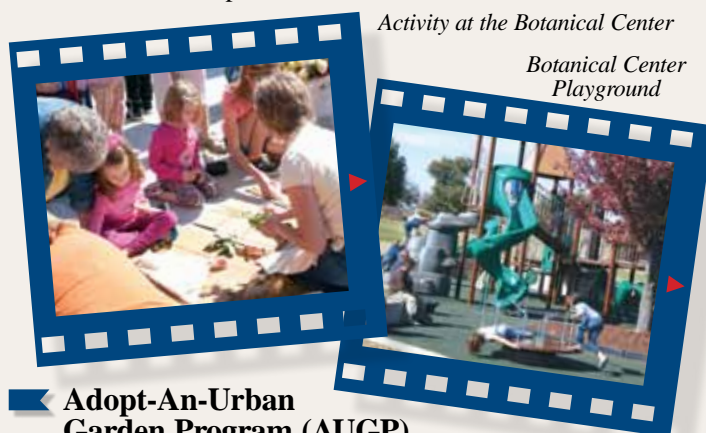
habitat Thanks to public and private donations, the zoo has seen tremendous growth over the past decade.

### The Botanical Center at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park

The Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park is home to the new Springfield-Greene County Botanical Center. The 12,700-square-foot center contains classroom, meeting, rental, office, and exhibit space, along with a roof garden, gift shop, library, and elevated plaza. Lake Drummond sits on the south of the property with a link to the Ozark Greenway's South Creek Greenway. The park also features the Dr. Bill Roston Butterfly House, The Gray-Campbell Farmstead, Master Gardener Demonstration Gardens, and the Mizumoto Japanese Stroll Garden.

Activity at the Botanical Center

Botanical Center  
Playground



### Adopt-An-Urban Garden Program (AUGP)

The goal of the Urban Gardens program is to offer space for growing fruits, vegetables, or flowers to people who otherwise do not have the immediate space available in their own backyards. In response to community requests, Rutledge-Wilson Farm Community Park began offering plots in 2010. Rutledge-Wilson will continue to make available its 60 garden plots with additional gardens opening this year at Grant Beach Park.

### Professional and Collegiate Teams

The Springfield community serves as home to several professional sports teams including the Springfield Cardinals AA minor league franchise, the Springfield Lasers World Team Tennis league, and the Springfield WolfPack professional indoor football franchise. Additionally, collegiate teams from Missouri State University, Drury University, Evangel University, Central Baptist College, and Baptist Bible College lead the way in providing Springfield with sports entertainment year round.

### Trails and Greenways

Springfield-Greene County has an extensively planned network of trails and greenways, which connect the community and special areas of interest, including but not limited to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield and the Springfield Conservation Nature Center.

### Waterways

Lakes and rivers in the Ozarks provide great water activities for everyone. These waterways provide enthusiasts with a variety of activities including canoeing, boating, scuba diving, parasailing, and fishing.



Bridge by the Cave at Sequiota Park



## Parks and Open Space

Springfield and Greene County residents value parks and open space; voters continue to demonstrate their support with the passage of a park sales tax not once, but twice. Most recently, voters approved the renewal of the 2006 Greene County Park Sales Tax to finish subsequent phases of the County-Wide Parks Open Space and Greenways Comprehensive Plan.

The Springfield-Greene County Park system is a National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Gold Medal Award Winning Department. Springfield and Greene County are privileged with a park system that far surpasses both the quality and quantity of facilities and programs that are typical of municipalities this size and larger. In serving the residents of Springfield-Greene County, the Park Board oversees more than 102 city-county parks and facilities encompassing more than 3,600 acres including historical and state-of-the-art facilities such as Cooper Park, Fasnigh Park, Lake Springfield Park, Valley Water Mill Park, the Botanical Center and gardens at Nathanael Greene/Close Memorial Park, Dan Kinney Park, and multiple School-Park sites.

The growth and development of this system provide the opportunity to host numerous community events, ranging from local to international competitions, which directly affect our local economy. In 2010, 35 major athletic events were studied. The economic impact information was calculated for those participants and/or attendees who do not reside within the Springfield-Greene County area. The economic impact (visitor spending) of these 35 athletic events that used Park Board facilities was conservatively estimated at \$6,750,000 spent within the community on hotels, meals, shopping and more.

The parks system currently works with more than 200 agencies and organizations on an annual basis to support and grow its facilities, programs, and special events. It is essential to the social capital of our community to continue to cultivate this network of collaborative agencies and organizations.

The success of this can be seen in both the bonding and bridging that occurs between the Springfield R-12 Public School District and the Springfield-Greene County Park Board within the School-Parks Are Reaching Communities (SPARC) program. The school-park concept is supported by current and future county-wide park sales tax referendums to develop 27 school parks over a 20-year period. Since its inception in 1998, SPARC has grown to include 26 school sites that have either before- or after-school programming through the school-park shared usage programming concept.

As a result of these collaborative relationships, responses to red flags within the community can more easily be addressed. The Springfield-Greene County Park Board, Ozarks Regional YMCA, and The Boys & Girls Clubs of Springfield have broadened their scope with special programming that focuses on some of the special needs of the Springfield R-12 Public School district, areas of childhood development, and entire families.

## RED FLAGS

### Obesity\*

As cited in the Community Health section of this report, childhood obesity is at epidemic proportions in our country and Greene County's rate is higher than the national average. Complications associated with obesity have led scientists to predict a shorter life expectancy for children of this generation. Without a continued effort to encourage active play and nutritious eating habits, these rates will continue to rise and chronic disease

will persist and increase.

In response to the critical nature of childhood obesity, the Healthy Kids Academy was established through collaborative efforts between the YMCA and the Missouri Foundation for Health. Healthy Kids Academy was implemented in the YMCA Prime Time before- and after-school childcare program to provide education on nutrition, reading labels, healthy eating habits, and tooth brushing. Specific periods of vigorous and moderate activity are a part of each day and only healthy snacks are provided for participants.

Additionally, SPARC began a walking program to target childhood obesity. The STEP CLUB now serves 19 schools reaching both students and parents with 1,200 participants per week. Children learn healthy eating habits and participate in school-park after school activities that are obtained through the Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition (WECAN) website and program curricula. Springfield was chosen as an intensive site for this nationally acclaimed program that is a collaborative effort between the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI).

### Securing Green Space and Conservation

Previous *Community Focus* reports discussed the need to secure green space and set aside parks for wildlife habitat and recreation due to urban sprawl. Additionally, conserving the environment, and thus preserving the quality of community waterways, is a growing concern\*.

With continued urban sprawl, a comprehensive plan to secure natural areas and preserve the environment for future parks, open space, and greenways of Greene County is essential. A strategic and evolving plan has been implemented to obtain new park land and property acquisitions through private donations, grants, and countywide Parks sales taxes.

Springfield and Greene County continue to experience success with this master plan, which was implemented at the following park sites: Rutledge-Wilson Farm Park, Rex P. Kreider Park, Lake Springfield Park, Valley Water Mill Park, Dan Kinney Park, and Lost Hill Park.

In collaboration with Springfield Public Works and Greene County Commission, the Springfield Park Board is working to establish the best practices and implementation in upgrading park lakes, waterways, and streams. For example, the Dickerson Park Zoo water quality improvements, Sequiota Park waterways and lake improvements, and Fasnigh Park waterway improvements are scheduled for completion in 2011.



*Sequiota Park Lake*

### Economic Conditions\*

The current economic conditions reported in the 2009 *Community Focus* report remain largely unchanged. Many agencies continue to operate their facilities and/or programs at capacity or greater. There is also an increase in the number of financial aid requests made to these agencies. While there is significant increase in use and financial aid request, the agencies are faced with limited resources to match this increased demand.

\* Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 Community Focus Report

"We must work together to create a regional multi-modal transportation network that is safe, sustainable, efficient, effective, and accessible in order to maintain and enhance economic vitality and quality of life."

Jim O'Neal, Mayor, Springfield

Transportation is essential to all aspects of the community, from education to recreation. The movement of people and goods is important for the health and vibrancy of the community.

Transportation choices and sustainability are the emerging themes of the regional transportation network. The Market Street Action Plan and the Springfield Strategic Plan both highlight the need for sustainability.

Transportation funding shortfalls are a major issue for all modes of transportation within the region. The roadway network, sidewalk system, and public and school bus systems face funding shortages.

## BLUE RIBBONS

### Roadway Traffic

The five-county area that comprises the Springfield Metropolitan Statistical Area has grown by more than 68,000 people in the last 10 years, accounting for an 18.5 percent growth rate during the last decade. This growth has placed increased pressure on the transportation network.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average commute time remains within 1 percent of that of the last decade. It has risen from 17 minutes to 17.63 minutes for drivers within Springfield and increased from 19.17 minutes to 19.45 minutes for drivers in all of Greene County.

While traffic flow remains a concern for commuters, many improvements have been completed to avoid severe traffic congestion. These improvements were funded by partnerships between the City of Springfield, Greene County, and the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT). In the City of Springfield, voters renewed a Capital Improvement sales tax in 2010 and Transportation sales tax in 2008 to fund transportation projects. Greene County also uses sales taxes to fund major transportation projects. One example of collaboration is the Kansas Expressway and I-44 interchange. Constructed as a diverging-diamond interchange, it was the first of its kind in the nation and received the 2010 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity for reduction in accidents and reduced traffic delay.



Kansas Expressway and I-44 Diverging Diamond Interchange

Another way that traffic flow has been improved is through the incorporation of Intelligent Transportation Systems. A new Regional Transportation Management Center opened in early 2011 provides a system to monitor and improve traffic flow through a computerized traffic signal system with closed circuit real-time traffic cameras and a 9-1-1 live data dispatch feed. Message signs were also installed in 2011 to inform drivers of accidents or congestion in order to take a detour.

SpringfieldCommunityFocus.org

### Safety

The World Health Organization has declared traffic injuries and fatalities a World Health Issue. In 2010, the City of Springfield was honored with three awards recognizing the comprehensive improvement of safety for automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists. These awards include:

- 2010 Springfield Safe Community and Injury Prevention Award;
- 2010 Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Public Agency Council Achievement Award of Excellence; and the
- 2010 Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Edmund R. Ricker Transportation Safety Award

The overall number of accidents has been steadily decreasing due to intersection improvements and also to red-light cameras, which have been suspended due to court challenges. In 2008, the City began to implement a neighborhood speed reduction program, which led to an overall average speed reduction of 1 mph to 3 mph citywide. Springfield also has implemented a Traffic Safety Education program that provides signs and brochures to promote personal responsibility with regard to traffic safety.

In the 2009 *Community Focus* report, an increase in pedestrian and bicycle accidents\* was reported as an emerging issue. Over the past two years, the actual numbers of accidents have been decreasing. While this issue still needs monitoring, the safety programs implemented by the City have begun addressing the issue.

City of Springfield Traffic Accidents										
All Accidents*	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
Fatality Accidents	16	14	20	18	22	9	17	10	19	
Injury Accidents	2,500	2,342	2,484	2,144	2,097	2,090	2,001	2,093	2,121	
Total Accidents	8,316	8,097	8,109	7,921	7,629	7,849	7,487	7,436	7,409	
*All accidents include Bike & Ped										

Source: City of Springfield 2010 Traffic Data Book

### Airport

The new Springfield-Branson National Airport terminal opened in 2009 with additional capacity to allow for more convenient travel. From Springfield, passengers can get non-stop service to 10 cities, up from 6 cities in 2000 and down from 12 cities in 2006. Nationally air travel has been decreasing, and that is true of the Springfield airport as well. However, the total number of annual passengers is still up by 12 percent since 2000.



Springfield-Branson National Airport Terminal

Total Airport Passengers	
2000	710,961
2001	657,224
2002	652,283
2003	653,253
2004	721,958
2005	888,738
2006	864,999
2007	882,904
2008	779,995
2009	811,771
2010	796,251

Source:  
Springfield-Branson  
National Airport



## Public Transportation

City Utilities operates both a fixed route bus system and an on-demand paratransit system for disabled riders. A lack of transit capacity\* was identified as an emerging issue in the 2009 *Community Focus* report. Since that time ridership numbers have decreased. In 2008, a new fare structure was enacted, which led to less recreational ridership. The new fare structure has alleviated the transit capacity issue on the busiest routes, allowing for more ridership focused on reaching a destination.



*Passenger using bike rack on front of City Utilities bus.*

### Transit Ridership

2005	1,659,279
2006	1,903,926
2007	2,047,496
2008	1,599,278
2009	1,475,617
2010	1,406,547

Source: City Utilities

City Utilities has purchased five new paratransit route buses to provide service by appointment to disabled passengers. All but two of the 25 fixed route buses have surpassed their useful life and many are more than 14 years old. Replacement buses are needed in order to continue to provide transit service in coming years.

## Sustainable Transportation Network\*

The City of Springfield and Greene County are working together to provide a sustainable transportation network through sidewalks, trails, and bicycle routes. A sustainable transportation system is one that is equitable within and between generations, is affordable and efficient, offers choices, limits emissions, and minimizes consumption of non-renewable resources.

The City of Springfield has signed more than 60 miles of designated bike routes and is enhancing the system with additional pavement markings and signs. To further facilitate connections between greenways, the City of Springfield is working on a project named The Link, which will enhance sidewalks as well as bicycle route signage, primarily on existing streets with minimal vehicular traffic. The League of American Bicyclists awarded the City of Springfield a Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community designation in 2010 for bicycle-route improvements and educational and promotional programs for bicyclists.

The City of Springfield has constructed more than 40 miles of sidewalks to elementary schools based on priorities submitted by each school and has identified a goal of having a sidewalk on at least one side of every street within a half-mile of elementary schools. In order to meet this goal, 100 miles of sidewalk need to be constructed. About \$1 million per year has been dedicated through the quarter-cent transportation tax to meet this goal. Greene County is addressing this need by constructing sidewalks with road projects near schools. In conjunction with construction



*The City of Springfield has constructed more than 46 miles of sidewalks to elementary schools since 1989.*

improvements, the City manages a Safe Routes to School Program to encourage safe walking programs at schools.

Other sustainable transportation programs include the completion of 105 miles of greenways, 15 streetscape projects in the Center City that provide improved pedestrian and bicycle linkages, a road diet program that reduced the number of automobile lanes to provide for bicycle lanes, and a regional rideshare matching system to provide options for sharing the commute.

## RED FLAGS

### Transportation Funding Shortfall\*

The overall traffic volume remains steady in spite of rising gas prices and an economic recession; however, transportation funding is declining. Both federal and state fuel tax revenues from the motor fuel tax are declining due to more fuel efficient vehicles and people traveling less. Local transportation funding is provided through sales tax, which experienced declines through the prolonged recession. The problem is so serious because the Missouri Department of Transportation's budget has decreased from \$1.2 billion last year to \$662 million in 2011. By December 2012, the Missouri Department of Transportation will be reducing staff by 1,200 due to the decreasing ability to fund construction projects. The local impact of this state and federal funding shortfall is that no new improvements will be funded to address safety or congestion although maintenance work will continue.

### Paratransit Service and Coordination

Paratransit service and coordination have been red flags in previous *Community Focus* reports. The 2007 report identified a shortage of door-to-door transportation service for the elderly and disabled. The shortage of service persists due to a lack of funding and liability insurance costs. Transit providers are unable to cover the costs to provide service through ridership fares alone. Medicaid and Medicare will provide a percentage of the costs, but additional funding is needed from government sources in order to provide services to all who need it.

While additional coordination is occurring among the more than 20 non-profit transportation providers that offer services to the elderly and disabled, a need still exists for coordinated dispatching. Funding is needed to provide a central calling system that would allow for clients to call a single number and have a ride scheduled with an available provider.

### Need for a Regional Transit System\*

The ridership of the public transportation system is expected to increase over the next 10 to 20 years due to the aging baby boomer population. Increasing gas prices also will affect ridership. Increased investment will be needed to provide service to additional customers and more frequent service.

Currently, service is only provided within the City of Springfield city limits. A regional system would allow for service to those living in other cities and outside of the city limits. A new funding source is needed to expand transit service. The Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO) and City Utilities are conducting a study to determine what the costs for such a system might be.

### Funding Shortfall for all Public School Busing

In previous *Community Focus* reports, the reduction of state funding for public school bus service was identified. State funding continues to be reduced. The Springfield Public School district has been able to maintain service despite the shortfalls. In addition, the state law requirement that a yellow school bus transport students in order to get state reimbursement for this service is an obstacle to collaboration.

\*Indicates Emerging Issue in 2009 *Community Focus* Report



# Community FOCUS Committee List

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# Additional Resources

Burrell Behavioral Health	<a href="http://burrellcenter.com">burrellcenter.com</a>
City of Springfield	<a href="http://springfieldmo.gov">springfieldmo.gov</a>
Community Foundation of the Ozarks	<a href="http://cfozarks.org">cfozarks.org</a>
Community Partnership of the Ozarks	<a href="http://commpartnership.org">commpartnership.org</a>
CoxHealth	<a href="http://coxhealth.com">coxhealth.com</a>
Greene County	<a href="http://greenecountymo.org">greenecountymo.org</a>
The Health Commission	<a href="http://thehealthcomission.org">thehealthcomission.org</a>
Jordan Valley Community Health Center	<a href="http://jordanvalley.org">jordanvalley.org</a>
Junior League of Springfield	<a href="http://jlspringfield.org">jlspringfield.org</a>
The Kitchen Clinic	<a href="http://thekitcheninc.org/clinic.php">thekitcheninc.org/clinic.php</a>
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	<a href="http://dese.mo.gov">dese.mo.gov</a>
Missouri Department of Higher Education	<a href="http://dhe.mo.gov">dhe.mo.gov</a>
Missouri Department of Natural Resources	<a href="http://dnr.mo.gov">dnr.mo.gov</a>
Missouri Department of Social Services	<a href="http://dss.mo.gov">dss.mo.gov</a>
Missouri Department of Transportation	<a href="http://modot.mo.gov">modot.mo.gov</a>
Ozarks Community Hospital	<a href="http://ochonline.com">ochonline.com</a>
Ozark Greenways Incorporated	<a href="http://ozarkgreenways.org">ozarkgreenways.org</a>
St. John's Health System	<a href="http://stjohns.com">stjohns.com</a>
Smokefree Air Act of 2011	<a href="http://springfieldmo.gov/smokefree">springfieldmo.gov/smokefree</a>
Springfield/Greene County Social Capital Survey Report	<a href="http://sociology.missouristate.edu/assets/sociology/Springfield_Social_Capital_Survey_Report.pdf">sociology.missouristate.edu/assets/sociology/Springfield_Social_Capital_Survey_Report.pdf</a>
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce	<a href="http://springfieldchamber.com">springfieldchamber.com</a>
Springfield-Greene County Health Department	<a href="http://springfieldmo.gov/health">springfieldmo.gov/health</a>
Springfield-Greene County Library District	<a href="http://thelibrary.org">thelibrary.org</a>
Springfield-Greene County Office of Emergency Management	<a href="http://greenecountymo.org/oem">greenecountymo.org/oem</a>
Springfield-Greene County Park Board	<a href="http://parkboard.org">parkboard.org</a>
Springfield Public Schools	<a href="http://springfieldpublicschoolsmo.org">springfieldpublicschoolsmo.org</a>
Springfield Regional Arts Council	<a href="http://springfieldarts.org">springfieldarts.org</a>
Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services	<a href="http://health.mo.gov">health.mo.gov</a>
United Way of the Ozarks	<a href="http://uwozarks.com">uwozarks.com</a>

## Community Focus

[SpringfieldCommunityFocus.org](http://SpringfieldCommunityFocus.org)



Arts and Culture

Business and Economic Conditions

Citizen Participation

Community Health

Early Childhood

Education

Housing

**Community**

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Natural Environment

Public Order and Safety

Recreation, Sports and Leisure

Transportation

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