



Metro Center Neighborhood Investment Plan 2025–2035

City of Springfield and the Metro Center Association, Residents, local Businesses, Organizations, and other Stakeholders

Metro Center Neighborhood Investment Plan 2025–2035



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Goal: To enhance and inform the delivery of municipal services and the investment of municipal, state, federal, and private funding, and other resources in the Metro Center neighborhood through collaborative planning and implementation between residents, including resident businesses and organizations, and other stakeholders and city departments.

Introduction

Welcome to the Metro Center Neighborhood Investment Plan 2025.

This plan begins with a brief history of how the neighborhood developed over time. We want everyone reading the plans to know that, just as your neighborhood was created by people who came before you, so too can you influence the way your neighborhood develops into the future.

In 2022, as the city and the nation emerged from the COVID 19 pandemic, the city of Springfield allocated \$746,340 of [American Rescue Plan Act](#) funds to update the city’s [Neighborhood Data Atlas](#) and facilitate development of [Neighborhood Investment Plans](#) in twelve neighborhoods where residents experienced disproportionately high rates of COVID infection, hospitalization, and death, including the Metro Center neighborhood. The city engaged the [Pioneer Valley Planning Commission](#) (PVPC) to complete this work, and PVPC subsequently engaged [Way Finders Community Building and Engagement](#) team via a competitive procurement process to lead engagement focusing on residents, local businesses, and community-based organizations.

The goal of this neighborhood plan and the planning process that led to its development is to establish and agree on shared priorities for investment in the neighborhood and to strengthen the connection between the neighborhood—its residents, small businesses, institutions, and community-based organizations, along with the [Neighborhood Council](#) and the city’s many departments. The city of Springfield works with residents through the city’s neighborhood councils, and the city relies on them to share information with their residents. Residents who want to get involved in their neighborhoods can start with the neighborhood council. Recognizing that the city’s neighborhood councils needed financial support and technical assistance, the city invested [\\$1.7 million in the form of \\$100,000 grants to each neighborhood council](#) in 2022-2024 and developed a neighborhood council handbook.

This planning process was initiated by the city [Office of Planning and Economic Development](#) (OPED) [Division of Neighborhood Services](#), and this city office is working to ensure integration and acceptance of these prioritized projects by all city departments, boards, and commissions. Through this plan, the city and the neighborhood are proclaiming their shared commitment to work collaboratively on behalf of their residents to implement these priority investments over the next ten years, through 2035.

Cover image: 19th century rowhouses on Mattoon Street

Previous page: Metro Center neighborhood, seen from the South End Bridge

Executive Summary

The Metro Center Neighborhood Investment plan reflects the vision and values of a community that takes pride in being inclusive, connected, and forward-thinking. At its core, the plan focuses on creating a vibrant, safe and accessible neighborhood that supports the diverse needs of all residents, with a particular emphasis on those who have historically been overlooked in traditional planning efforts. Through extensive community engagement, residents prioritized key investments, including enhancing walkability and bike infrastructure to ensure everyone, regardless of age or ability, can move safely through the neighborhood. The plan also calls for a new public park to serve as a shared space for relaxation, recreation, and cultural gathering, fostering a sense of community cohesion, and strongly supports the establishment of a multi-cultural community center hub in the neighborhood.

Local businesses are central to the neighborhood's identity, and the investment plan champions small, independent enterprises that reflect the diversity and creativity of the residents. By supporting these businesses, we not only stimulate the local economy but also reinforce the neighborhood's character and resilience. This plan sets out strategies to ensure that entrepreneurs from all backgrounds have the resources and support they need to thrive while enhancing the area's overall commercial vitality.

Balancing affordable housing with market-rate options is also a critical part of our long-term vision for equitable growth. The plan outlines a thoughtful approach to ensure that families and individuals with varying incomes can call Metro Center home, without the risk of displacement. This balance of housing types is key to maintaining the neighborhood's caring spirit, where long-term residents and newcomers alike can build meaningful connections. The Metro Center Neighborhood Investment Plan is a blueprint for a future that honors our history, embraces our diversity, and strengthens our shared commitment to a thriving, inclusive community.

A historical black and white photograph of a busy city street, likely in the early 20th century. The street is filled with pedestrians, horse-drawn carriages, and early motor vehicles. On the left, a large trolley is visible. In the center, a tall building features a prominent sign that reads "LYNCH". To the right, a large, ornate building with many windows and decorative architectural elements stands out. The street is wide and appears to be a major thoroughfare. The overall scene depicts a bustling urban environment.

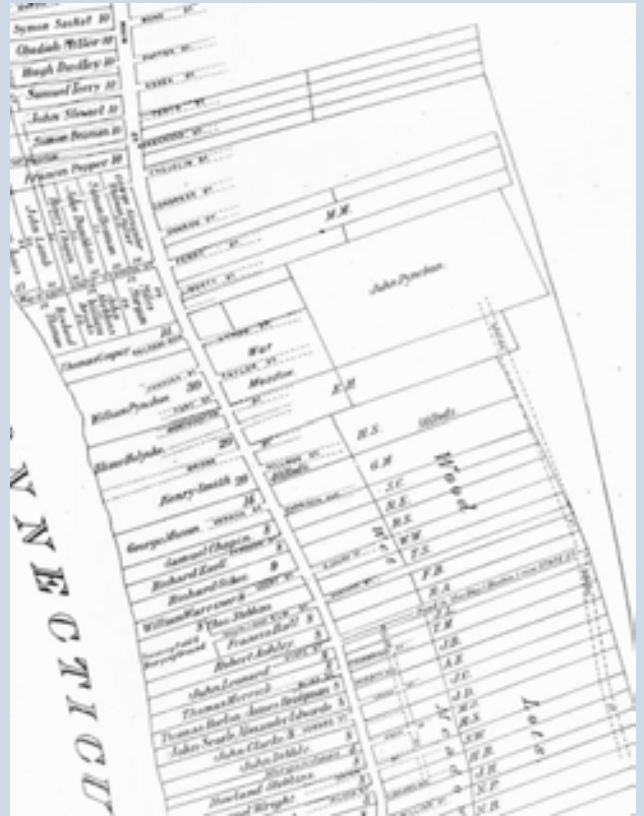
Metro Center Neighborhood History

Early History

The land that would become the Metro Center neighborhood was historically part of the homeland of the Agawam people, who lived on both sides of the Connecticut River in modern-day Hampden County. This area was an important crossroads for Native American trade, as it was located near the confluence of the Westfield, Chicopee, and Connecticut Rivers.

In 1636, colonial settlers, led by William Pynchon, purchased several parcels from the Agawam people, including present-day Metro Center. This land would become the center of the colonial settlement here, which was initially named Agawam but later renamed to Springfield. The early development was concentrated along Main Street, where settlers were granted long, narrow house lots that extended west from Main Street to the Connecticut River. The east side of Main Street was primarily swampland, and was initially unsuitable for development. Instead, the east side served as woodlots for the settlers.

Throughout most of the colonial period, geography helped to limit the extent of Springfield's development. The marsh on the east side of Main Street, and the steep slope beyond it, were barriers to eastward growth, and the Connecticut River acted as a barrier on the western side of the settlement. This meant that most of modern-day Springfield remained sparsely settled during the 1600s and 1700s, aside from Metro Center and the northern part of the South End neighborhood.



Detail of a 19th century map, showing the colonial-era house lots in Metro Center. From The First Century of the History of Springfield by Henry M. Burt (1898).



The Pynchon House, also known as the Fort, which stood at the corner of Main and Fort Streets from around 1660 until it was demolished in 1831. Illustration from the book Historical Collections (1848).

Previous page: Main Street looking north from near Pynchon Street in the 1910s. Library of Congress, Detroit Publishing Company Collection.

Economic Growth

William Pynchon chose to settle in this area largely because of its location on major trading routes, and Springfield would remain an important commercial hub for many years. Much of this trade involved transporting goods up and down the Connecticut River, and many families became wealthy in the process, including the Pynchons and later the Dwights. They were among the “River Gods,” the ruling upper class that dominated the Connecticut River Valley in Massachusetts during the colonial period.

Commerce would continue to play a major role in Springfield’s economy after the American Revolution, but manufacturing would soon surpass it. This was largely because of the Springfield Arsenal, which was established in 1777 on the north side of State Street, in the eastern part of the Metro Center neighborhood. The arsenal became the Springfield Armory in 1794, with a focus on the development and manufacturing of small arms for the United States military.

The Armory provided employment for Springfield residents, but it also helped to spark further industrial growth. The technological innovations that were developed at the Armory were applicable in many other types of manufacturing, beyond just firearms. Many industrialists established factories in Springfield to draw upon the skilled local workforce, and many former Armory employees also started their own firms.

Residential Development

Springfield’s population had remained relatively low during the 1700s. By the first federal census in 1790, Springfield had just 1,574 residents, making it the

12th largest community in Western Massachusetts. This count included modern-day Chicopee, but otherwise most of these residents lived within the current Metro Center neighborhood.

However, the establishment of the Armory and other industries led to significant population growth in the first half of the 19th century. By the eve of the Civil War in 1860, Springfield had grown to over 15,000 residents, which was nearly double that of the next-largest community in the region.



Detail from 1851 map of Springfield, showing the Metro Center neighborhood. Boston Public Library, Norman P. Leventhal Map Center

By this point, most of the city's residents still lived within the boundaries of the Metro Center neighborhood. Along Main Street, most of the old colonial-era house lots were subdivided into new streets extending down to the Connecticut River. East of Main Street, many of the city's wealthier residents built homes on State Street and other nearby streets, including Chestnut and Maple Streets.

Chestnut Street became a particularly desirable area, and it was developed with large homes that had expansive views from atop the hill. Prominent 19th century residents here included future Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft; dictionary publisher George Merriam; artist Chester Harding; railroad and bank executive Chester W. Chapin; and artist James Abbott McNeill Whistler, who lived on Chestnut Street for several years as a child.

During this time period, Springfield also became home to a small but growing population of Black residents, many of whom had escaped from slavery in the south. At the time, Springfield was a major hub in the Underground Railroad, with prominent abolitionists including John Brown, who lived on Franklin Street in the northern part of the Metro Center neighborhood. The Black community was centered around the Free Church on Sanford Street, and many members formed the League of Gileadites, with the goal of actively resisting any attempts to recapture former enslaved people in Springfield. One of the presumed



The home of railroad and bank executive Chester W. Chapin on Chestnut Street, around 1893. From Sketches of The Old Inhabitants and Other Citizens of Old Springfield (1893).



The view of Metro Center looking southwest from the top of the Arsenal tower, around 1869. J. Paul Getty Museum.

members was Thomas Thomas. He had escaped from slavery in Maryland, came to Springfield, and became a successful restaurateur in the Metro Center neighborhood.



The view looking north on Main Street from near the railroad arch, around 1908. Library of Congress, Detroit Publishing Company Collection.

Post-Civil War Population Growth

The Springfield Armory played a vital role in supplying the Union army with firearms during the Civil War. The total wartime output consisted of more than 800,000 rifles in four years, which was more than the combined total produced at the Armory in the previous 66 years.

The Armory required a large workforce to accomplish this, and other industries in the city likewise increased production to meet wartime demands of other products. The result was that the city's population nearly doubled during the 1860s, as many of the wartime workers and their families remained in the city.

By 1870, Springfield had a population of 26,703. More than half, about 13,500, lived in Metro Center. By this point, Springfield had a large immigrant population,

with about 3,500 foreign-born residents in Metro Center, most of whom lived in the northern part of the neighborhood, north of the railroad tracks.

Late 19th Century Changes

The post-Civil War population boom led to sustained growth over the next few decades.



Looking north on Maple Street toward State Street, around 1905-1915. Library of Congress, Detroit Publishing Company Collection.

Metro Center saw significant changes during this time, with much of the older, low-density residential development giving way to factories and commercial properties. This was particularly the case on Main Street, which by the turn of the 20th century consisted almost entirely of multi-story commercial buildings with retail on the ground floor and offices on the upper floors.

Around the same time, just as Main Street was developing into a major commercial corridor, State Street was becoming home to many of the city's cultural institutions. The quarter-mile section of State Street between Chestnut and Byers Streets had once been primarily residential, but by 1900 it featured the city library, the art and science museums, a

grammar school, Central High School, and four churches.

These changes helped lead to a shift in Springfield's population during the late 19th century. With Metro Center developing into an important economic and cultural hub, many residents chose to relocate to the new "streetcar suburbs" such as McKnight and Forest Park, where they could live in large, new homes while easily commuting to Metro Center via electric trolleys. By the 1910 census, the population of Metro Center was approximately 16,300. This was an increase in total numbers compared 1870, but it represented a much smaller percentage of the city's total population. While half of Springfield residents lived in Metro Center in 1870, just 18% lived here by 1910.



Aerial view of Metro Center in 1932. National Archives.



Detail of 1935 Home Owners' Loan Corporation map of Springfield, showing the Metro Center area. Areas shaded in green are "best;" blue are "still desirable;" yellow "definitely declining;" and red "hazardous." Source: Mapping Inequality

This trend would continue throughout the 20th century, and by 2020 the Metro Center neighborhood had 5,874 residents. This is a 64% decrease compared to the residential population of the neighborhood in 1910, and Metro Center residents comprise just 3.8% of the city's total population

20th Century Challenges

The rise of automobile ownership in the early 20th century contributed to these changes, creating an even greater separation between the places where people lived and where they worked and shopped. The central core of the Metro Center neighborhood became almost entirely commercial, but in the meantime the residential areas on the edges of the neighborhood experienced disinvestment during the first half of the 20th century.

Some of this disinvestment came in the form of redlining. For example, in the 1930s the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) produced maps that assigned one of four grades to different parts of major cities, based on perceived long-term security risks. These

determinations were often made based on faulty metrics such as the presence of racial minorities, immigrant populations, and poor white residents. The Springfield map, which was produced in 1935, classified large portions of Metro Center as being "Hazardous," which was the lowest possible grade. These areas, which were highlighted in red on the map, included the parts of the neighborhood to the south of State Street and to the north of the railroad arch. These designations made it more difficult for homeowners to attain mortgages in these

neighborhoods, with in turn exacerbated existing problems.

Highways and Redevelopment

The lack of investment in these residential neighborhoods, in turn, led to large-scale redevelopment projects that displaced many residents in those sections of Metro Center. Most significantly, this included the construction of Interstates 91 and 291, both of which pass through Metro Center. When these highways were built in the 1960s, many believed that this was the key to economic growth, and that a city bypassed by the interstate highway system would turn into a "ghost town."

However, not all Springfield residents were enthusiastic about the highways, particularly those who lived in the affected areas. State Representative Armand N. Tancrati, whose district in the North End would be heavily impacted by the proposed routes, expressed his opposition to any highways in Springfield at a public hearing in 1960. By contrast, the legislators from the more suburban parts of the

city—which would not be directly affected by the highways—voiced their support for these projects. Among them was Representative John D. B. Macmillan of suburban East Forest Park, who dismissed concerns about the routes by arguing that, either way, “someone has to be hurt.”

Interstate 91 was ultimately built along the eastern side of the Connecticut River through Springfield, with Interstate 291 crossing diagonally through the northern part of the city. The two highways meet at an interchange on the northern edge of the Metro Center neighborhood, where Interstate 291 forms the boundary between Metro Center and the North End neighborhood.

Aside from the highways, portions of Metro Center were also heavily affected by redevelopment projects, particular in the area to the north of the railroad arch. This part of the neighborhood had long been home of many working-class residents and immigrant communities, but by the 1950s many city officials viewed it as a slum, and the area was targeted for redevelopment in conjunction with the highway construction. Nearly all of the buildings between the railroad tracks and Memorial Square were demolished, and the area was redeveloped with automobile-oriented commercial buildings that were surrounded by large surface parking lots.

Revitalization and Preservation Efforts

In the last few decades of the 20th century, Metro Center was the subject of other large-scale developments that were intended to revitalize the central business district area of



Aerial view of the U.S. Armory around 1935, with Pearl, Worthington, Byers, and Spring Streets in the lower foreground. National Archives.

the city. This included the construction of high-rise commercial buildings such as Tower Square and Monarch Place, along with the Civic Center—modern-day MassMutual Center—as a venue for sports, concerts, and other events. Other redevelopment efforts during this period focused on drawing residents back to Metro Center, including the construction of the 34-story Chestnut Tower, which opened in 1976 as the largest residential building in the city.

This period also saw the rise of the historic preservation movement in Springfield, including protecting the historic portions of the Metro Center neighborhood that had not yet been affected by redevelopment. In 1972, the city created the Quadrangle-Mattoon Local Historic District with the goal of protecting the historically significant properties in the vicinity of the Quadrangle, including the 19th century brick rowhouses on Mattoon Street. Other local historic districts were later established, including the Apremont Triangle, Lower Maple, and the Federal Square-Upper State Street Local Historic Districts, which are located partially or entirely within Metro Center.

Other historic preservation efforts involved adaptive reuse projects to convert historic buildings into residential units. Here in Metro Center, this included the former Classical High School on State Street, the Kimball Hotel on Chestnut Street, the Milton Bradley factory on Stockbridge Street, and a group of 19th century industrial and commercial buildings on Main,

Taylor, and Worthington Streets. More recent preservation-related investments have included the former Willys-Overland Building on Chestnut Street, along with the restoration of the former Court Square Hotel on Elm Street.



Local Historic Districts in Metro Center. Source: MassGIS



Metro Center Zoning and Land Use

Neighborhood Boundaries

The Metro Center neighborhood forms the urban core of Springfield, and it includes the city's central business district along with surrounding residential areas. The neighborhood is bounded by the Connecticut River to the west; Interstate 291, Cass, Liberty, Heywood, and Warwick Streets to the north; Armory and Federal Streets to the east; and State, School, Mulberry, Maple, Union, Willow, and State Streets to the south.

Residential Zoning

The Metro Center neighborhood has only a limited amount of residential zoning, mainly in the eastern part of the neighborhood. The area around Mattoon, Elliot, Spring, and Byers Streets is zoned Residence C, which allows for a range of single-family, two-family, and multi-family buildings.

Likewise, portions of Union and High Streets are zoned Residence C, as are the upper parts of Pearl and Worthington Streets. In addition, the Armory campus is nominally zoned Residence B, although it is not actually used for residential purposes. Instead, most of the Armory is now Springfield Technical Community College, while the western part of the campus is the Springfield Armory National Historical Site.

Not counting the Armory, approximately 10% of the zoned land in Metro Center is residential. This is a significantly smaller percentage than other neighborhoods in the city, but many of the residential buildings in Metro Center are located in areas that are zoned for Business.

Previous page: 2021 aerial image of Metro Center.
Source: MassGIS



Medium-density residential development on Salem Street



Apartment buildings on High Street



Mixed-use residential and commercial buildings near the corner of Main and Worthington Streets.



A mix of government and high-rise commercial buildings in Metro Center



Main Street from State Street, showing the MassMutual Center on the right



The northern part of Metro Center along Liberty Street

Business Zoning

The majority of the Metro Center neighborhood is zoned for Business C, including almost all of the land between Chestnut Street and the Connecticut River. The Business C zoning district allows for a wide range of high-density uses, including mixed use residential and commercial properties. Included in this area are Dwight and Chestnut Streets, which are areas where residents who participated in this neighborhood investment planning process would like to see more pedestrian-focused development and amenities.

In the northeastern part of the neighborhood, much of the land is zoned Business B, particularly along the upper parts of Worthington and Taylor Streets. This zoning district allows for a wide range of businesses, including those that are generally car oriented. Other areas are zoned Business A, which focuses more on promoting pedestrian-oriented development. There are also several Commercial A zones, primarily along State Street. All of these business and commercial zones also allow for residential use, and many of these parcels feature apartment buildings and mixed-use properties.

Business C is the single largest zoning district in Metro Center, covering over 25% of the zoned land in the neighborhood. In addition, about 7% of Metro Center is zoned Business A, 12% is zoned Business B, and 6% is zoned Commercial A.

Industrial Zoning

There are several industrial zones in Metro Center, primarily in the northern part of the neighborhood. Most of the land along the railroad corridor between

Liberty and Taylor Streets is zoned for industrial use, as is the area around Congress Street and the northern part of Main Street. Many of these parcels are not actively being used for industrial purposes, and are instead occupied by a variety of businesses and organizations. In total, about 23% of the neighborhood is zoned for industrial use.

Land Use

As Springfield's central business district, the Metro Center neighborhood is heavily developed with a variety of medium- and high-density uses. This includes high-rise commercial offices, government buildings, hotels, restaurants, retail stores, and event venues, along with cultural institutions such as schools, museums, churches, and the city's main library. City Hall and the Hampden County Hall of Justice are both located in the neighborhood, as are many of the city's major attractions, including the Springfield Museums, the MassMutual Center, and the Springfield Armory National Historic Site.

However, while it has a substantial amount of commercial, civil, and institutional uses, Metro Center is also a residential neighborhood. Most of the existing residential development is east of the central business district, and it features a wide range of housing stock, including single-family and multi-family homes, along with large apartment buildings and high-rises.



The Springfield Technical Community College campus at the former Armory



The northeastern part of the Metro Center neighborhood from the Armory



Symphony Hall and City Hall on Court Street



Main Street looking north from the corner of Harrison Avenue



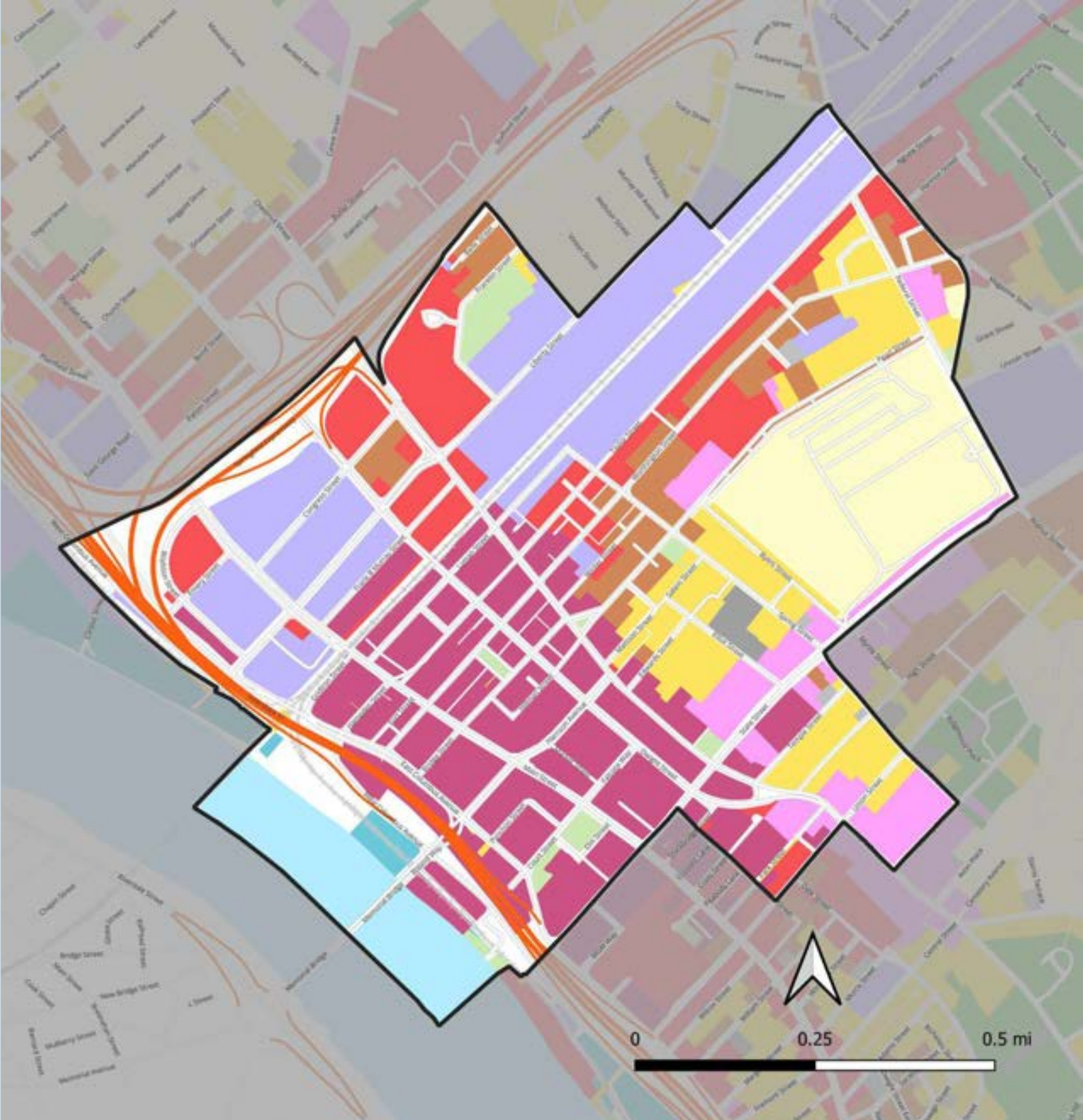
Vacant Business B land at the corner of Worthington and Alert Streets










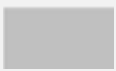
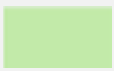


Apartments on Worthington Street near Federal Street

Summary of Metro Center Zoning Districts

District	Description
Residence B	Medium density residential, primarily single-family and two-family
Residence C	Single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings
Commercial A	Small scale retail and service convenience type commercial establishments.
Business A	Main Street and pedestrian oriented shopping districts with residential allowed.
Business B	Highway-oriented automotive and service business activities.
Business C	Downtown with pedestrian amenities and high-rise buildings with no setbacks. Mixed uses.
Industrial A	Full range of industrial and business uses compatible with a major urban center.



Metro Center Zoning Districts

	Residence B		Business C		Industrial A
	Residence C		Commercial A		Connecticut River District
	Business A		Commercial Parking		Open Space
	Business B		Office A		

Source: MassGIS, Springfield WebGIS

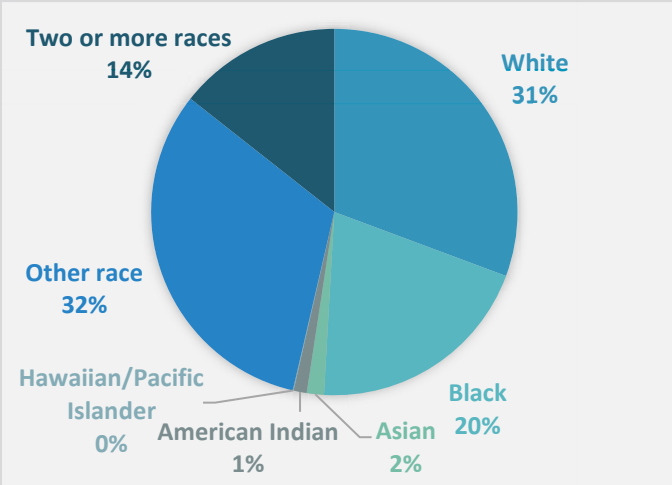


Metro Center Demographics and Housing

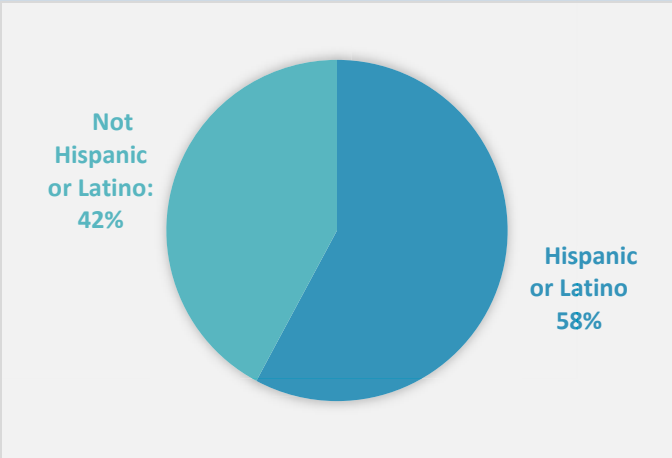
Demographic Overview

As of the 2020 census, the Metro Center neighborhood has a population of 5,874, which comprises approximately 3.8% of the city’s total population. Of these residents, 31% identify as White, 20% as Black, 14% as being of two or more races, and 32% as being of another race. The majority of Metro Center residents are of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, with 58% identifying as such.

An estimated 22% of residents are under the age of 18, although this varies within the neighborhood. Among residents who live to the

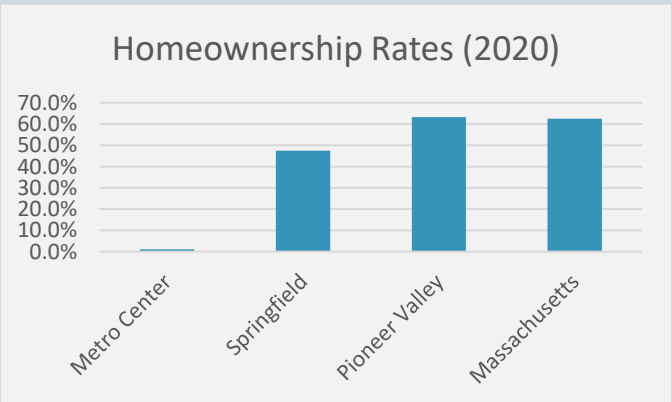
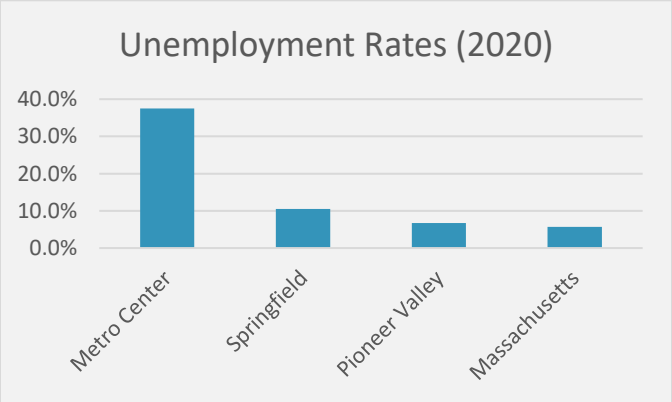
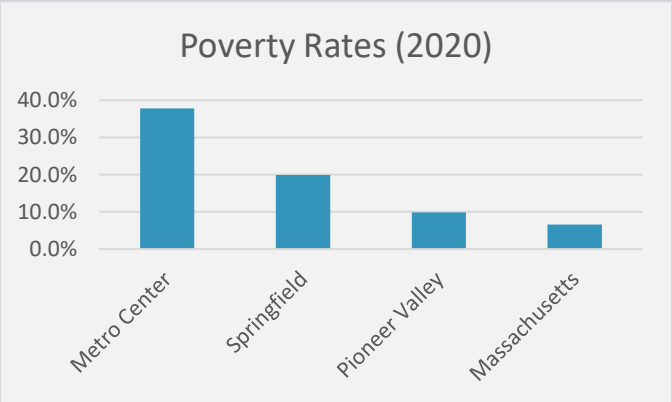
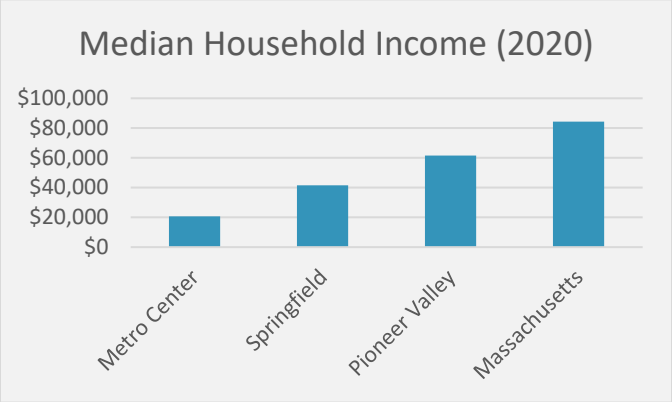


Racial composition of Metro Center, 2020 U.S. Census



Hispanic/Latino ethnicity in Metro Center, 2020 U.S. Census

Previous page: Apartment buildings on Pearl Street



		Metro Center	Springfield	Pioneer Valley	Mass.
Children and youth	Babies born with low birth weight	0.0%	10.3%	9.1%	7.6%
	Child poverty	47.5%	36.2%	20.8%	12.2%
Education	Preschool enrollment	64.0%	60.1%	53.6%	58.0%
	Attainment of higher education	18.5%	19.0%	32.6%	44.5%
Health	Premature mortality (per 1,000)	4.1	4.0	3.3	2.7
Economic security	Median household income	\$20,612	\$41,571	\$61,569	\$84,385
	Income inequality (Gini index)	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.48
	Poverty	37.8%	19.9%	9.9%	6.6%
	Elderly poverty	54.4%	13.7%	10.1%	8.9%
	Unemployment	11.1%	10.5%	6.7%	5.7%
	Labor force participation	49.0%	57.6%	61.4%	67.2%
Housing	Housing cost burden	56.2%	45.4%	34.9%	34.5%
	Homeownership rates	1.1%	47.4%	63.2%	62.5%
Transportation	Low-carbon commuters	42.2%	17.6%	14.1%	22.4%
	Average commute time (minutes)	21.4	21.1	23.1	30.0

Much more information is available in the [Springfield Data Atlas](#)

west of Chestnut Street, only 16% are under the age of 18. However, in the census tract to the east of Chestnut Street, approximately 28% of residents are under the age of 18. In addition, an estimated 11% of Metro Center residents are 65 or older. This number is consistent throughout all three of the census tracts in the neighborhood.

Economic Security

Compared to the other neighborhoods in Springfield, Metro Center tends to have weaker economic security. The median household income in Metro Center is \$20,612, which is the fourth lowest of the city's 17 neighborhoods, and less than half of the citywide median of \$41,571. Approximately 37.8% of residents have a household income that falls below the federal poverty line, compared to 19.9% citywide, and the neighborhood also has the sixth-lowest labor force participation rate (49.0%) in the city.



Apartments on Franklin Street across from Emily Bill Park

Housing

The homeownership rate in Metro Center is 1.1%. This is by far the lowest rate of any neighborhood in the city, and it is largely an effect of the high density of development within the neighborhood. There are very few single-family or two-family homes in Metro Center,

and the homeownership rate includes residents who own condominiums.

Overall, approximately 5% of housing units in Metro Center are in buildings that have 1 to 3 units each. About 19% are in buildings with between 4 and 20 units, and the remaining 77% of housing units in Metro Center are in buildings with more than 20 units.

There are an estimated 1,860 subsidized housing units in Metro Center. This is by far the largest amount of subsidized housing in any neighborhood in Springfield, and it comprises about half of the total number of housing units in the neighborhood.

Housing Investments

Metro Center has seen a number of major housing-related investments in recent years, including the rehabilitation of existing housing units, along with the construction of new units through adaptive reuse of historic buildings. Among these investments was a \$50 million revitalization of the Skyview Downtown buildings, formerly known as Chestnut Park. This work was completed in 2021, and it included 489 affordable units, along with space for commercial tenants.

Other recent investments have included the creation of 60 market rate apartments in the former Willys-Overland Building at 151 Chestnut Street, and the residential conversion of the Court Square Building at 31 Elm Street. The latter, which was completed in late 2023, includes 59 market-rate units, along with 15 units for those earning under 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Along with these completed projects, there are also several other market-rate rental properties that are in the planning process. These include Lyman Corners, a



The high-rise apartment building at 10 Chestnut Street. It is part of the Skyview Downtown complex, and it is the tallest residential building in Springfield.



The Overland Lofts at 151 Chestnut Street

planned 90-unit conversion of a historic building at 162-172 Lyman Street.

Planned housing investments also include the development of affordable housing units, such as Residences at the Vault, located at 310 State Street and 878 Worthington Street, which will feature 60 units for residents at or below 60% AMI. Other affordable housing developments are intended for those with lower incomes. Chestnut Crossing, the former YMCA building at 275 Chestnut Street, is in the process of adding another 29 units to the facility, which will be available for households with incomes at or below 30% AMI. Another planned affordable housing development, also for those at or below 30% AMI, will be located at 775 Worthington Street. It will feature 36 units of permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness.

In total, these recent investments have added 119 new units to the Metro Center neighborhood, with an additional 215 units that are planned or under construction as of 2024.



162-172 Lyman Street, subject of a planned residential conversion



275 Chestnut Street



Metro Center Transportation

Street Network

The layout of the street network in Metro Center reflects the colonial-era development patterns in Springfield. Main Street, which runs north to south through the neighborhood, continues to be the core of the city's central business district, but there are several other major north-south streets that run parallel to it. To the east of Main Street, Dwight and Chestnut Streets form a one-way pair north of State Street, and they connect directly to Maple Street, which continues to the south of State Street. On the west side of Main Street, East and West Columbus Avenue similarly act as a one-way pair, on either side of Interstate 91. All of these one-way streets have two or more travel lanes in each direction, with few protected pedestrian crossings, making them a significant obstacle to pedestrian travel, along with functioning as visual barriers that divide the neighborhood.

Although there are relatively few north-south streets, there are many streets that run east to west in Metro Center. State Street is the primary east-west route through the city, but other important parallel streets include Union Street to the south of it and Worthington Street to the north. Further north, Liberty Street is another major street, connecting Metro Center to the Liberty Heights and East Springfield neighborhoods.

Two interstate highways pass through Metro Center. Interstate 91 is located in the western part of the neighborhood, where it runs parallel to the Connecticut River. Interstate 291 forms



The Interstate 91 viaduct and parking garage beneath it, shown from West Columbus Avenue



Bicycle lane on East Columbus Avenue

Previous page: A southbound CT Rail train passing Riverfront Park

the northern boundary of the neighborhood, and its interchange with Interstate 91 is partially located within Metro Center. Over the years, the location of Interstate 91 in particular has raised concerns about the effect that it has had in isolating the riverfront area from the rest of Metro Center. The elevated highway forms a significant visual barrier, and there are only a few places where pedestrians can cross beneath it.

Rail Transportation

Metro Center includes the city’s central business district, and it is well served by different types of public transportation. Union Station is located in the northern part of the neighborhood, and it serves as an important rail hub for Western Massachusetts. The station is the northern terminus of the Hartford Line, a commuter rail line that links Springfield, Hartford, and New Haven. As of

2024, the line is served by 11 daily Amtrak and CT Rail trains in each direction. Local Amtrak service also includes two daily Valley Flyer trains in each direction, linking Springfield to Greenfield.

In addition, Amtrak provides long-distance passenger service in the form of one daily north-south Vermonter train in each direction, and one daily east-west Lakeshore Limited in each direction. Currently, the Lakeshore Limited is the only eastbound or westbound train serving Springfield. This lack of additional trains has long been identified as an area of need, and it has been the subject of ongoing efforts to create an east-west rail link across Massachusetts. This could have a significant impact on the Metro Center neighborhood, as it would likely increase demand for transit-oriented development in the area around Union Station.



An Amtrak train at the new accessible platform at Union Station



PVTA buses at the bus terminal adjacent to Union Station

Bus Transportation

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) serves the region with public bus routes and paratransit services. The main bus terminal is located in Metro Center, directly adjacent to Union Station, and the neighborhood is well served by a number of bus routes in all directions. In particular, Main and State Streets have frequent service, but most of the other major streets also have bus routes, including Dwight, Liberty, and Worthington Streets.

The various PVTA routes in Metro Center provide service throughout the city, but they also link the neighborhood to the surrounding

communities. The PVRTA has direct bus routes from Metro Center to cities and towns such as Holyoke, Chicopee, West Springfield, Westfield, Agawam, Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, and Ludlow.

Aside from city and regional PVRTA buses, Metro Center also has intercity bus service. The Peter Pan Bus Lines headquarters and main terminal is located at Union Station, and its buses link Springfield to a number of destinations throughout the northeast.

Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Nearly all of the streets in Metro Center have sidewalks, and the neighborhood is highly walkable. However, there are areas of concern regarding pedestrian safety. Most significantly, the section of State Street in front of the Central Library has been the subject of calls for a new crosswalk and other traffic-calming measures. The library and its parking lot are located on opposite sides of the street, and there are no crosswalks directly linking them. This has led to several fatal pedestrian crashes in recent years, and many neighborhood residents have expressed a need for improved pedestrian safety here. In response to these concerns, the city plans to install a new crosswalk here in 2024.

Residents have also raised concerns about Dwight Street, which is currently a three-lane, southbound one-way street. The street has high traffic volumes, and vehicles often travel at high speeds. This helps to create a barrier



Main Street has frequent bus service from many different routes in Metro Center



State Street in front of the Central Library, where many neighborhood residents have expressed a need for a crosswalk to improve pedestrian safety.

between the more commercial part of Metro Center to the west of Dwight Street, and the predominantly residential area to the east. The streetscape also presents a strong visual barrier, as there are a number of surface parking lots, parking garages, and blank walls along Dwight Street. One proposed solution is to convert Chestnut Street into a two-way street, utilizing design strategies from the Complete Streets Plan to improve walkability

and pedestrian safety. Likewise, another proposed solution is to make Complete Streets improvements to Dwight Street in the short term, with the long-term goal of likewise converting it into two-way traffic.

Aside from Chestnut and Dwight Street, residents have also expressed a desire to reduce the number of travel lanes on State Street to one in each direction, in order to make the street safer for all road users.



Looking north on Dwight Street from near Hillman Street. Many residents have expressed concerns about the street acting as a barrier between the residential and commercial parts of the neighborhood.



Chestnut Street, looking north from the corner of Mattoon Street.

There is currently only limited bicycle infrastructure in Metro Center. There are approximately 1.15 miles of bike lanes in the neighborhood, including a 0.75-mile bike lane on the northbound side of Main Street, between Union and Liberty Streets. There are also bike lanes on both sides of the Memorial Bridge, on Chestnut Street north of Liberty Street, and on portions of State Street, Lyman Street, Taylor Street, and East and West Columbus Avenue.

Aside from on-street bike lanes, the Metro Center neighborhood also includes a portion of the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway. This is a multi-use trail that extends along the Connecticut River from the Chicopee city line to near the South End Bridge. However, because the riverfront area is largely isolated from the rest of Metro Center, there is only one access point to the trail within the neighborhood, at Riverfront Park. Another access point, via an elevated walkway across the railroad tracks, is located just south of the neighborhood boundaries near the Basketball Hall of Fame.

Other bicycle infrastructure includes ValleyBike, a regional bikeshare program with pedal-assist e-bikes. It was launched in 2019 and operated through 2022. After a hiatus in 2023, it resumed operations in 2024. Station locations in Metro Center include Court Square, Union Station, and Springfield Technical Community College.

Transportation Improvements

The Metro Center neighborhood has seen significant transportation-related investments in recent years. Among these is the \$95 million restoration of Union Station, which reopened in 2017 after sitting vacant for many years. A year later, the station became the terminus of the newly opened Hartford Line commuter rail service. Because of the frequent service on this line, it has significantly expanded the commuting options for Metro Center residents who work in Hartford, New Haven, and other cities and towns in Connecticut. The reopening of Union Station also led to the construction of a new bus terminal for the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority and Peter Pan Bus Lines adjacent to the station.

Additional improvements are also planned for the area around Union Station. This includes streetscape improvements such as tree plantings, benches, and street lights, along with improved sidewalks and pedestrian crossings on the adjacent streets.

Commuting Characteristics

The average commute time for Metro Center residents is 21.4 minutes, which is comparable to the citywide average of 21.1 minutes. Because of the high walkability of the neighborhood and access to several different modes of public transportation, Metro Center has by far the highest percentage of residents using environmentally friendly transportation. Approximately 42% of residents commute to work via biking, walking, carpooling, or riding public transportation.







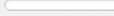

Sidewalks and pedestrian-oriented business development on Main Street.



The Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway at Riverfront Park

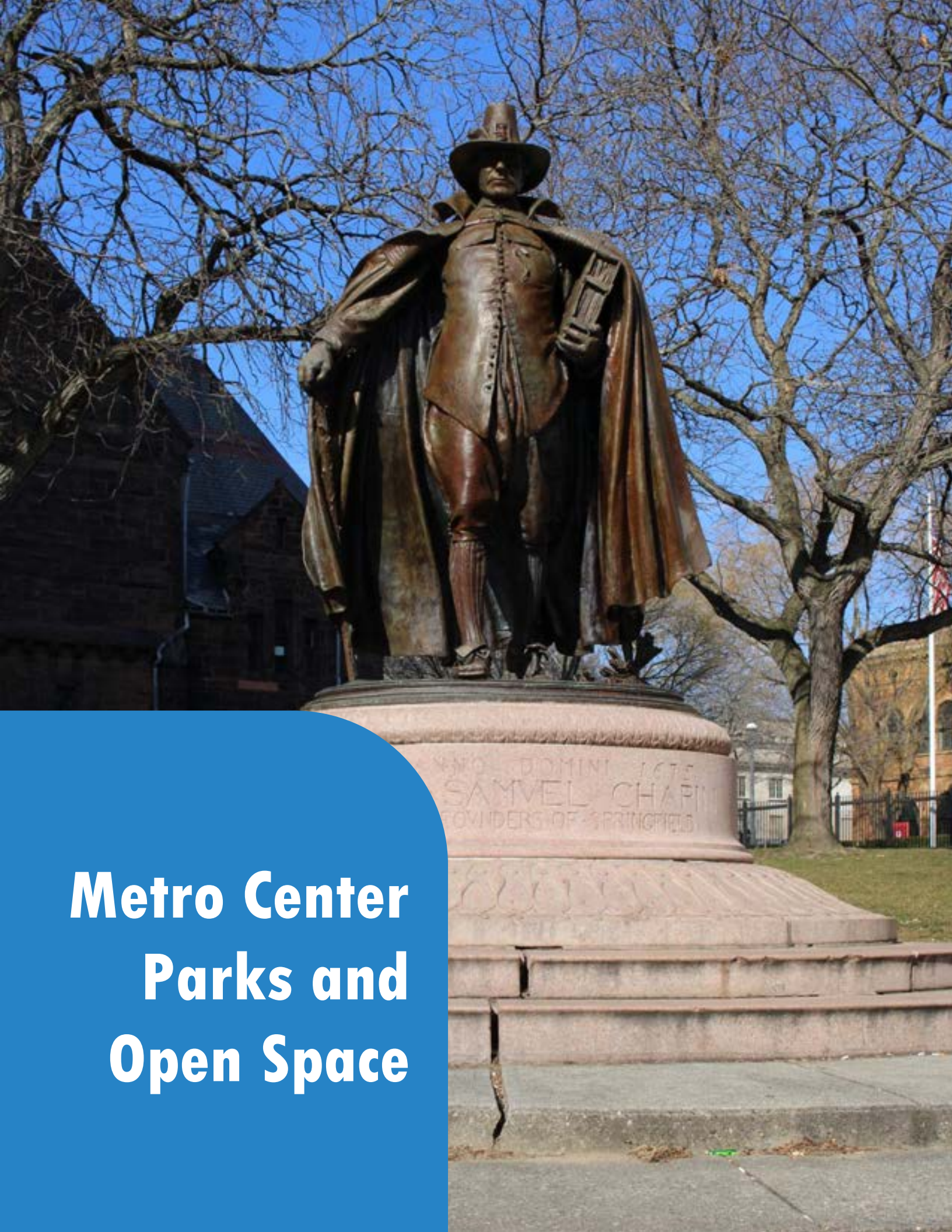


Metro Center Public Transportation

-  PVTA Bus Routes
-  Passenger Rail Lines
-  PVTA Bus Stops
-  Union Station
-  Streets
-  Buildings

Source: Pioneer Valley Transit Authority,
MassGIS





Metro Center Parks and Open Space

Neighborhood Parks

The Metro Center neighborhood includes 12 parks, which total 31.6 acres. Most of these parks are small public squares, generally under an acre in size, and are largely limited to passive recreation. These include Court Square, Stearns Square, Merrick Park, Apremont Triangle, Pynchon Plaza, Armoury Commons, Duryea Way, Kibbe Triangle, and the Quadrangle at the Springfield Museums.



The Quadrangle and the Springfield Museums



The Springfield Armory National Historic Site

Previous page: The Puritan statue at Merrick Park

Many of these small parks feature public art installations, such as the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden at the Quadrangle. The adjacent Merrick Park is the home of *The Puritan*, an 1887 bronze statue by prominent sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Other statues are located at Court Square, including ones for Miles Morgan, William McKinley, and a Civil War monument, along with several other historical markers and veterans' monuments.

Larger park facilities include the 4.24-acre Emily Bill Park on the northern edge of the neighborhood, and the 6.42-acre Riverfront Park along the banks of the Connecticut River. These two parks are the only ones in the neighborhood with playground equipment, and Emily Bill Park is the only park in the neighborhood with athletic fields. However, because it is located on the edge of the neighborhood, Emily Bill Park is not easily accessible to most Metro Center residents.

By far the largest park in the neighborhood is the 18.5-acre Springfield Armory National Historic Site, located on the site of the former national armory. It is administered by the National Park Service, and it includes a visitor center and small arms museum in the Main Arsenal. The park also includes the former commandant's house, along with the open land west of the Arsenal extending to Byers Street. The rest of the former armory is now the site of Springfield Technical Community College, and it is not included in the



Riverfront Park



Stearns Square from Worthington Street



Merrick Park and The Puritan

city's count of open space and recreational land.

There is also one privately-owned park in Metro Center. Known as Tower Square Park, it is located at the corner of Main and Bridge Streets. It is about one acre in size, and it is often used for farmers markets, live music, and other public events.

Proposed Investments

One area of need that has been identified by neighborhood residents is a lack of playgrounds and other active recreational facilities in Metro Center. A proposed solution would involve creating a new park on vacant land between Taylor and Worthington Streets to the east of Chestnut Street. Such a park would help to meet the needs of residents in this part of Metro Center.

In conjunction with a park on that site, another proposal is to create a pedestrian greenway linking Mattoon Street to Lyman Street. This part of Metro Center has very long blocks, including a nearly quarter-mile section of Pearl Street between Chestnut and Spring Streets. A greenway here would provide direct access to the proposed park, while also improving walkability in this part of the neighborhood.

Another proposal has involved the idea of redesigning the Apremont Triangle. It is currently a small, underutilized space in the middle of an intersection, but one proposal is to close the Pearl Street side of the triangle to vehicular traffic, and convert the street into a pedestrian plaza.

Environmental Justice

Based on the 2020 census, Metro Center is considered to be an environmental justice population, as defined by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA). The EEA defines an environmental justice population as a census block group that meets at least one of four criteria relating to median household income, minority population, and limited English proficiency. The EEA considers such groups to be most at risk of being unaware of or unable to participate in environmental decision-making, or to benefit from environmental resources. Of the three census block groups in Metro Center, one meets the criteria based on income and minority population, and the other two block groups meet the criteria based on all three factors.

Justice40 Initiative

Because Metro Center is an environmental justice population, it could benefit from federal programs through the Justice40 Initiative, which seeks to support disadvantaged communities that have historically been marginalized and underserved. Under this initiative, environmental justice communities are eligible for federal funding to support investments in any of the following areas: climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure. It is important for

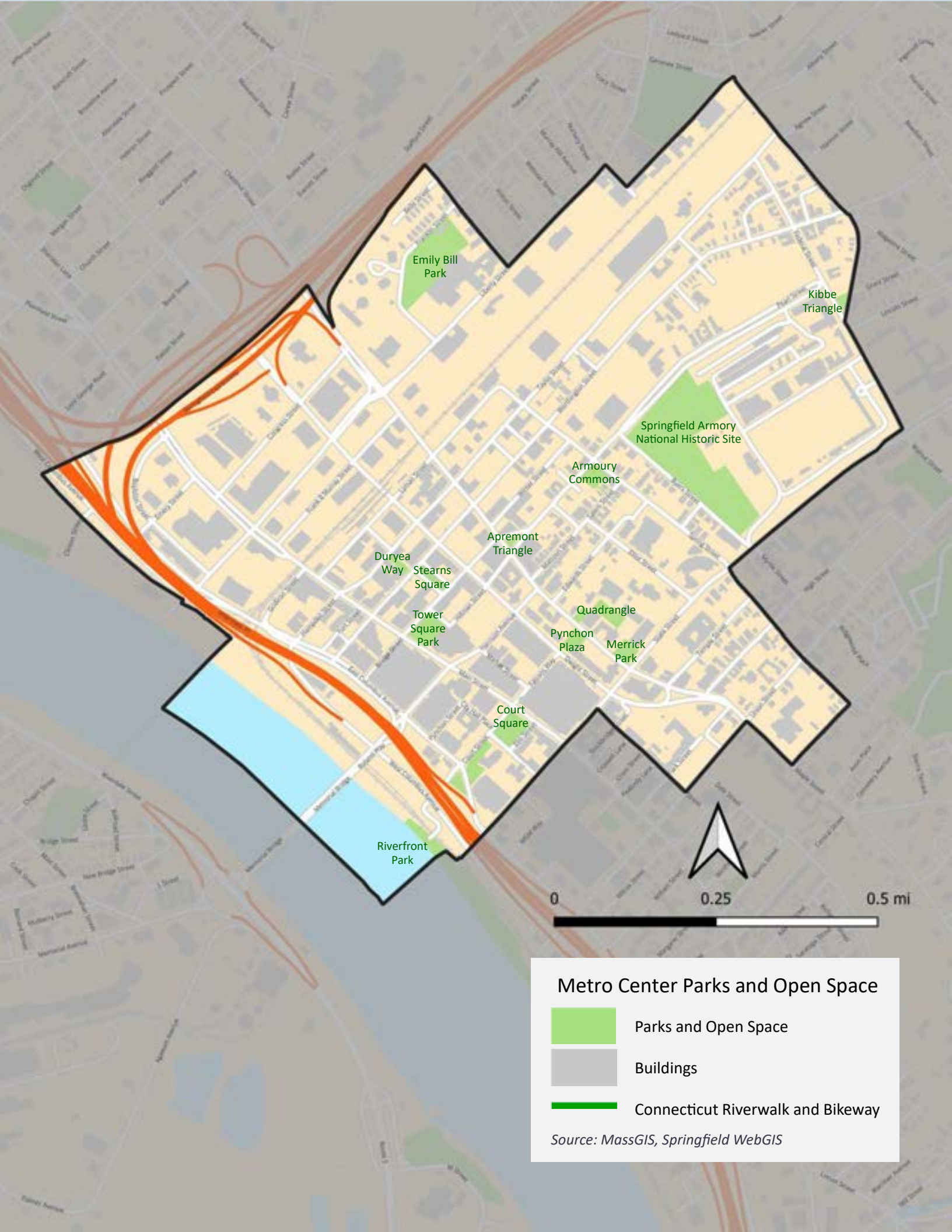


Apremont Triangle



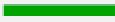


The playground at Emily Bill Park

both the Metro Center Association and the city to assess ways in which the neighborhood could benefit from such investments.



Metro Center Parks and Open Space

-  Parks and Open Space
-  Buildings
-  Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway

Source: MassGIS, Springfield WebGIS



Metro Center Economic Development Opportunities

Economic Development Opportunities

As has been previously noted, while the Metro Center neighborhood is home to the heart of the city's downtown, it is also home to 5,874 people who want to shop and meet their daily needs locally. Economic opportunity abounds for new local businesses that cater to the needs of and reflect the creativity, vitality and diversity of the residents. Success stories such as Jugito's, which opened during the pandemic with a take-out window and has grown to a larger location with sit-down dining, as well as the success of the long-standing locally owned coffee shop, Mocha Emporium, attest to the possibility for success in the neighborhood. At the same time, however, businesses are closing or struggling to stay open.

As part of this neighborhood investment planning process, a number of potential economic development concerns, ideas, and opportunities in the Metro Center emerged through resident surveys, community engagement events, meetings with stakeholders and city staff, and review of existing neighborhood plan recommendations.

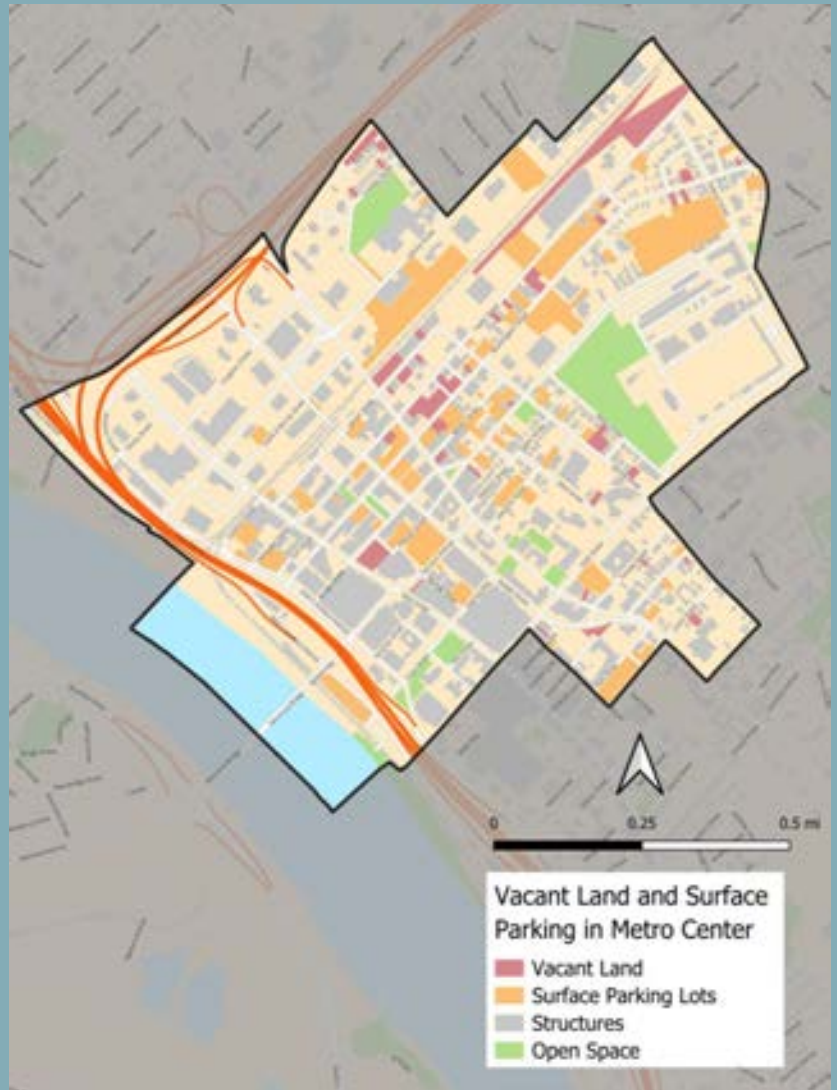
In particular, these economic development opportunities centered around the high number of vacant lots, surface parking lots, and vacant or underutilized buildings in the neighborhood. Redevelopment of these sites will help to visually connect the different parts of the neighborhood, promote walkability, and provide additional housing and retail space in Metro Center.



Vacant Lots and Surface Parking Lots

According to 2024 city assessor's data, there are 15 acres of land in Metro Center that are classified as vacant. In addition, there are 47 acres of parcels that are used entirely or almost entirely for surface parking lots. Overall, vacant lots and surface parking areas collectively comprise about 16% of the land area in the neighborhood, not including roads, highways, and railroad rights-of-way.

However, these lots are not evenly distributed throughout the neighborhood. There is a particularly high concentration of underutilized land on Taylor and Worthington Streets, particularly to the east of Dwight Street. This area is in close proximity to the predominantly residential parts of the neighborhood, and it is also close to Union Station. Because of this, these parcels have strong potential for mixed-use business and residential development, including transit-oriented development. In addition, this area could be the site of a new park, which would address the lack of existing playgrounds and other active recreational facilities in the Metro Center neighborhood.



Vacant land and surface parking lots in Metro Center. Source: MassGIS Property Tax Parcels 2024

Vacant/Underutilized Buildings

Aside from vacant lots and surface parking areas, the Metro Center neighborhood also has a high number of buildings that are vacant or only marginally utilized. The neighborhood has recently seen several successful rehabilitations, including apartments in the former Willys-Overland Building on Chestnut Street, and in the former Court Square Hotel on Elm Street. In addition, as noted in the Housing and Demographics section, there are several other proposed or ongoing housing investments in the neighborhood. In addition to housing, other successful adaptive reuse projects have included converting the vacant former National Needle Building on Emery Street into indoor storage units.

Looking ahead, there are many other opportunities to build upon these investments. In particular, the area around Union Station has strong potential for transit-oriented rehabilitation of existing buildings, as well as infill development on adjacent vacant lots. Possible

opportunities for investment could include the former Massasoit House/Paramount Theater on Main Street, the former Absorbine Jr. Building at the corner of Lyman and Chestnut Streets, and a vacant city-owned six-story building at 137-141 Lyman Street.

Neighborhood Council members and residents and stakeholders alike throughout this local planning process pointed to the opportunity for local businesses to develop in the Metro Center neighborhood catering to the needs of its residents.



The former Massasoit House/Paramount Theater at the corner of Main and Gridiron Streets.



Vacant city-owned building at 137-141 Lyman Street, near the corner of Chestnut Street.



Neighborhood Investment Plan Process

Community Engagement

The Community Building and Engagement team from Way Finders and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) led the engagement process for the Springfield Neighborhood Investment Plan in the Metro Center neighborhood.

The goal of the outreach effort was to offer residents a wide range of opportunities to engage in the planning process. This included hosting community meetings, informal coffee-hour gatherings, collecting surveys, and creating one-to-one connections at local events. As a result, the planning phases were iterative, building on each other and occasionally overlapping, which allowed for the continuous refinement of ideas and goals shaped by resident input.

Diverse resident participation was crucial to the process as well, with engagement focusing on populations often overlooked. Resident leaders from the targeted areas were invited to support the Planning Team with strategic thinking, outreach, and engagement. The team consisted of PVPC staff, Way Finders' staff, representatives from the Metro Center Association (MCA), and five volunteer community advocates – three of whom live in Metro Center and four who are bilingual.

The process began with an initial assessment of the Metro Center neighborhood, providing a broad understanding of its needs and priorities. This was followed by strategic engagement opportunities for residents - each designed to foster a shared vision and set clear goals for future investment projects over the next 10 years. After the initial planning meetings with the MCA board members, the engagement process was divided into two phases to ensure broad community participation and input.

Phase One: Initial Engagement and Data Collection

The first phase focused on gathering input from residents and ensuring widespread participation. Activities included:

- In-person community meetings, coffee hours, and prioritization workshops
- Outreach at neighborhood events: tabling, distributing flyers, sending bulk emails, and publicizing via social media
- Resident surveys: collecting input through various survey formats

In October 2023, the planning team held an initial meeting with MCA President Betsy Johnson and board members to discuss key issues related to neighborhood investment, collaborate on the engagement process, and gather feedback on their concerns, ideas, and priorities. Board members highlighted that Metro Center is a densely populated area, with many multi-family apartment complexes concentrated in a central location. They also noted that only 10% of the zoned land in Metro Center is designated for residential use, a significantly smaller proportion compared to other neighborhoods in the city.

In addition, the Metro Center population is diverse, with 58% of residents identifying as Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, according to the US Census 2020. At least 31% identify as White, 20% as Black, 14% as being of two or more races, and 32% as being of another race.

As a result, the planning and engagement process intentionally presented all relevant materials in English and Spanish, and provided Spanish-language interpretation at coffee hours, community listening sessions, tabling events, and other engagement opportunities.

We began our engagement by emailing more than 250 residents who comprise MCA's listserv to inform them of the process, and alert

them to upcoming opportunities to participate. In addition, Way Finders and PVPC staff tabled at the Tower Square Harvest Festival in October to raise awareness and collect resident feedback on a neighborhood map and introductory surveys. More than 50 residents took the surveys or provided feedback on the neighborhood map.

This general survey asked:

- What do you like most about your neighborhood?
- If you had money to solve 3 problems in your neighborhood, what would you solve?
- When thinking about yourself and your neighbors, how do you feel about the housing in your neighborhood?
- Do your transportation options (driving, biking, walking, rolling) feel safe and efficient in your neighborhood?
- Do you feel like your neighborhood is prepared for extreme weather events (such as flooding, heat waves, poor air quality)?
- What would you like the city to be doing to help with the climate crisis?
- Are there specific services or types of businesses that you would like to see in your neighborhood?
- What other priorities or concerns do you think should be addressed as part of the neighborhood investment planning process?

Way Finders then worked closely with several neighborhood property managers and landlords, resident engagement coordinators, and MCA board members to publicize in-person meetings and coffee hours held between November 2023 and May 2024.



Reviewing UMass Landscape Architecture & Regional Planning designs at the April 24, 2024 interactive workshop at South Congregational Church

Recognizing the importance of meeting residents where they live, the team chose to engage residents in community meeting spaces at several large residential buildings centrally located in Metro Center (see chart on the following page for locations). Each community meeting was two hours long, providing ample time for discussion. Coffee hours followed a more flexible, drop-in format, offering residents greater opportunities to participate based on their schedules, while fostering informal conversations in a relaxed environment. Live Spanish interpretation was available at all in-person meetings to ensure accessibility, and food was provided to all participants.

In November 2023, the engagement team hosted its first interactive workshop for residents who live in the Skyview Downtown high-rise on Chestnut Street, adjacent low-rise, and the surrounding area. On site childcare was provided to anyone with a need. Residents participated in a mapping activity. Throughout the process, PVPC, Way Finders, the Metro

Community Meetings and Coffee Hours Held in Metro Center			
Date	Location	Event	Resident Attendance
11/18/2023	Skyview Downtown, 10 Chestnut St.	Community meeting and interactive workshop	35
12/6/2023	South Congregational Church, 45 Maple St.	MCA Annual Meeting	21
01/8/2024	Stockbridge Court, 35 Willow St.	Coffee Hour	12
02/6/2024	The Rainville, 32 Byers St.	Coffee Hour	16
02/7/2024	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress St.	Meeting with UMass Landscape Architecture & Regional Planning Program students	11
02/21/2024	South Congregational Church, 45 Maple St.	Interactive Workshop 1	13
03/28/2024	South Congregational Church, 45 Maple St.	MCA monthly meeting	12
04/21/2024	Classical Condominiums, 235 State St.	Condominium Association meeting	36
04/24/2024	South Congregational Church, 45 Maple St.	Interactive Workshop 2	30
05/29/2024	South Congregational Church, 45 Maple St.	Interactive Workshop 3	15
Total			201

Center Association, and the engagement team set a goal to provide varied opportunities for residents to participate by staggering times and days to include day, evening, and Saturday hours.

To wrap up the in-person engagement activities, the team hosted three interactive workshops over the course of four months (February through May). All held at South Congregational Church, the workshops provided residents with an opportunity to review feedback gathered and to view renderings and live models designed by students in the UMass Landscape Architecture & Regional Planning Program. In addition,

residents provided feedback by marking up maps of the neighborhood with suggested projects and investments. At the final interactive workshop in May, residents voted on their top neighborhood priorities identified in earlier surveys and meetings. In total, PVPC and Way Finders engaged more than 200 people at in-person meetings.

Surveying and Outreach

Between January and June 2024, a series of online and print surveys were available in both Spanish and English. In phase one, a total of 186 people participated in a general survey.

In phase two, topic-related surveys were launched, with 96 additional people participating in surveys that asked them to prioritize strategies in categories that included Arts and Culture, Economic Development, Energy, Food, Housing, Parks and Open Spaces, and Transportation.

This allowed residents to further narrow priorities for investment in their neighborhood based on feedback from the first round of surveys.

Residents ranked them as high, medium, or low priority or identified their top two priorities for specific projects. Surveys were collected at various locations including the Tower Square Harvest Festival, Springfield's Pancake Breakfast, and the Tower Square Farmers Market.

Outreach also included flyer distribution by a team of resident volunteers and Way Finders staff at key locations throughout the Metro Center neighborhood, including Big Y at Tower Square, Union Station, Hispanic American Library, Springfield Central Library, City Hall, housing units, day care centers, barber shops, salons, bodegas, and other small businesses. This effort was aimed at encouraging participation from a wide variety of neighborhood residents and other stakeholders.

Other Communication/Promotion

- Press releases were created and sent to local media outlets (print, social media, online).
- Flyers distributed at community meetings and programs (MCA Board, Classical Condominium Board, other meetings).
- Social media posts promoting meetings on Way Finders page, with public sharing available, and tags to partner pages.
- Flyers with a QR code that linked to PVPC Springfield Neighborhood Plans website and community wide surveys were distributed widely.
- Email invitations to community meetings sent via Constant Contact to more than 5,000 Way Finders clients in the targeted neighborhood.



Interactive Workshop #1 at South Congregational Church on February 21, 2024



Interactive Workshop #2 at South Congregational Church on April 24, 2024

- Email invitations sent to stakeholders, community partners, businesses, community organizations, and multiple listservs.
- SMS texts, email listservs, and the PVPC website were set up to provide up to date information on the project and the process to residents who signed up at community meetings, tabling opportunities and other outreach activities and were used throughout the process for engagement outreach.

Phase Two: Refining the Plan and Targeted Outreach
The second phase focused on refining the plan based on feedback from residents and engaging key local stakeholders. Activities included:

- Small business luncheon: fostering discussion with local entrepreneurs
- One-to-one meetings with Community-Based Organizations: ensuring diverse perspectives were incorporated
- Draft plan review: review and feedback sessions with Neighborhood Councils

In July 2024, project staff interviewed community-based organizations and small business operators, to gather feedback for the neighborhood investment plan.

The interviewees who participated included CEOs and/or executive directors at the Caring Health Center, Dakin Humane Society, Latino Economic Development Council, New North Citizens Council, Springfield Partners for Community, Public Health Institute of Western Mass., and Way Finders.

In August 2024, PVPC and Way Finders hosted a lunch for small business owners at Nadim's Restaurant. More than 40 small business

operators located within the North End, South End, and Metro Center neighborhoods were invited to attend and share feedback. Among businesses in attendance were the owners of Nadims, Las Kangris, Hispanic American Union, Doreen's Travel, and others. Also present was Tina Quagliato Sullivan, Deputy Development Officer for Housing, Community Services & Sustainability, City of Springfield and Ed C. Whitley, Deputy Director of Neighborhood Services, City of Springfield. Small business owners provided ideas to the City about ways businesses could be better supported regarding City policies and practices, as well as giving feedback on neighborhood priorities.



Small business owner's lunch at Nadim's Restaurant in August 2024



Goals and Strategies

City Goals

The Springfield Neighborhood Investment Planning process is built upon years of planning efforts across the city. Over the past decade, city-wide planning efforts have engaged residents and stakeholders in planning for a more resilient and equitable future, often in direct response to crises such as the 2011 tornado and COVID-19 global pandemic. Within these many plans, goals for neighborhood-specific projects and programs have been integrated with broader city goals.

City Goal #1: Improve transparency, trust, and communication between the city and the Metro Center neighborhood.

One of the keys to fostering a strong neighborhood is to ensure that there is active and ongoing communication and collaboration between the neighborhood residents, the Metro Center Association (MCA) and the city government. As such, it is vital to ensure that residents feel empowered to bring concerns and ideas to their local government, and also to participate in the decision-making process.

Strategies:

- City, neighborhood council, and residents collaborate to design, create, and implement an equitable and inclusive neighborhood planning process in Metro Center, ensuring consistency with city's values of climate resilience and sustainability.
- City communicates all aspects of the Targeted Neighborhood Investment Plan update process and implementation by posting all materials on the city website-or linked to it-and providing paper copies at City Hall, Metro Center Association offices and other locations as determined by residents and MCA representatives, and to people who request them, including calendar of meetings scheduled, plan template, access to the Data Atlas and expanded GIS maps website, zoning regulations, related city plans, draft products, deliverables, notes from meetings and any other draft and final work products.
- Build the capacity of residents and the city staff to understand how each other 'works' and the forces limiting, constraining, and facilitating each group's ability to act.

City Goal # 2: Identify, prioritize, and implement investments in the Metro Center neighborhood.

In creating this neighborhood plan, the goal is to not only involve residents in the process of identifying and prioritizing needs in the neighborhood, but also to ensure ongoing collaboration as the city works to implement this plan over the next ten years.

Strategies:

- City, neighborhood council, and residents identify long-term (8+ years), short-term (6 months to 3 years), and mid-term (4 to 8 years) priority projects for neighborhood stabilization, equity, sustainability, and resiliency.
- City and Metro Center Association collaborates to conduct work on a neighborhood level that is reflective of larger city-wide planning practices, such as ReBuild Springfield, the Urban Renewal Plan, the Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP), the Complete Streets Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, the Economic Development Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and any other relevant plans.

Neighborhood Goals

As part of this neighborhood investment process, a number of goals and strategies emerged for the Metro Center neighborhood. These were based on resident and stakeholder engagement, along with a review of existing neighborhood and city plans and an evaluation of current neighborhood conditions.

Neighborhood Goal #1: Maintain and expand the neighborhood's housing stock.

Strategies:

- Encourage new housing development, with an emphasis on promoting a balance between affordable and market-rate units.
- Increase funding for home repair programs for existing homeowners, prioritizing exterior projects and critical interior issues.
- Increase code enforcement of multi-family rental properties to ensure the health, safety, and security of tenants.

Neighborhood Goal #2: Expand transportation opportunities and ensure that the streets are safe for all forms of transportation.

Strategies:

- Convert Chestnut Street to two-way traffic to and through State Street to 2-way Maple St. and redesign based on the Complete Streets plan,
- Implement traffic calming measures on Dwight Street as per the Complete Streets plan design guidelines, with the goal of eventually converting to two-way traffic.
- Enhance State Street for pedestrians and bicyclists, including improved infrastructure around crosswalks.
- Consolidate public parking options through shared parking agreements, parking garages, and other strategies, while repurposing under-utilized parking lots for mixed-use development.
- Construct a pedestrian protected 4-way crosswalk outside Union Station at Dwight Street and Frank B. Murray Street.

Neighborhood Goal #3: Improve and expand parkland and recreational open space areas

Strategies:

- Develop an active recreational community park between Taylor and Worthington Streets.
- Plant more street trees, particularly in the vicinity of Union Station.
- Improve lighting and public access to Armory Commons Park.
- Transform Apremont Triangle into a more usable open space and create pedestrian plazas and pocket parks in locations throughout the neighborhood.
- Enhance the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway by improving access, lighting, and programming to bolster public safety.

Neighborhood Goal #4: Strengthen the economy of the neighborhood

Strategies:

- Repurpose vacant lots by engaging with landlords to facilitate sales or redevelopment. For city-owned vacant lots, market them for community gardens and markets while maintaining them in an appealing and well-kept manner.
- Encourage local business development focusing on diversity, creativity and neighborhood character, and on catering to neighborhood needs, such as pet stores, houseware stores, and fitness facilities.
- Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings and infill construction, especially on Chestnut Street, through zoning adjustments that anticipate increased transit-oriented development from West-East rail and the North-South “Knowledge Corridor” rail
- Strengthen edges, linkages, and connectivity with creative signage and landscaping elements to integrate the area with the River, Symphony Hall, City Hall, MMC, Main Street, MGM Springfield, Quadrangle, and other cultural, entertainment, and community services.

Neighborhood Goal #5: Celebrate the rich and diverse history and culture of Metro Center

Strategies:

- Establish a multi-cultural community hub for the neighborhood focused on building community and community well-being with programs for all ages.
- Redevelop the former CityStage as a Youth Arts Center to provide accessible and equitable arts programs and serve as a hub for the creative community, in association with existing providers and programs.
- Creatively repurpose the city-owned Old First Church building and support the congregation-led transformation of the South Church building as multi-purpose assets for surrounding cultural, civic, entertainment, and convention functions.

Neighborhood Goal #6: Ensure the long-term sustainability and climate resilience of Metro Center

Strategies:

- Expand EV charging station network throughout Metro Center, including ones on existing street lamps
- Assist homeowners and renters in converting to electric heating, cooling, and energy-efficient appliances to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.
- Convert all area street lamps to low blue spectrum lights while retaining existing historical design lamp fixtures.

District-Wide Recommendations

Along with the neighborhood-specific recommendations, the neighborhood investment planning process also resulted in several recommendations that were consistent across the North End, Metro Center, and South End neighborhoods. These four recommendations are all supported by the neighborhood councils and by the majority of residents, stakeholders, businesses and community-based organizations that participated in the plan development process.

Expand existing city programs that assist homebuyers and homeowners

Throughout the neighborhood investment planning process, residents have regularly raised the issue of housing. In particular, residents believe that increasing homeownership rates and supporting existing homeowners are high priorities for these neighborhoods. As outlined earlier in this plan, there are a number of existing city programs, but many of these are limited in terms of eligibility requirements and in terms of the total number of applicants who receive funding.

Specific actions should include:

- Increasing funding for city programs that assist homeowners in maintaining, repairing, and restoring their homes.
- Increasing funding for programs and initiatives that provide education and assistance to first-time homebuyers.
- Constructing single-family homes on vacant, city-owned parcels for first-time homebuyers.

Improve access and lighting along the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway

The Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway links the North End, Metro Center, and South End neighborhoods. It is a valuable asset for pedestrians and cyclists, and it is used both for recreation and for environmentally friendly commuting. However, it has only a few access points, and it lacks lighting, which limits its usefulness to many people. Future investments in the bikeway should address these issues, including:

- Adding more access points along the route of the Riverwalk and Bikeway.
- Repairing the elevator at the walkway over the railroad tracks at Riverfront Park.
- Extending the southern terminus of the Riverwalk and Bikeway to connect it to the South End Bridge.
- Adding lighting to improve visibility and perceptions of safety along the Riverwalk and Bikeway.

Redevelop the former CityStage building as a Youth Arts Center

The former CityStage building at 150 Bridge Street was used for many years as a performing arts venue. It closed in 2018, but it is the subject of a proposed reuse that would involve converting it into a youth arts center. Such a facility would provide accessible and equitable arts programs and serve as a hub for the creative community, in association with existing providers and programs. It would serve not only the North End, Metro Center, and South End neighborhoods, but also the other neighborhoods throughout the city.

Action Plan



Timeline:

Short-Term (S)	6 months – 3 years
Medium-Term (M)	4 years – 8 years
Long-Term (L)	8 years or more to implement

Goals are organized where the first one in each section has received the highest amount of votes on the neighborhood survey and through additional engagement with the various stakeholders.

Primary Goals			
Housing Goal: Maintain and expand the neighborhood's housing stock.			
Action	Lead Implementer	Collaborators	Timeline
<p>H-1. Encourage new housing development, with an emphasis on promoting a balance between affordable and market-rate units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey current landlords and report on status of development of parcels/buildings in neighborhood and interest in re-use or sale. Affirm ownership status of vacant lots and research possibility of developing housing. Support and participate in City-wide Housing Production Plan. 	Office of Housing	Metro Center Association (MCA), Way Finders (WF), Habitat for Humanity (HH), Partners for Community Action (PCA), Revitalize Community Development Corporation (ReVCDC), Home City Housing, First Resource, Winn Dev, McCaffrey	S
<p>H-2. Increase funding for home repair programs for existing homeowners, prioritizing exterior projects and critical interior issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request additional funding in next year's city budget process. Identify new grant programs or possible funding sources as federal, state, and private funds become available and are more readily advertised. 	City Development Services and City Council	MCA, Spfld No One Leaves, WF Resident Advocates, CPA Comm, Spfld Housing Trust Fund - <i>currently being developed</i> , City Council	S

H-3. Increase code enforcement of multi-family rental properties to ensure the health, safety, and security of tenants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City hires more staff to conduct code enforcement. Assess and inventory current requests and/or complaints about code issues in multi-family buildings to identify barriers. City Council review of the Ordinance and revise as needed to facilitate enforcement, particularly related to a step process of fining to taking or acquisition due to non-compliance. 	Department of Code Enforcement / Building Department	C3 for Mason Square, MCA, City Council, WF	M
Transportation Goal: Expand transportation opportunities and ensure that the streets are safe for all forms of transportation.			
Action	Lead Implementer	Collaborators	Timeline
T-1. Enhance State Street for pedestrians and bicyclists, including improved infrastructure around crosswalks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Compete Streets plan and others for proposed treatments. Secure funding and implement. 	DPW	Walk Bike Spfld, MCA, OPED, MassBike, Walk MA, MassDOT	S
T-2. Convert Chestnut Street to two-way traffic to and through State Street to 2-way Maple St. and redesign based on the Complete Streets plan.	Department of Public Works (DPW), OPED	WalkBike Springfield, MCA, Board of Public Works, MassDOT	S
T-3. Implement traffic calming measures on Dwight Street as per the Complete Streets plan design guidelines, with the goal of eventually converting to two-way traffic.	DPW	Walk Bike Spfld, MCA, PVPC, MassDOT	M
T-4. Consolidate public parking options through shared parking agreements, parking garages, and other strategies, while repurposing under-utilized parking lots for mixed-use development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to Springfield Parking Authority and other parking lot owners to discuss shared use. Research and share draft agreements. 	Office of Planning and Economic Development	DPW, Springfield Downtown BID, MCA, Spfld Parking Authority (SPA)	M

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the city's latest parking studies and develop a Parking Management Plan as needed. Identify and reach out to large, under-utilized parking lot owners to understand need and capacity Work with City OPED to determine possible developers of mixed use to engage with. 			
T-5. Construct a pedestrian protected 4-way crosswalk outside Union Station at Dwight Street and Frank B. Murray Street.	DPW, Springfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA),	Walk Bike, MassDOT, MCA	
Parks Goal: Improve and expand parkland and recreational open space areas			
Action	Lead Implementer	Collaborators	Timeline
P-1. Develop an active recreational community park between Taylor and Worthington Streets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Springfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA) to understand their plans as they have recently acquired 2:3 parcels Secure CPA funding, other funding, or possible Grad student studio to complete a design study of recreational park at said location. 	Parks Department, SRA	MCA, CPA Comm, Springfield Downtown BID	S
P-2. Transform Apremont Triangle into a more usable open space and create pedestrian plazas and pocket parks in locations throughout the neighborhood. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See plan detail in Northeast District downtown plan 2021. Advance proposed improvements, working closely with the Parks Department. 	Parks Department	MCA, DPW, SRA	S
P-3. Plant more street trees, particularly in the vicinity of Union Station. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement work funded by federal earmark 2024 Assure maintenance, monitor and implement the plan related to the federal earmark in 2024. 	Parks Department / Forestry Division	DPW, MCA, ReGreen Springfield	S

P-4. Improve lighting and public access to Armory Commons Park.	MCA with Parks Department	DPW, Eversource	M
P-5. Enhance the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway by improving access, lighting, and programming to bolster public safety.	Parks Department, SRA	MCA, DPW, AMTRAK	M
Economic Development Goal: Strengthen the economy of the neighborhood			
Action	Lead Implementer	Collaborators	Timeline
ED-1. Repurpose vacant lots by engaging with landlords to facilitate sales or redevelopment. For city-owned vacant lots, market them for community gardens and markets while maintaining them in an appealing and well-kept manner. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory current landlords and status of development of parcels/buildings in neighborhood. • Reach out to landlords who may looking to release their lots or buildings for sale. • Activate city community garden ordinance. 	OPED, Springfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA)	Office of Housing, Gardening the Community, Springfield Food Policy Council, MCA, Springfield Downtown BID	S
ED-2. Encourage local business development focusing on diversity, creativity, and neighborhood character and on catering to neighborhood needs, such as pet stores, houseware stores, and fitness facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with the Downtown BID to refine understanding of business needs in neighborhood. • Keep track of vacant lot and building sales to facilitate communication to interested businesses coming to the city. 	OPED, Springfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA)	MCA, Springfield Downtown BID, WF	S

<p>ED-3. Promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings and infill construction, especially on Chestnut Street, through zoning adjustments that anticipate increased transit-oriented development from West-East rail and the North-South “Knowledge Corridor” rail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the Historical Commission on any discussions of historic buildings in the neighborhood. • Identify buildings that are in the process of being redeveloped and celebrate its continuation as a historic building and its adaptive reuse. • Research how other Transit Oriented Development, particularly MBTA Communities legislation, addresses historic preservation and redevelopment in regulations. 	<p>OPED, Springfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA)</p>	<p>Historical Commission, MCA, Springfield Downtown BID, MassINC, PVPC, WF</p>	<p>M</p>
<p>ED-4. Strengthen edges, linkages, and connectivity with creative signage and landscaping elements to integrate the area with the River, Symphony Hall, City Hall, MCCA, Main Street, MGM Springfield, Quadrangle, and other cultural, entertainment, and community services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to existing plans that address wayfinding and assess status of implementing those strategies • Identify funding sources and advance implementation 	<p>OPED</p>	<p>Parks Department, Historical Commission, MCA, MCCA, MGM Springfield, Springfield Downtown BID, Springfield Cultural Partnership, WF</p>	<p>M</p>

Arts & Culture Goal: Celebrate the rich and diverse history and culture of Metro Center			
Action	Lead Implementer	Collaborators	Timeline
<p>AC-1. Establish a multicultural community center hub focused on building the community, community well-being, and arts & culture with programs and growth opportunities for all ages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and leverage an available venue to house the center for community hub. • Research underserved community needs • Determine organizational structure to develop the center to serve community needs and accomplish the goal 	South Church, 45 Maple Street	Amistad Redevelopment Corp., Office of Planning and Economic Development, Department of Health & Human Services, Community Foundation of Western Mass, Springfield Cultural Partnership, MCA	S
<p>AC-2. Redevelop the former CityStage as a Youth Arts Center to provide accessible and equitable arts programs and serve as a hub for the creative community, in association with existing providers and programs.</p>	Hope for Youth and Families	Springfield Cultural Council, OPED, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Spfld Community Music School	S
<p>AC-3. Creatively repurpose the city-owned Old First Church building and support the congregation-led transformation of the South Church building as multi-purpose assets for surrounding cultural, civic, entertainment, and convention functions.</p>	OPED	South Cong Church, Springfield Cultural Council, Massachusetts Cultural Council, 31Elm Apartments	M

Energy/Climate Action Goal: Ensure the long-term sustainability and climate resilience of Metro Center			
Action	Lead Implementer	Collaborators	Timeline
ECA-1. Assist homeowners and renters in converting to electric heating, cooling, and energy-efficient appliances to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.	OPED	RevCDC, MCA, Mass Save® Program, Partners for Community Action, SRA	S
ECA-2. Expand EV charging station network throughout Metro Center, including ones on existing street lamps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all current charging stations in the neighborhood, including those in parking garages and lots. Identify planned locations based on previously adopted plans or mentions. Seek grant funding to install new charging stations. 	DPW, Eversource	OPED, PVPC, Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER)	M
ECA-3. Convert all area street lamps to low blue spectrum lights while retaining existing historical design lamp fixtures.	DPW, Eversource	Historical Commission, Eversource	L

Examples of Potential Funding Sources	
Arts & Culture	
Cultural Facilities Fund	This program provides funding for public and non-profit cultural facilities such as museums, historic sites, theaters, exhibition spaces, and classrooms. These funds can be used for planning, acquiring, designing, constructing, and rehabilitating eligible facilities.
Local Cultural Council (LCC)	The LCC provides funding for a wide range of cultural activities, including festivals, lectures, performances, and other events that have a public benefit. Eligible applicants include municipalities, organizations, and even private individuals.
Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program	This program provides funding for historic preservation planning, including inventorying historic properties and other cultural resources. Such inventories are valuable tools in identifying and prioritizing historic properties, while also highlighting the history of structurally disadvantaged groups whose stories are often overlooked.
Clean Energy	
Community Change Grants	This federal program is administered by the Environmental Protection Agency, and it provides grant funding to address issues relating to pollution and climate change in disadvantages communities. The entire North End area qualifies as a disadvantaged community under the program criteria. Applicants must consist of a partnership of two community-based organizations (CBO), or a partnership between a local government and either a CBO or institution of higher learning. These funds can be used for projects relating to issues such as climate resiliency, low- and zero-emission technology and infrastructure, and pollution reduction.
Community Clean Energy Resiliency Initiative (CCERI)	This state program provides funding for clean energy projects that improve municipal resilience and prevent service disruptions caused by climate change.
Green Communities Program	Municipalities in Massachusetts that are designated as Green Communities, including Springfield, are eligible to apply for competitive grants under this program. These grants can be used for projects that reduce municipal carbon footprints. In Springfield, this would not only result in energy savings, but it would also help to reduce the city's high air pollution rates.
Economic Development	
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	CDBG funds may be used for a variety of economic development-related projects. These include commercial or industrial improvements and assistance, microenterprise assistance, and planning/capacity building projects.
Community One Stop for Growth	One Stop is a single application process that includes a number of different state grant programs relating to economic development and housing. Funding is available for a variety of projects, including community activation & placemaking; planning & zoning; site preparation; buildings; and infrastructure.

Examples of Potential Funding Sources

Food Security

Urban Agriculture Program	This program provides funding for the development of urban agriculture, in order to improve access to fresh, local produce in low- and moderate-income areas. Eligible applicants include municipalities, non-profit organizations, educational and public health institutions, and private individuals with commercial urban agriculture experience.
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Housing & Historic Preservation

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	CDBG funds can be used for a wide range of housing-related initiatives. These include homeowner assistance programs, first-time homebuyer programs, housing rehabilitation, and code enforcement.
Community Preservation Act (CPA)	The CPA is funded by city taxpayers, with matching contributions by the state. These funds are administered by the city's Community Preservation Committee, and can be used to for development of affordable housing along with historic preservation.
Housing Development Incentive Program (HDIP)	The HDIP involves tax incentives for the development of market-rate housing in Gateway Cities in Massachusetts, including Springfield. Eligible projects may involve new construction or substantial rehabilitation of existing buildings, and must be within the city's designated HD Zone. However, only a small portion of the North End is within the designated HD Zone.
Housing Stabilization Fund (HSF)	This state-funded program provides funding for acquisition and/or rehabilitation of rental properties, or construction of new properties. Eligible applicants include non-profit and for-profit developers, along with municipalities. All properties that receive HSF assistance must be occupied by low- and moderate-income residents.
Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF)	The MPPF provides funding support for preservation work on buildings that are listed on the State Register of Historic Places. Applicants include municipal governments and non-profit organizations. Within the North End neighborhoods, there are a number of eligible historic buildings, and this number could likely be expanded with additional historic resource surveys.
Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program	This program provides funding for historic preservation planning, including inventorying historic properties. Because many of the historic buildings in the North End have not yet been inventoried, especially those in Brightwood, this would be an important step in prioritizing residential properties for rehabilitation and making them eligible for additional grant opportunities.
National Housing Trust Fund Program (HTF)	Funding from this program can be used to acquire, rehabilitate, or construct new rental properties for residents with incomes at or below 50% of the median area income. Eligible applicants include non-profit developers, along with for-profit developers who are partnered with non-profits that receive support service funds.

Examples of Potential Funding Sources	
Parks & Open Space	
Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	CDBG funds may be used for a variety of public facilities and improvements. These include projects relating to the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of open space-related amenities such as parks, playgrounds, public trees, sculptures, and fountains.
Community Preservation Act (CPA)	Along with affordable housing and historic preservation, CPA funds can also be used for projects relating to parks and open space areas in Springfield.
Gateway City Parks Program	This program provides funding for Gateway Cities in Massachusetts, including Springfield, to create or improve parks and other recreational spaces in the city.
Transportation	
Chapter 90 Program	This state-funded program provides reimbursement for expenses relating to a wide range of eligible projects. This includes analysis, design, and construction work for roadway improvements, traffic calming measures, bike lanes, sidewalks, and other transportation-related work.
Complete Streets Funding Program	This program provides funding for Massachusetts communities, including Springfield, that have a Complete Streets policy. It provides funding for projects that are identified in the city’s Prioritization Plan, which can include intersection redesigns, traffic calming measures, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements.
MassTrails Grants	This program provides matching reimbursements for projects that involve recreational and shared-use trails. Eligible expenses include the development, design, construction, and maintenance of these trails.
Safe Routes to School Program	This program seeks to make walking and bicycling safer for students traveling to school. Such initiatives not only help to improve student health, but they also improve traffic congestion and air quality.
Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program	This program provides funding for municipalities and public transit authorities to improve safety and accessibility for all roadway users. Eligible projects include bikeshare programs, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and transit infrastructure.

A photograph of a city street scene. In the background, there are multi-story brick buildings. The building on the left is red brick with a green roof. The building in the center is a lighter-colored brick with many windows. Bare trees are in the foreground and middle ground. Two silver cars are parked on the street. A blue graphic with a white border is in the bottom left corner, containing the word "Appendix" in white text.

Appendix

Summaries of Recent City-wide Planning Efforts

Prior to the Neighborhood Investment Planning process, the City of Springfield has included neighborhood-level planning objectives as a part of several city-wide plans, projects, and programs.

Rebuild Springfield (2012)

The Rebuild Springfield initiative was created in response to the June 1, 2011 tornado that struck the City of Springfield and produced a four-part comprehensive planning response to the natural disaster. The Rebuild Springfield plan includes a city-wide overview and three district plans for neighborhoods directly impacted by the tornado. The Citywide planning process is organized according to the six Nexus Domains of a healthy and vibrant community. These domains include the physical, cultural, social, organizational, educational, and economic components of a community while listing twenty-one total recommendations. More neighborhood-specific recommendations and strategies are outlined in the district plans: District One (Metro Center and South End), District Two (Maple High-Six Corners, Upper Hill, Old Hill, and Forest Park), and District Three (Sixteen Acres and East Forest Park).

Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2023)

The City of Springfield's latest hazard mitigation plan presents a thorough summary of community features and risks posed by natural hazards. The planning document identifies and prioritizes forty-four total mitigation actions for the City to implement. While many of the included strategies are city-wide in scope, several features are identified as priorities within specific neighborhoods.

Strong, Healthy, and Just: Climate Action and Resilience Plan (2017)

Springfield's first climate action and resilience plan in name, "Strong, Healthy, and Just: Climate Action and Resilience Plan" (SHJ) was developed in 2017 to provide a path for the City of Springfield to reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and to enhance urban resilience. The SHJ plan builds upon over 15 years of climate action by the City and first recommends the City to conduct an analysis of the progress that had been made on previous plans and their climate-related strategies. A second priority recommendation presented is for the City to better communicate the ongoing and planned climate action and resilience work, especially in neighborhoods with high concentrations of chronically stressed residents. Additionally, the plan expands on ten recommended Action Categories with goals and strategies to reduce GHG emissions and enhance resilience.

Springfield Complete Streets Prioritization Plan – 2020 Update

Expanding on the 2017 Springfield Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, the latest update provides an examination of more recent data and a list of projects developed through various engagement efforts. The updated plan identifies previous priority projects that have been completed both city-wide and within individual neighborhoods. emissions and enhance resilience.

Local Rapid Recovery Plan (2021)

Springfield's Local Rapid Recovery Plan was the result of the Commonwealth's Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program intended to provide every municipality in Massachusetts the opportunity to develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges and COVID-19 related impacts to downtowns, town centers, and commercial areas. The LRRP focuses on Springfield's Main Street Convention Center District (MSCC) in the Metro Center neighborhood. Through the LRRP process, fifteen projects were identified as priority opportunities for investing the city's initial American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

Open Space and Recreation Plan (2022)

The Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) developed in 2022 outlines a comprehensive park and conservation land improvement program and establishes a framework for guiding city expenditures through Fiscal Year 2027. The plan establishes six broad goals that were developed through input from each City department involved in managing open space.

Safety Action Plan (2022)

Collaborating with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the City created the Safety Action Plan to provide information and direction on strategies and treatments most likely to improve roadway safety performance within the city. The plan addresses citywide crash patterns and trends and systemic treatments that can be used to address those trends. The content of the plan establishes a vision and goals specific to roadway safety performance and establishes a basis for informing roadway safety performance improvements over the next three to five years. Strategies for addressing roadway safety improvements are separated into "engineering" and "non-engineering" countermeasures. Specific countermeasure locations are identified for intersections, signalized and unsignalized, along with corridors throughout the city.

Capital Improvement Plan, FY 2024–2028 (2023)

The City of Springfield's annual update of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) acts as a roadmap for the acquisition, renovation, or construction of new or existing facilities and infrastructure. As part of the City of Springfield's continuing efforts to develop robust long-term strategic planning initiatives, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Years 2024–2028 lists all capital improvement needs throughout the city, and the estimated cost associated with those projects. The estimated cost for all 477 projects totals \$1.3 billion, with the highest priority projects totaling \$182 million. These 18 "Grade A" projects include investments in public safety, upgrades to schools and municipal buildings, road resurfacing, city-wide systemic safety interventions and numerous projects aimed at driving economic development, while improving the safety, mobility, and the quality of life of the residents of Springfield.