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Filed: 05-28-19

Sponsored by: McGull

COUNCIL BILL 2019- 128 RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION

ADOPTING the Springfield, Missouri, Walkability Guide, which identifies guidelines and fundamental elements of a walkable environment that can be used to increase walkability in the City of Springfield.

WHEREAS, a regional “Walkability Team,” comprised of City staff, elected officials, Ozark Greenways, and Ozarks Transportation Organization participated in the 2018 Walkability Action Institute offered through the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors; and

WHEREAS, the Walkability Team prepared and presented the Springfield, Missouri Walkability Guide, for the purposes of promoting and encouraging expansion of walkable infrastructure to allow people of all ages and abilities to safely and easily walk, bicycle and use public transportation to get to where they live, work, learn, and play; and

WHEREAS, the Springfield, Missouri, Walkability Guide outlines recognizable benefits and attributes of walkable places; and

WHEREAS, well-designed, livable communities with a high-degree of walkability promote active-living and increased health benefits; and

WHEREAS, incorporating principles of placemaking and walkability into redevelopment opportunities, help to incentivize public/private partnerships and investment that establish a strong sense of place and public pride; and

WHEREAS, by making policy, systems, and environmental changes, walkability can be integrated into the daily decision-making process while also making active modes of transportation the practical choice for Springfield residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, residents of all incomes, ages, ethnicities, backgrounds, and abilities should be engaged in the planning process, to help shape walkable investments and increase walkability and placemaking in the City of Springfield.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF

36 SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI, as follows, that:

37
38 Section 1 – City Council hereby accepts the Springfield, Missouri, Walkability
39 Guide which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference as “Exhibit A”
40

41 Section 2 – City staff is directed to incorporate principles of walkability into the
42 Comprehensive Planning process and Housing and Urban Development Consolidated
43 Planning process.
44

45 Section 3 – The City of Springfield Capital Improvements Program shall seek to
46 include walkability as a program and project component.
47

48 Section 4 – This Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately upon
49 adoption.
50

51 Passed at meeting: _____
52
53

54 _____
55 Mayor
56

57 Attest: _____, City Clerk
58

59 Filed as Resolution _____
60

61
62 Approved as to form: Achale T. Wudu, Assistant City Attorney
63

64
65 Approved for Council action: Jason R. Hays, City Manager

EXPLANATION TO COUNCIL BILL 2019-128

FILED: 05-28-19

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Public Works

PURPOSE: Adopting the Springfield, Missouri, Walkability Guide, which identifies guidelines and fundamental elements of a walkable environment that can be used to increase walkability in the City of Springfield.

BACKGROUND: The City was invited to participate in a program sponsored by the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (“NACDD”) regarding actions to be taken by local government to increase walking and walkability in their jurisdictions. This program consisted of team preparations, pre-course assignments and culminated in a trip to Decatur, Georgia, to view projects promoting walkability and to develop a Walkability Action Plan for the City of Springfield.

The Team has since developed the *Springfield, Missouri Walkability Guide* (“Exhibit A”) and presented the principles of walkability and the Guide itself to City Council. At the conclusion of the April 2, 2019, Council Lunch Presentation, staff was asked to prepare a Resolution accepting the Guide.

The Guide outlines the principles, attributes, and benefits of walkability, and further details four guidelines that each touch on an aspect of walkability:

GUIDELINE 1: PRIORITIES

Increase awareness of the value and characteristics of walkability to establish the Springfield community as a regional leader in implementing principles of walkability.

GUIDELINE 2: INFRASTRUCTURE

Construct, enhance, and maintain sidewalks, multi-use side paths, bicycle facilities, transit facilities, trails, and linear parks in connection with planning for adjacent land uses, utility infrastructure and overall community growth and development.

GUIDELINE 3: EQUITY

Advocate for neighborhood improvement across the city through the development of public and private infrastructure projects that help to expand the walkable network, increase connectivity and access for users of all types, without displacing current residents.

GUIDELINE 4: POLICY

Consider alignment of local, regional, and statewide policies that can have a positive impact on creating a culture of walkability.

The attached Resolution accepts the Walkability Guide by City Council and directs staff

to incorporate principles of walkability into the Comprehensive Plan, Housing and Urban Development Consolidated Plan, and the Capital Improvements Program.

REMARKS: The City Manager and Director of Public Works recommend passage of this Resolution.

Submitted by:



Kirk Juranas, Assistant Director of Public Works

Recommended by:



Dan Smith, Director of Public Works

Approved by:



Jason Gage, City Manager

Exhibit A



A GUIDE TO WALKABILITY IN SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI WALKABILITY GUIDE

DEVELOPED BY: SPRINGFIELD WALKABILITY TEAM

Mary Kromrey, Natasha Longpine, Richard Ollis, Randall
Whitman, Julie Viele, Ashley Krug, Derrick Estell

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**SPRING
2019**

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Background & Introduction

In April of 2018, the Springfield Walkability Team attended the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors' (NACDD) Walkability Action Institute in Decatur, GA. The purpose of the four-day applied-learning course was to assemble a multi-disciplinary team made up of city staff, community partners, and an elected official to gain knowledge on strategies that can be used to implement walkability in the Springfield community. Upon completion of the Institute, the Springfield Walkability Team was tasked with developing a *Walkability Action Plan*, which was used as guidance to report the status of goals within the *Walkability Action Plan* back to the NACDD.

The purpose of this document is to take those elements of the *Walkability Action Plan* and create guidelines for the development of the City of Springfield's upcoming Comprehensive Plan and will ultimately influence the expansion of funding options for walkability projects, as well as the City's annual Capital Improvements Program. Each of the following four guidelines touches on a different aspect of walkability – but are all equally important. This guide should inform and help shape the fundamental elements that will be included in the Comprehensive Plan – including, but not limited to, land use, transportation, parks and recreation, sustainability, and community health.

Defining Walkability for Springfield

"Walkability allows for people of all ages and abilities to safely and easily walk, bicycle, and use public transportation to get to where they live, work, learn, and play."

Recognizable Benefits and Attributes of Walkable Places

- An active, livable, highly social, mixed-use environment with high concentrations of people, places of residences, business, and employment centers.
- Neighborhoods that promote active-living, located within walking distance of neighborhood-scale retail, and services.
- An urban environment that provides and supports improved physical and mental health.
- Places that act as a catalyst for private investment.
- Incentivizes public/private partnerships to establish a sense of place and increase pride in ownership.
- Dedicated facilities and space for pedestrians of all abilities, bicyclists, and street-side commerce that is separated from vehicles.
- Compatible land uses, building types, site design, densities, access to public transit facilities, and connections to a network of external trails and greenways.
- The presence of a mature tree canopy and landscaping that enhances the natural beauty of the outdoors and public spaces.
- A diverse range of housing types and affordability options that promote equity for all residents.
- Pedestrian scale lighting that contributes to the atmosphere, sense of place, and defines the limits of the public domain.

Challenges to Implementing Walkability

- Education – continuing to promote walkability and the components and characteristics that make a community more walkable.
- Culture – creating value, building a people-centric space that provides positive outcomes in health, equity, transportation and connectivity, economic vitality and quality of life.
- Funding – walkability requires investment, retrofitting existing development and on-going maintenance costs



Guideline 1: Priorities

Increase awareness of the value and characteristics of walkability to establish the Springfield Community as a regional leader in implementing principles of walkability.

Prioritizing principles of walkability cannot happen without community input and support. Community feedback in a variety of circles suggests the expansion of walkable infrastructure and walkable neighborhoods as a top priority across the community and one of the leading trends across the nation for communities that are working to attract and retain residency, as well as quality employers and a talented work force. To implement this guideline, two significant commitments must be made:

- Education – Walkability deals with a variety of disciplines - transportation, planning, health, sustainability, and recreation; each has a relationship with the next. In addition, walkability is also about promoting the right mix of community conditions; terms that include equity, accessibility, or affordability. Educating our citizens, elected and appointed officials on how each can impact the next is vital to moving the needle. To increase awareness and a higher level of understanding and enthusiasm, a series of targeted community presentations and workshops with leading experts in the related fields of walkability will be pursued in concert with the development of the comprehensive plan.
- Consensus – In addition to education, successful implementation depends on establishing a high degree of community support and collective agreement on how and where to implement walkability. The development of a new comprehensive plan is the best opportunity to combine education and community support with strategies for implementation.

Guideline 2: Infrastructure

Construct, enhance, and maintain sidewalks, multi-use sidepaths, bicycle facilities, transit facilities, trails, and linear parks in conjunction with planning for adjacent land uses, utility infrastructure and overall community growth and development.

To promote walkability our community must first have the appropriate infrastructure in place to support it. This can be accomplished through the construction, enhancement, and maintenance of sidewalk, multi-use sidepaths, bicycle facilities, transit facilities, trails, and linear parks. These infrastructure improvements require coordination with transportation, adjacent land uses, utilities, transit, parks, neighborhoods, the development community, and the region. This coordination further emphasizes the importance of the inclusion of this guide, as well as other community plans, studies, and policies that include a specific focus on walkability, into the City of Springfield's Comprehensive Plan. All of this collective planning work will shape the projects funded through the Capital Improvements Program and other infrastructure planning and funding programs, as well as those projects funded independently of the City budget which greatly contribute to the walkable network. Incorporating walkability as a key consideration in planning and evaluating private developments and public infrastructure projects helps to ensure that walkability is integrated into our community.

Example Projects

- Projects which fulfill the upcoming ADA Transition Plan
- Projects which fulfill the Ozarks Transportation Organization Regional Trail Plan
- Projects which fulfill Springfield-Greene County's Trail Plan
- Projects which fulfill the City's Complete Streets Policy and Bikeway Master Plan
- Projects which promote access to transit facilities





Guideline 3: Equity

Advocate for the development of public and private infrastructure projects that help to expand the walkable network, increasing connectivity and access for users of all types, without displacing current residents.

A common challenge of successfully implementing walkability is ensuring equitable access for all users across the city. Walkable places, neighborhoods and civic areas are often highly desirable and can often stimulate economic development projects. Undeveloped land and/or older unstable neighborhoods that surround highly sought-after walkable places become easy targets for redevelopment and displacement of vulnerable residents and associated residential land uses. Ensuring the preservation of neighborhood fabric that provide access to affordable housing, public transportation and services in these areas requires strategic planning and policy formation.

In addition, trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks serve as a safe, reliable public transportation option for many. Targeting projects with a high degree of connectivity increases usage and expands opportunities for a variety of users. Ensuring walkable infrastructure development is driven by a variety of considerations and is targeted to benefit all users for a variety of purposes requires coordination of planning activities from a variety of agencies as well as planning for public and private housing and infrastructure projects.

To increase access and expand opportunities for all users requires changes in public policy, which begins by engaging residents of all ages and abilities, as well as economic, racial and ethnic backgrounds in the planning to build ownership in the development of a walkable community through:



- the development of the City's Comprehensive Plan, focusing on new opportunities to locate walkable infrastructure and increase connectivity to existing neighborhoods that are underserved,
- consideration of the inclusion of design standards and policies that encourage frequent and accessible connectivity to walkable infrastructure, as well as access to public transit and high employment areas. Essential safety elements and amenities, such as pedestrian-scale lighting and signage also help to make walkable infrastructure inviting and functional components of the multi-modal network,
- community input that identifies, prioritizes and programs walkable infrastructure projects into the Comprehensive Plan, which in turn, serves as a guidance document for City's programs and policies, including the Capital Improvement Program, and
- the development of the City's five-year Consolidated Plan, which outlines a plan and establishes funding priorities for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.



Guideline 4: Policy

Consider alignment of local, regional, and statewide policies that can have a positive impact on creating a culture of walkability.

Policy, systems, and environmental changes integrate walkability into the daily decision-making process while also making active modes of transportation the practical choice for members of the community. Springfield currently has a Complete Streets Policy in place and a successful Tree City USA Program. Continuing to refine ways the City can support these programs can lead to a widespread implementation of the principles of walkability.

Implementation Opportunities

- Research successes in benchmark communities
- Continue the implementation of the Complete Streets Policy
- Enhanced city-wide tree planning, landscaping and maintenance program
- Explore various funding mechanisms to implement principles of walkability
- In consultation with City Utilities, explore feasibility of burying utilities along designated corridors
- Education outreach across community partners and among the public
- Integrate with the Comprehensive Plan





Conclusion

Walkability is the multi-disciplinary lens that will create a resilient community, increase quality of life for residents, and result in a robust, connected transportation system that is safe and easy for residents and visitors to utilize. By further integrating walkability into our community's design, culture, and long-range plans, we will create places that support happy and healthy residents and become a Midwest destination. Further work is needed to both define and measure success, determine funding mechanisms, and continue to increase deliberate cross-collaboration among sectors, departments, and within public infrastructure projects.







OZARKS TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION



**O Z A R K
GREENWAYS**



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