



State of the City: Springfield, MN

January 28, 2026 - Covering the period from Jan. 2025-Dec. 2025

Reflecting on Our Challenges

In 2025, Springfield continued to balance the realities of small-city governance with the opportunities that come from growth and investment. Challenges remain—ranging from staffing to infrastructure needs—but Springfield’s ability to adapt and stay forward-looking has kept us moving in a positive direction.

Key challenges during 2025 included:

- **Workforce and Staffing:** Recruiting and retaining skilled staff continues to be a focus. The City Council and staff have worked to build a stable team environment with competitive wages, benefits, and professional development opportunities, knowing that quality services depend on dedicated employees. The focused initiative to recruit police officers has proved successful with 2025 bringing a fully staffed department of four. City staff continue to build relationships, cross train, and streamline processes ensuring continuation of services no matter the circumstances. The city has a much stronger team entering 2026 and we are no longer surviving the day-to-day. Staff are moving the needle forward with new ideas and projects to better the community.
- **Financial Stewardship:** With inflation and rising costs affecting city operations, budget planning required careful prioritization. Staff continue to look for ways to get the same or better result while saving money in the budget. A workable plan was developed for the purchase of equipment and building maintenance going forward and a new capital improvement fund will be started to save for future street projects. These changes demonstrate the council’s commitment to fiscal responsibility which ensures Springfield can meet today’s needs while preparing for tomorrow’s uncertainties.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** Like many small communities, we face the challenge of maintaining core facilities, utilities, equipment and transportation systems. Sorting through the aftermath of the collapse of several aged buildings in our downtown area has highlighted the importance of reinvestment in both public and privately owned infrastructure to keep Springfield resilient and prepared for future growth.

Despite these pressures, Springfield remained steady and resilient, focusing on long-term solutions over short-term fixes.

A Future to Look Forward To: Initiatives and Investments

As we look ahead to 2026 and beyond, it is important to reflect briefly on the goals established for the past year and the progress made toward them. In 2025, the City focused on economic development, police department upgrades, marketing the city, and community engagement. Meaningful steps were taken in each area, including continued investment through the EDA,



progress on police facility and operational needs, expanded efforts to promote Springfield as a place to live and do business, and increased opportunities for community involvement through EDA, housing childcare studies, surveys and focus groups. While this work is ongoing, these efforts have helped position Springfield for sustainable growth and thoughtful reinvestment moving forward.

As we look to 2026 and beyond, several initiatives will shape Springfield's growth and community spirit:

1. **Housing Development:** Building on the Region 9 housing study, Springfield continues to seek partnerships to meet community housing needs. Through several grants, the Springfield EDA aims to move the needle forward by initiating and supporting housing projects.
2. **Business Development/Support:** The Economic Development Authority (EDA) will continue to introduce new business programs with proceeds from the sale of the Parkview Apartments as well as grant funding. These programs will work to stimulate local entrepreneurship and attract business and housing development which will stabilize the tax base for the future.
3. **Facility Maintenance:** The city should work to maintain its current infrastructure before proceeding with new amenities as several current buildings are in need of major repair or maintenance. This includes updated police department facilities such as the building roof and evidence room, city hall facilities including roof and office space, etc. These buildings are a pillar of our downtown commercial district and should be maintained appropriately to ensure they continue to stand for many years to come. Recent repairs from the hail claim, pool and campground investments, and grant funded library and community center updates will leave the city in a stable position overall.
4. **Technology Updates:** The city should work to update its technology contracts to continue to provide affordable, reliable services for the residents. I believe several key vendor changes will help to eliminate staff frustrations and create a more streamlined process including changing Managed IT vendors, addressing internet connectivity issues, refreshing AV equipment, etc.

Many city initiatives have been made possible or accelerated through state and federal grant funding. The following sections outline the impacts of grant investments over the past year, including key statistics and a summary of grants that have been awarded, completed, or are currently in progress. The coming years offer exciting opportunities to build a stronger, more vibrant Springfield.

Impacts of Grant funding

From January 2025 to December 2025, the city will benefit from significant financial investments representing a transformative boost to our city's development:



- Approximately \$3,463,966 of grants completed in 2025 or awarded and in progress currently.
- \$500,000 in federal loans to support business initiatives.
- Annual local government aid of about \$1 million annually, not including one time aid payments, small cities assistance, police and fire aid, etc.
- This equates to over \$4,963,966 in total state/federal and grant funded support during this period.
- To provide perspective, Springfield collected approximately \$1,543,512 in local taxes in 2025.
- With an estimated population of 2040, this breaks down to **\$757 per resident annually**, enabling us to maintain essential services, including our streets, parks, pool, police, fire department, library, and more.
- We are administering \$3.21 of state, federal, and grant funding for every \$1.00 of local taxes collected and leveraging these dollars to improve the city.

The city has successfully secured funding for numerous projects in the past year:

- **Grants/Loans completed (in 2025):**

- Pieschel Foundation Grants - \$1,000 fire pagers, \$36,717.29 ambulance power load cots, \$9,500 summer reading program and juried arts show.
- MnDOT Emergency Operations Grant – \$14,400 (100% of copay, No Match) Airport hangar roof replacement
- ARMER Radio Equipment Grant with Brown County - \$17,845 towards (4) radios for Fire, EMS, and Police Departments (95/5).
- SMIF Small Town Grant - full housing and economic development study - \$7,600 (80/20)
- OSHA Safety Grant - \$6000 to provide secure entrance to Police department (50/50)
- MnDOT Aeronautics Equipment Grant - \$235,670 – Airport snowblower (95/5)
- Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation Literacy Grant – 130 English and 25 Spanish children’s books
- MN DNR - \$295,000 to expand campground and bathroom facilities (50/50)
- Arts Culture and Heritage Fund Grants – \$500+ for library programming/events
- American Legion Post – \$1,000 Library Infinity Game Table
- American Legion Post – \$600 Ambulance Burger Feed Supplies
- Compeer Financial - \$4,000 towards new ambulance pacing monitors.
- Brown County REA - \$1,000 towards new ambulance navigation tablets.
- Redwood Electric - \$1,000 towards new ambulance navigation tablets.
- Centerpoint Energy - \$2,500 towards new ambulance navigation tablets.

- **Active Grants/Loans (awarded and in progress)**



- MnDOT Aeronautics - \$29,000 Airport rezoning (95/5)
 - FEMA Mitigation - \$1.4-\$1.683 million Storm shelter and concession stand (75/25)
 - MnDOT Railroad crossing arms at Burns Ave 100% covered – (No Match)
 - SMIF Taylor Childcare Grant - \$20,000 towards EDA program to support new daycares (No match)
 - MPCA Stormwater Resiliency grant - \$233,000 Hoyt Ave and Wildridge Stormwater dry pond which will allow us to develop the area further (90/10, with \$5,000 and land donated by developer)
 - USDA Rural Economic Development Loan - \$500,000 to another local business in the early stages. (Loan)
 - FAA Airport Improvement Program - \$150,000/year beginning 2025 with NPIAS designation for capital upgrades to the airport – using towards D42 Springfield Municipal Airport, Airfield Electrical Update with an additional 2.5% to be covered by the state \$5,787.00. (95/2.5/2.5). A 2026 application is underway to update airport runway lighting.
 - Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant - \$108,000 for D42 Springfield Municipal Airport, Airfield Electrical Update – meaning project is covered at roughly 95% by the federal government and eligible for an additional 2.5% to be covered by the state \$2,787.00. (95/2.5/2.5) A 2026 application is underway to update airport runway lighting.
 - MN Secretary of State - 2025 Polling Place Accessibility Grant - \$4,342.22 for Community Center curbs and polling place signage.
 - Office of Emergency Medical Services - Ambulance AOD Grant - \$39,247.53 for ambulance operating funds
- **Grants/Loans Awaiting Response (applied and currently under review)**
 - Federal EDA Disaster Supplemental - \$13,000,000 – Industrial Park Expansion (80/20)
 - Department of Education Multi-Use Community Facilities Grant – Additional \$169,000 may be available for capital upgrades to Springfield Area Community Center and Springfield Public Library (No Match)
 - City staff actively seek new grant opportunities daily for both the city and its local businesses and non-profits.

Closing Thoughts

Springfield enters 2026 stronger and more prepared thanks to the work accomplished in 2025. Together, we have built momentum—investing in infrastructure, supporting public safety,

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expanding opportunities through economic development initiatives, and keeping our community connected and engaged.

Our city's future is bright because of the dedication of our residents, volunteers, staff, and council. Springfield's strength continues to lie in its people, and together, we are shaping a community ready to thrive in the years ahead.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Dale
City Manager