

Questions & Answers

Q&A from Grant Avenue Parkway Feb. 9 Virtual Public Engagement Session

- ***When you talk about incentivizing potential developers, could you expand on that?***
The significant investment in infrastructure and placemaking between Downtown and Wonders of Wildlife museum should result in an attractive location to invest. The proposed zoning changes will promote quality development while allowing greater flexibility of uses.
- ***Very excited and pleased at what I've seen. A real asset for Springfield, this parkway will be a jewel for the city!***
That's what we're working for.
- ***Can you please consider planting native and edible vegetation? Planting edible plants would help feed and educate the public.***
Yes, this is an interesting idea. The City is open to connecting investors with edible vegetation advocates.
- ***Are the current CU projects to update water and gas lines related to this?***
Yes. While Grant Avenue is being improved, City Utilities plans to upgrade the gas and water lines along the corridor to accommodate existing and future demands.
- ***Why won't the corridor start @route 66 (college street)?***
The corridor does go from Sunshine to College Street along Grant Avenue and includes a downtown loop that utilizes College Street (Route 66).
- ***I'm more concerned about property being taken for retail space, not trails or greenway. I.e., a house by a corner, yet not on the corner - taken for parking or whatever.***
While some property acquisition will be necessary for the trail, utility, and roadway improvements along Grant Avenue, the project will not acquire land for redevelopment purposes. The acquisition of property for development or redevelopment would be done through private transactions.
- ***Where will all the bicycles park?***
Amenities along the trail, such as bicycle parking, are part of the vision of the Grant Avenue Parkway. These details will be part of the design-build teams' proposals.
- ***Will you use this a new opportunity to set a new gold standard for maintenance and stewardship?***
Maintenance along the corridor will be part of the evaluation of various improvement options.

- *Will current homeowners/property owners be grandfathered in for property taxes? I am concerned that some homeowners may not be able to afford gentrification of property taxes. This has happened in Seattle/Portland areas.*

There are currently no plans to freeze property taxes.

- *Wi-Fi access is an interesting service to offer for public streets, what could we learn from the potential data to improve the use of public space over time (years)?*

Smart City technologies, such as those that might be included along Grant Avenue Parkway, have the potential to offer the community important data on traffic volume, utilization and performance of the trail, parking, and travel speed that can be used to better serve the people of Springfield.

- *What can be done to encourage historic preservation of existing housing stock or development with architecture that is cohesive with the existing neighborhoods?*

The corridor plan encourages preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties. Expanding the menu of uses should assist property owners in adaptively re-using their historic property. The City does not plan to initiative placing properties on historic registers.

- *NOT A QUESTION, but it is so great to see such a comprehensive project in Springfield!*

- *Will this project tie into other trails in addition to Fasnicht Creek trail?*

Coordination is ongoing with Ozark Greenways to ensure that the Grant Avenue Parkway is connected to the regional trail network (including on-street bike routes, Fasnicht Creek Greenway, and Jordan Creek Greenway) to maximize the benefits of the project.

- *Will the city push for homes to be rebuilt or knocked down during construction of project?*

The Grant Avenue Parkway project will only acquire properties that are necessary for the construction of the trail and associated improvements. The project will incentivize teams to limit impacts on property owners and avoid unnecessary acquisition as part of their design, so more dollars can be put into the trail improvements.

- *Would it be possible to create designated parking garages to get people a little bit closer but emphasize pedestrian and bike navigation?*

In addition to commercial parking lots, there is an abundance of on-street parking available, it is unlikely that additional parking garages can be feasibly constructed or operated.

- *What about parking for all those mixed-use lots?*

Sites where mixed uses would be allowed are relatively limited in size and number. It is anticipated that many of these commercial uses would be oriented to pedestrian and bike traffic on the parkway and in the neighborhoods. Parking for staff would be located on-site as required by the size of commercial space.

- ***Will the mixed use be apartments or actual purchasable housing?***
They could be either; rent versus own would be driven by the market.
- ***How is the City of SGF engaging the surrounding neighborhoods to voice their opinion throughout this process?***
Receiving citizen input for the Parkway and Corridor Plans has been a foundational component of the process. The Feb. 23 virtual public event was our seventh public livestream broadcast regarding the Grant Avenue Parkway, each with polling and questions. In addition, there have been more than 35 one-on-one stakeholder and property owner meetings, as well as numerous calls between citizens and staff, many in response to a postcard that invites those with concerns to reach out directly to city staff. So far, more than 2,000 individuals have engaged directly throughout this process.
- ***How will State St be affected? Harrison?***
Intersection improvements at Grant Avenue and State Street will be part of the project, although the exact layout will be determined by the design-build teams.
- ***What kind of grants/assistance may be available to homeowners in the area?***
We suggest homeowners visit the Restore SGF program website at restoreSGF.com.
- ***What is the timeline for completion of the GAP?***
Construction is likely to start in the second half of 2022 and will be completed by the end of 2025.
- ***How does the city hope to retain residents in the neighborhood that might become displaced?***
An overriding goal of the Corridor Plan is to increase the number of units and variety of housing types available in the area, creating more, better choices for residents. Offering a wider range of uses should help achieve this.
- ***Is there a Fassnight Neighborhood Association? If not, this seems like the perfect time for one to be organized.***
Citizens interested forming a Fassnight Neighborhood Association should contact the City of Springfield's Planning and Neighborhoods office at 864-2027
- ***What programs will there be to help homeowners improve housing?***
We suggest homeowners visit the Restore SGF website at restoreSGF.com.
- ***What can be done about the two blocks of Douglas south of Grand? No forward-thinking development will take off with such blight, drugs, and crime in the back yard of the Grant Parkway. Complaints are filed on a regular basis, but nothing substantial changes. This area seems to only be getting worse.***
Changes in zoning are intended to encourage new investment in the area. The City endeavors to respond to all citizen complaints.

- *Is it too soon to write another BUILD grant proposal and start working on connecting this project to other staples of our community? For instance, what about this same concept for Kimbrough from Sunshine to Chestnut? And Harrison/State from MSU to Grant? The State/Harrison corridor is already a wide street with some great features: Jenny Lincoln Park, St. Agnes, MSU, and beautiful homes. Additionally, that section of State Street was formerly occupied by Springfield's Streetcar. (MSU is in the process of designing their next long-range plan looking into the next 5-10 years. Let's form a partnership with them and execute something big.)*

BUILD Grants are highly competitive and we are fortunate to have received one for the Grant Avenue Parkway. Through the Grant Avenue Parkway project, the City intends to demonstrate to the Federal government that we are responsible grant recipients, so that one day we may be able to apply for another and be successful.

- *With all the mixed-use positive input, where will all these people park?*
Sites where mixed uses would be permitted are relatively limited in size and number. It is anticipated that most commercial uses would be oriented to pedestrian and bike traffic on the Parkway, as well as the neighborhoods. Parking for staff would be located on-site as required by the size of commercial space.
- *How will the possible development be driven and incentivized?*
Grant Avenue Parkway is a significant placemaking and public improvement project, creating interest in walking and biking. Changes in zoning that allow more uses while providing quality development standards are expected to incentivize many property owners to invest in their property.
- *How about extending the split parkway north to Mount Vernon, razing the structures on the east side? The apartment complex and boarded up houses between Madison and Mount Vernon are just as bad as the houses south of Madison. This could be an even bolder step to really make the parkway special.*

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