



GREATER SPRINGFIELD **PARTNERSHIP**

2023 Annual Meeting

By Mike McDorman, President & CEO

This year's Annual Meeting theme is "The Future is Now!" We have waited a long time as a community to get to the place where we can honestly say our time has come. A time when there is positive momentum propelling us forward in a BIG way. I wrote in a recent GSP newsletter, "I often hear people talk about the good old days of Springfield. In the very near future, these same people might get to see the best days of Springfield!" A great example is the Jetson's like opportunity happening at our airport.

Let's watch a quick video which highlights a recent groundbreaking event that depicts the important next generation job opportunity investments The City is working on with Jobs OHIO, the Dayton Development Coalition, GSP, and many others at Springfield's Beckley Municipal Airport.

The Greater Springfield Partnership has worked with the City, The County, and many other key stakeholders to help stem the decline that has plagued us for decades and now is working on a smart growth plan that is being strategically employed right now. A doctor named Steve Judson, whom my youngest daughter works with in Hartford, Connecticut, said in a recent book he wrote, "When you get a mission, you get a life. Clench your fists, buckle down, and start really living." That is what we are doing as we all continue to work on building this thing called a vibrant community.

In 2023 the GSP team will continue to be focused on seven strategic pillars. We will continue to convene meetings regarding potential vision projects like the Big Four Sports & Events Center, a 100,000 square foot regional sports tourism facility that would serve to shore up our existing YMCA and Clark State Performing Arts Center assets. The new flat space would attract 3,000 sports team participants and associated visitors per weekend while serving as a community youth and adult recreation center during the week. The flat space would provide room for many different youth sports opportunities which includes room for eight basketball or 16 volleyball courts.

We continue to experience incredible job growth with the addition of Gabe's Distribution Center. This \$90M investment will bring 1,000 jobs with it. That is in addition to the several thousand jobs already created over the past several years. These unprecedented developments, along with outside employment pressures, have created a workforce issue for area companies.

That is why GSP has been working on a nationally recognized program it created called “Consider Clark County” that utilizes an associated website Clarkcounty.jobs. This program combines YouScience, a student aptitude and career assessment tool, with a sixteen career cluster video series which highlights area job opportunities. These ongoing efforts will be a game changer in providing an answer to our future workforce needs.

Our area’s massive job growth has stimulated a housing market surge for the first time in decades. GSP is partnering with Forty Partners on the Melody Parks project, a 400-acre development which includes the Melody Drive in and most of what is now known as Nextedge Tech Park. The project will include 1,250 upscale housing units along with a mixed-use retail and restaurant development located along Route 40 east near I70.

GSP will continue to work with Springforward, a downtown development catalytic fund, which is working primarily with mixed use developers to help make this area a hotspot lifestyle community opportunity in the heart of the county seat. In the next five years there are plans for more than 200 market rate apartments with associated entertainment, retail, and restaurant opportunities.

GSP continues to receive statewide awards that recognize destination marketing excellence. We are also focused on public arts and major downtown events like Mustard Fest, IndieCraft, the Farmers Market and of course the month-long Holiday in The City. GSP has committed to buying the popular outdoor ice rink for \$300,000 over three years with the help of major sponsors Speedway and the Convention Facilities Authority.

Yes, the future for Greater Springfield is NOW! We are dreaming BIG and now the hard work is paying off. We have the right ingredients for success. We know No one creates success alone! We are better together, and together we are accomplishing great things. We are building a vibrant community. We simply need to keep the pedal down in '23! Onward!