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Springfield Chamber Board endorses April 7 lodging tax proposal to advance regional convention and events center

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors voted to endorse the City of Springfield's proposed 3% lodging tax increase on the April 7, 2026, ballot, citing the project's long-term economic impact and alignment with the Chamber's strategic plan.

If approved by voters, the measure would increase the city's lodging tax from 5% to 8% on hotels, motels and short-term rentals. The additional revenue would be used primarily to finance the construction, operation and maintenance of a regional convention and events center. The tax would sunset after 35 years.

Although the tax will primarily be levied on visitors, Chamber Board Chairman Jessica Harmison-Olson said the project will positively impact Springfield citizens and businesses.

"This is about positioning Springfield for long-term success," said Harmison-Olson. "A modern convention and events center will help us compete for additional events and hosting opportunities that our facilities currently cannot support. That means increased visitor spending, stronger support for our local businesses and citizens, and greater momentum for downtown investment."

Projections estimate the proposed facility could generate \$1.3 billion in new visitor spending and \$68.7 million in tax revenue over 30 years. Additional visitor spending will increase Springfield's sales tax collection, support quality-of-life investments and create new opportunities for business growth and workforce expansion across the region, ultimately supporting the employees and families who call Springfield home.

The proposal was unanimously recommended by Springfield City Council on January 12, 2026, following the completion of a community listening tour, conducted after a similar measure failed in November 2025. In response to voter feedback, the city has made intentional efforts to listen to concerns and gather feedback from citizens, influencing the proposal on the April ballot. As a result, the ballot language now includes a 35-year sunset provision, and discussions around the project have highlighted a \$175 million construction cost cap, simplified funding structure, commitment that no General Fund dollars will be used, and greater clarity regarding location and implementation.

Chamber President Matt Morrow said the proposal represents a generational opportunity to strengthen Springfield's business community and economic competitiveness.

"Leading regional economic development means embracing generational opportunities that accelerate the success and prosperity of our community and region," said Morrow. "This ballot proposal prioritizes stakeholder input and directly aligns with our five-year strategic plan by strengthening our region's ability to attract talent, support existing businesses and enhance quality of life for residents."

The election will be held April 7, 2026. For more information about the ballot measure, visit the [City of Springfield's website](#).

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