



What is Springfield 2051?

“We obviously hope that people will see it as a call to action, really helping to shape the future of this community, and it's not just the distant future. It's immediate future in some cases.”

BY BRITTANY LANTZ • GENERAL • SEPTEMBER 18, 2025





Brittany Rempe – Future IQ CEO David Beurle speaks at the Springfield 2051 Kick Off



What will Springfield look like as it celebrates its 250th birthday in 2051? That's the question driving [the Springfield 2051 initiative](#).

While that date and celebration are many years away, leaders like Marta Wojcik, Executive Director of the Westcott House, are hoping to get the community involved in answering that question now. With the help of [Future IQ](#), a research and consulting firm that focuses on strategic planning, Springfield is undergoing a 15-month process that should create a roadmap for the city's future.




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The project is a product of conversations that started last fall, as Springfield became the subject of national conversations and gave the city a spotlight that had lasting effects on its residents, Wojcik says.

“We are just grappling with this reality, and really, the negative news affecting real people in our community,” she adds. “But that led us to this idea that this needs to be really thoughtful – a really deep process.”


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As Wojcik explains it, the Springfield 2051 initiative is an opportunity for residents to think deeply about the place they call home, share their concerns, hopes and dreams to help craft a future that is mindful of everyone’s point of view.

Future IQ CEO David Beurle says the project will also expand beyond city limits and consider how Springfield fits into the broader region.

“The other part that we’re looking at, too, is what I call the strategic positioning of this community,” Beurle explains. “So that bigger sort of outward-looking in conversation, saying, ‘Where does Springfield fit into the broader region from Dayton to Columbus?’”

Berurle and his team at Future IQ have helped cities across the United States develop long-term, actionable plans through a process they designed and developed.



Brittany Rempe

Future IQ CEO David Beurle speaks at the Springfield 2051 Kick Off

“We decided to invest our time, money and energy into this multi-month process and commit to involving as many people as possible in Springfield to have a series of conversations and brainstorming sessions, and think tank sessions...to basically shape a roadmap to the community’s future,” Wojcik says of Future IQ’s work.

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After publicly launching last month, Springfield 2051 has officially entered its second of four phases. The first phase started earlier this year and included internal preparation work, like planning and information gathering. It also included

the creation of an advisory group, which includes 60 community members from various sectors who will serve as the project’s ambassadors.

Phase two includes gathering community feedback – an integral part of the project, done through a community survey, listening sessions, think tanks, interviews, and more. Wojcik says they’re leaning into this part of the process and trying to gather as much feedback as possible.

During the Springfield 2051 events, Beurle leads conversations, asks thought-provoking questions, and helps connect common threads, which means feedback and ideas don’t need to be fully fleshed out and prepared. He says he’s already had individuals reach out to share new ideas that they’ve thought about in the days following an event.



Brittany Rempe

“David will prompt them through the questions that will really kind of help aggregate those ideas,” Wojcik explains.

Information gathered in phase two is then used to develop the roadmap and create a plan for strategic positioning in phase three. They will utilize task forces for key topic areas, which will help build out action steps. As Wojcik describes it, the first couple of phases create the vision, while the next ones help answer, “How do we achieve that vision?”

“This will guide us to a roadmap, to a vision for Springfield, to our preferred future, by really taking into account everyone’s ideas, everyone’s dreams, but concerns as well,” she says. “Then we will see that visualized data and get a good picture of where everyone stands.”

It’s here that Beurle notes that “Springfield is not starting at ground zero. There’s a lot of good stuff that has happened. A lot of good stuff is happening. There are a lot of very effective organisations that, for ages, have been taking on big projects and moving through to implementation.”



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He adds that, across the board, communities are becoming more resource-constrained, so understanding how to combine and best leverage the resources that are available and recognizing the work already being done is a crucial part of the roadmap.

“This is the opportunity now to say, okay, if you were to bring all those together, rather than these sorts of efforts happening somewhat in silos, if you were to bring that together under a unified sort of plan and vision and approach, what would be possible then?” he adds.

By the middle of 2026, they should be starting phase four – implementation. Wojcik explains that while the project is attempting to visualize Springfield in 2051, many of the changes born of this plan will be implemented immediately.

“We obviously hope that people will see it as a call to action, really helping to shape the future of this community, and it’s not just the distant future,” she says. “It’s immediate future in some cases.”

Beurle adds that this process is a unique and direct opportunity to shape the future of Springfield.

“It’s also one of those rare opportunities where people get a chance to directly be part of shaping the future of their own community,” he explains. “If you look at it, really, for most people, the way they get to do that is they vote in local elections, right? But this is a much more direct line from somebody to being able to have input into shaping a road map for the future.”

To learn more about Springfield 2051, [click here](#).

To take the Springfield 2051 Community Survey, [click here](#).

Springfield 2051 is hosting Think Tanks sessions on [September 19](#) from 8:30 a.m. until noon, and on [September 26](#) from 8:30 a.m. until noon. Registration for those events can be found online.

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Brittany Lantz is State Editor for Indiana–Ohio, overseeing Input Fort Wayne and Hub Springfield. With roots in Ohio and now based in Fort Wayne, Indiana, she brings valuable perspective to both states in coordinating journalism efforts across the region. She joined Issue Media Group in 2021 as Assistant Editor for Input Fort Wayne. Prior to that she participated in the College Input Program and interned with Northeast Indiana Public Radio.

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