

IMAGINE BELLEVILLE

ADOPTED
JUNE 16, 2014

Our Residents

A diversified and educated population with an entrepreneurial spirit is the key to meeting the challenges of an unpredictable future.

- OneSTL

SECTION 5

Economic Development



Introduction

Over the last 75 years, the types of employers supporting Belleville's local economy have followed national trends, transitioning from a manufacturing-based economy to one primarily composed of "eds and meds." In other words, five of Belleville's top eight employers are educational ("eds") or medical ("meds") institutions: Memorial Hospital, Southwestern Illinois College, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, School District #118, and School District #201.¹ After the Great Depression, manufacturing jobs declined while education, health care, and government jobs increased at staggering rates, as seen in **Figure 5.1, U.S. Job Creation by Industry**.² Between 1990 and 2008, approximately one half of new U.S. jobs were classified in one of these three sectors.

Belleville's two major hospitals; two higher education institutions; multiple school districts; and city, county, and state jobs serve as economic engines to the community. These destinations - whether the new \$24 million Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center at Memorial Hospital or the \$35 million State Crime Lab

¹ Additional statistics can be found on page 5.4.

² "What's the Single Best Explanation for Middle-Class Decline?" Derek Thompson. The Atlantic. August 20, 2012.

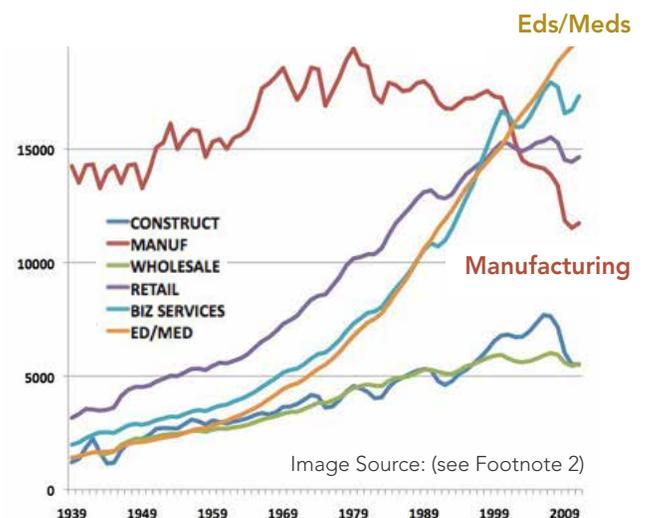


Figure 5.1, U.S. Job Creation by Industry

The sharp decline of manufacturing jobs is juxtaposed against the steep rise in educational and medical employment, particularly since Belleville's last Comprehensive Plan in 2000. This national trend is clearly reflected in the local job market visualized on page 5.4.



Belleville Shoe Company

Founded in 1904, the Belleville Shoe Company (now referred to as the Belleville Boot Company) is the nation's oldest and largest military boot manufacturing company. It was one of the earlier businesses to migrate to Belle Valley Industrial Park in 1986.



across from Lindenwood University - Belleville (LU-B) - cast a wide net to attract visitors from across the region and beyond. They inject millions into the local economy through primary and secondary jobs, modernized infrastructure systems, and regional visibility. Yet, growth in these sectors, alone, is not considered a sustainable, long-term economic development strategy.

One of Belleville's primary tools for diversification is to grow businesses and entrepreneurs from within the community. Mainstays such as the Belleville Shoe Company (now the Belleville Boot Company), reflect the community's German heritage and military connections to Scott Air Force Base (AFB). Over the past 10 years, the company has opened two satellite operations in Arkansas and also had to downsize its Belleville workforce from 650 employees in 2005 to 175 employees in 2013. As companies must adapt to challenging economic conditions, it is important for Belleville to foremost retain existing ones. It is estimated that 75 percent of job growth occurs through the expansion of existing businesses – not through the recruitment of major employers. With the growing day- and night-time student populations at Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) and LU-B, Belleville has a qualified pool of recent graduates and young professionals eager to transition to the job market.

Approach

The purpose of this economic development chapter is to coalesce the leading actors, influences, and strategic initiatives that sustain and stimulate economic growth. Economic development is an overarching municipal function that involves complex partnerships among multiple organizations, institutions, and businesses. These public and private entities are bound together by a common set of goals requiring a level of engagement beyond the traditional scope of the

City. *This Comprehensive Plan should, therefore, be seen as a preliminary set of ideas and policies to help frame further dialogue on economic planning, but not as "the plan" itself. Instead, an economic strategy plan is warranted to spell out the specifics of the City's approach to its economic development.*

This section of the plan is based on the overlap of industry and innovation, human talent, and quality of place. That is, at the broadest scale, the assets of the City are its university and medical infrastructure, access to multi-modal transportation links, a beautiful natural setting, and the historic character of the built environment, among others. The City can help develop its economy by supporting a physical and regulatory environment in which the people who are attracted to the City can create and grow new businesses. In some cases, the City or other entities should stimulate private enterprise through marketing, programs, incentives, regulation, and investment.

In today's competitive marketplace, businesses are seeking communities that offer an enhanced quality of life, including:

- Well-paid jobs;
- Educational opportunities for all, including lifelong learning;
- Medical facilities;
- Quality and affordable housing;
- Public amenities, including public school systems;
- Safe neighborhoods;
- Recreation, entertainment, and shopping;
- Low cost of living / low taxation; and
- Attractive built and natural environments.



These amenities are essential to retaining and recruiting the next generation of residents. The community must meet the needs of prospective employees - and their families - by offering high-quality places to live, learn, work, and play. "Art in the Square" is a model example that improves the overall quality of life for local residents, while at the same time, elevating Belleville's profile as a regional and national destination. It demonstrates the public and private sectors' commitment to investing in the local community.

This section builds upon the core community character theme—and associated action strategies—that are found throughout this *Comprehensive Plan*. Other elements of this plan also tackle land use and sub-area planning, growth management, public investment, and quality of life as vehicles to attract economic opportunity.

One of the most significant linkages and community concerns is the implication of housing. The quality and attractiveness of Belleville's neighborhoods are key factors in recruiting prospective residents and employers. The presence of an adequate, available housing stock is imperative to meet the needs of low, middle, and upper income households that fulfill a diversity of job types. Beyond livability and economic development concerns, local government also has an interest in the sustainability of new residential construction and the condition of the existing housing stock since market and assessed values directly impact the tax base. Under the umbrella of the City's housing and economic development functions, areas that are in need of revitalization and redevelopment should be the target of assistance efforts to preserve existing neighborhoods and prevent widespread decline.

Economic Context³

Government

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE / MIDAMERICA ST. LOUIS AIRPORT

First developed in 1917, Scott AFB is the St. Louis Area's fourth largest employer. Located on 3,589 acres of land six miles east of Belleville, the base employs 13,000 workers (plus approximately 6,451 indirect jobs) and has a total population of 41,204 military and civilian personnel, family members, and retirees. The base contributes \$2.3 billion annually to the regional economy, and visitors occupy more than 105,000 hotel

³ The Economic Context section, including part of the Major Employers inset, is derived from other City documents, including the City's 2000-2020 *Comprehensive Plan*.



rooms annually. Recently the base has invested \$12.3 million in the 375th Security Forces Squadron, \$96 million in the U.S. TRANSCOM Addition, \$7.2 million in a Child Development Center, and \$11 million in the 932nd Squadron Operations Building. City leaders actively participate on the Belle-Scott Committee, a group committed to supporting personnel and their families and fostering partnerships throughout the region.⁴

MidAmerica St. Louis Airport is a joint use, public airport co-located on Scott AFB. In 2010, the airport serviced approximate two-thirds military operations and one-third general aviation. In 2012, Allegiant Air resumed twice weekly flights to Orlando/Sanford International Airport. The majority of general aviation traffic is dedicated to cargo operations, which are seen as a major economic development opportunity for growing the region's transportation and distribution sectors.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY

Belleville serves as the county seat for St. Clair County. Major County facilities located in Belleville include the County Court House serving as the administrative and county courts center, County Jail and Juvenile Detention Center, County Highway Department, Emergency Services and Disaster Agency, 9-1-1 Dispatching Center, Public Health Department, Intergovernmental Grants Department, and County Housing Authority. The St. Clair County Public Health Building Commission is the owner/operator of all County government facilities including the MidAmerica St. Louis Airport.

STATE/FEDERAL

State offices located within the Belleville area include the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Employment Security, Department of Public Aid, State Crime Lab, and offices of two Illinois State Representatives. Federal offices include

⁴ See page 5.11 for additional references to recent activity and key considerations.

Major Employers

In 1860, more than two-thirds of Belleville’s 7,500 residents were German immigrants. They established Belleville as an urban and cultural hub in southern Illinois. Shortly after this wave of immigration, and as population grew, Belleville became known as the stove capital of the world, and its strong industrial core was rooted in its many manufacturing facilities, milling centers, and distilleries and breweries. Although Scott AFB is the largest employer in the region, Belleville is still home to many large manufacturing and distribution facilities

Today, Belleville’s major employers are heavily represented in the education, health care, and government fields, as seen in **Table 5.1, Belleville’s Largest Employers**. Notable trends include:

- The Belleville Shoe Company downsized from 650 employees in 2005, 440 employees in 2010, and 175 employees in 2013. This is partly attributed to the conclusion of government contracts as well as two new plant expansions in Dewitt, Arkansas, in 2002 and Forrest City, Arkansas, in 2008.
- LU-B has increased from 13 employees in 2008 to 227 employees in 2013. This growth is a reflection of the growing student body and class expansion from night-only classes to day and night students. As a result of this growth, the University has invested in major campus improvements such as the new dorms.
- Regions Bank downsized from 1,200 employees in 2010 to 190 employees in 2013. This trend is common throughout the country as mobile and online banking threatens “brick and mortar” establishments, oftentimes the financial centerpieces to small- and medium-sized economies.

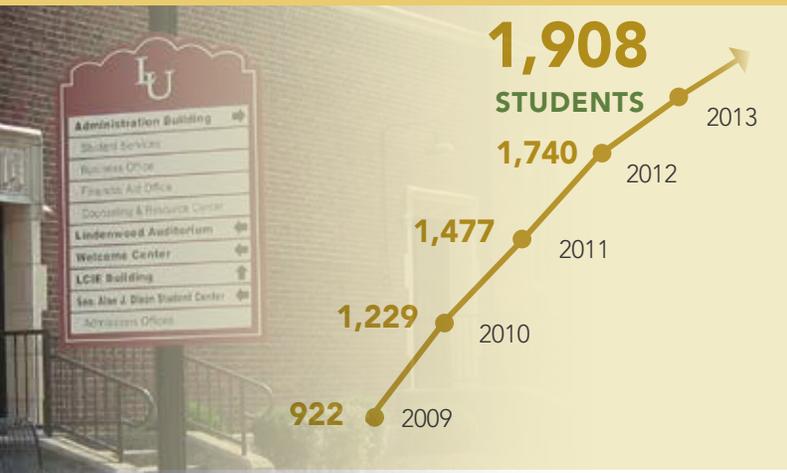
One of the most critical economic development strategies is for the City to **retain its existing employers**. Relocation of one of Belleville’s larger employers - especially one that has a long history in the community and/or is centrally located - would have negative spin-off effects that go far beyond employment impacts.

As stated in OneSTL, the regional framework for the St. Louis area, “Collaboration is an essential element of a resilient and growing economy. National trends over the past two decades support the notion that a collaborative approach toward economic development is better for overall economic prosperity for cities, towns, and suburbs alike.” This underscores the need for ongoing conversations between industries, institutions, and governments.

Table 5.1, Belleville’s Largest Employers (Full- and Part-Time)

	2010	2013	% Change
1. Scott Air Force Base	14,150	13,000	-8%
2. Memorial Hospital	2,400	2,500	4%
3. Southwestern Illinois College	1,700	1,700	0%
4. St. Elizabeth’s Hospital	1,750	1,353	-23%
5. St. Clair County	1,020	973	-5%
6. Allsup	660	671	2%
7. School District #118	552	586	6%
8. School District #201	500	482	-4%
9. Walmart	483	440	-9%
10. City of Belleville	440	431	-2%
11. Ameren	178	264	48%
12. First Student	125	262	110%
13. Empire Comfort Systems	250	260	4%
14. Dental Network of America	200	260	30%
15. Eckert’s Orchards	250	250	0%
16. ROHO	250	250	0%
17. Lindenwood University - Belleville	97	227	134%
18. McDonald’s	203	220	8%
19. Illinois American Water	205	205	0%
20. Belleville News Democrat	185	198	7%
21. Our Lady of the Snows	198	190	-4%
22. Regions	200	190	-5%
23. Shop N Save	185	188	2%
24. Schnucks	195	185	-5%
25. Belleville Shoe Company	440	175	-60%

Source: City of Belleville (Data collected September 2013)



Lindenwood University - Belleville plans for continued growth, projecting **3,000** total students by 2019 and **5,000** total students by 2024.

Source: Key Stakeholder Interview

the Department of Agriculture, Social Security Administration, U.S. Postal Services facilities, and the office of a U.S. Congressman.

Education

Belleville is home to nine public grade schools, five private grade schools, two public junior highs, and two public high schools, Belleville East and Belleville West. Governor French Academy, which educates young people from kindergarten through high school, and Althoff Catholic High School are also located in Belleville.

Belleville has multiple school districts within and immediately surrounding the City limits, such as District 118 (grade school district), District 201 (high school district), SWIC, Mascoutah School District, Harmony-Emge District, Signal Hill School District, East St. Louis School District, and Freeburg School District. These educational taxing bodies benefit from being located within a tax increment finance (TIF) district because property tax generated by newly revitalized property within the district is often used for schools, parks, and other civic functions. Over the last three years, more than \$6 million in TIF revenues has been used for schools, as documented on page 6.24.

Additionally, the City is within commuting distance of 11 major colleges and universities within the St. Louis metropolitan area.⁵ The state's largest community college south of Chicago, SWIC, is located in the Belleville community (although not incorporated). SWIC has a for-credit student population of 24,000 students annually across all three campuses and is consistently ranked among the top 100 institutions that confer associate degrees and certificates by *Community College Week* education magazine.

Building upon Belleville's long-standing tradition of excellent education, LU-B opened its doors at 2600



Figure 5.2, MidAmerica Local Workforce Investment Area #24

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 reformed federal job training programs and created a new, comprehensive workforce investment system. The reformed system was intended to be customer-focused, to help Americans access the tools they need to manage their careers through information and high quality services, and to help U.S. companies find skilled workers. This act divided the state of Illinois into Local Workforce Investment Areas (WIAs) to administer resources and track data.

The job readiness and training resources that are available to Belleville residents are identified on page 5.19. The City of Belleville is located in the MidAmerica WIA #24, which includes Clinton, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair, and Washington Counties. The following page uses the WIA boundary to track employment trends.

Direct Information Source: U.S. Department of Labor; Image Source: Workforce Information and Resource Exchange

⁵ Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Figure 5.3, Historic Unemployment Rates

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security



Belleville residents are struggling with one of the **highest unemployment rates** in the last 10 years. The City's unemployment rate has been consistently higher than the five-county workforce investment area (WIA) and St. Louis metropolitan statistical area (MSA).

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belleville	6.5%	7.1%	7.2%	6.7%	6.4%	6.7%	7.9%	11.0%	11.1%	10.2%	10.0%
5-County WIA	6.0%	6.6%	6.4%	6.0%	5.6%	5.9%	7.2%	9.9%	10.0%	9.3%	9.0%
St. Louis MSA	5.9%	6.4%	6.4%	5.9%	5.5%	5.9%	7.0%	10.0%	10.0%	9.3%	9.0%

Table 5.2, Job Creation and Earnings

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics

	2002	2012	% Change
Total Employment			
St. Clair County	89,512	88,631	-1%
MidAmerica WIA	128,931	128,271	-1%
Illinois	5,674,824	5,544,410	-2%
Job Creation			
St. Clair County	4,894	3,982	-19%
MidAmerica WIA	6,824	5,713	-16%
Illinois	273,565	246,092	-10%
Earnings: Average Monthly New Hire			
St. Clair County	\$1,526.75	\$2,049.00	34%
MidAmerica WIA	\$1,481.25	\$1,986.50	34%
Illinois	\$2,063.75	\$2,635.00	28%
Earnings: Average Monthly			
St. Clair County	\$2,528.00	\$3,269.50	29%
MidAmerica WIA	\$2,466.25	\$3,207.00	30%
Illinois	\$3,421.25	\$4,449.75	30%

The total employment in St. Clair County has slightly declined, but this trend is reflected in the five-county WIA and state.

Job creation has declined by 19 percent in St. Clair County in the last 10 years, significantly worse than the state. This is a critical focus of this plan.

St. Clair County's wages have increased in proportion to the region and state, yet the average wages of new hires is significantly higher than state averages. This may be associated with the community's higher percentage of college students and graduates (see next page).

**Table 5.3, Employment Projections by Industry Sector (MidAmerica WIA 24)**

Medical, education, and government institutions are projected to continue representing the largest share of the employment market in the five-county WIA. St. Clair County's *Comprehensive Plan* (2011) emphasizes strategic marketing and growth opportunities in the transportation and distribution industries, especially aviation-related developments linked to air cargo and passenger service at Mid-America St. Louis Airport and Scott AFB. This table identifies additional forms of diversification, such as professional, scientific, and technical services. These services range from biotechnology research and development to architecture and engineering.

	Employment 2010	Projected Change 2010-2020	Annual Compound Growth Rate	
Largest Projected Growth by # of Jobs	Health Care & Social Assistance	19,762	2,400	1.15
	Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	6,935	1,780	2.31
	Accommodation and Food Services	12,185	1,591	1.23
	Transportation & Warehousing & Utilities	10,245	1,042	0.97
	Educational Services, Private & Public	13,454	865	0.63
	Retail Trade	17,227	772	0.44
	Administrative & Waste Management Services	3,453	644	1.72
	Finance and Insurance	4,235	556	1.24
	Other Services	7,481	472	0.61
	Manufacturing	10,429	174	0.17
	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,207	174	1.35
	Wholesale Trade	4,433	172	0.38
	Information	1,651	51	0.30
	Construction	6,101	47	0.08
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	463	10	0.21
	Natural Resources and Mining	280	1	0.04
	Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2,123	-95	-0.46
	Agricultural	4,202	-124	-0.30
	Government	15,216	-438	-0.29

Source: Illinois Department of Economic Security

Education (from Section 1, Introduction)

- Belleville had a 63.2 percent increase in the number of students enrolled in college or graduate school between 2000 (2,660 students) and 2011 (4,340 students), according to the U.S. Census. This trend reflects the growing presence of LU-B and SWIC.

Commuting Patterns (from Section 1, Introduction)

- 69 percent of residents live and work in St. Clair County; 24 percent of residents live in Belleville and work in Missouri; seven percent of Belleville

residents work in one of the surrounding Illinois counties.

- The mean travel time to work for Belleville residents decreased from 23.7 to 22.3 minutes between 2000 and 2011.
- The number of residents traveling by bicycle, motorcycle, or taxicab to/from work between 2000 and 2011 increased from 109 to 320 residents. Belleville also experienced an increase in the number of residents commuting by public transit, increasing from 559 to 787 residents.



Memorial Hospital



St. Elizabeth's Hospital

West Main Street for the first time for the 2003 fall semester. The University's enrollment continues to grow each year, with as many as 1,000 undergraduate students and 900 evening and graduate students for the 2013 fall semester.

Health Care

The City of Belleville serves as a health care center for southwestern Illinois. With two full-service hospitals, Memorial and St. Elizabeth's, 13-state-licensed long-term care facilities, home health agencies, regional renal care and oncology care centers, and a new \$24 million Memorial Hospital Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center, the medical needs of the region are met in Belleville. Health care is a major part of the Belleville economy with roughly 12 to 15 percent of the city's employment serving in the medical field.

Memorial Hospital, located in West Belleville, is a 341-bed full-service medical center with a staff of skilled primary and specialty care physicians. Memorial provides medical, surgical, pediatric, obstetrical, and psychiatric care, and includes intensive care, cardiac telemetry, and surgical facilities for inpatient and outpatient services. St. Elizabeth's Hospital, located in Downtown Belleville, provides 498 beds and a medical staff of 230 physicians representing 30 medical specialties.⁶ St. Elizabeth's staff includes board-certified pathologies, radiologists, neonatologists, and emergency care physicians. Both hospitals offer outreach and community education/wellness programs, a variety of support groups, and outpatient diagnostic and treatment centers within the area.

Supplementing these hospitals is the Scott AFB Medical Center, a regional Air Force hospital, offering health care services to active duty and retired military personnel in the Belleville area.

⁶ Reference page 5.10 for recent developments about a possible relocation of St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

Key Issues and Considerations

Throughout the planning process, a number of issues and concerns were expressed related to economic development efforts in Belleville. These key issues and considerations are appended by the **Analysis of Strengths / Weaknesses and Opportunities / Threats** inset, located on the following page.

- One of the community's overarching concerns is Belleville's image and reputation in the region. In recent years, the City has increased the police force and adopted a crime-free housing ordinance, giving the police department greater capacity to address actual and perceived safety concerns. This perception is compounded by negative media coverage in the local newspaper and strong fears about decline of East St. Louis "happening again" in Belleville. In 2011, the City and Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce hired TOKY Branding and Design to develop a branding study to address community perceptions and next steps.
- The City's visibility continues to be elevated by its wide range of community events, as described on page 5.16. In recent years, the community received national recognition for "Art on the Square" in the U.S. (ranked number one art show four of the last six years by the Art Fair Source Book), the "All-America City" award by the National Civic League (2011), Delilah's Paint the Town event (2010), and many more accolades.
- Belleville has a number of "white elephants," or highly visible office or retail buildings vacant for long periods of time. Two examples of large shopping centers are the commercial plaza located on the north side of West Main Street near 64th



Few cities have an authentic communitywide gathering space as prosperous and active as Belleville's Downtown.

Analysis of Strengths / Opportunities and Weaknesses / Threats

The most effective economic development strategies are designed to maximize opportunities stemming from a place's existing asset-base. This analysis was originally derived from the findings of the TOKY Branding and Design Study, which is summarized on page 1.1 in *Section 1, Introduction*.

Strengths / Opportunities

- Services, resources, and programs of the faith-based community and civic organizations
- Local and regional roadway expansion projects (see page 5.14 and *Section 3, Mobility*)
- Three MetroLink stations connecting Belleville to the east (Scott AFB/MidAmerica St. Louis Airport) and west (St. Louis); potential for transit-oriented development
- Success of Downtown/LU-B revitalization and re-investment in the City's urban core
- Increased availability of "shovel-ready" industrial sites at Belle Valley Industrial Park - Phase III (170-Acre Expansion)
- Targeted economic development opportunities for transportation, distribution, and logistics; biomedical and biotechnology research and development; and health care (see page 5.7)
- Higher education in Belleville (LU-B/SWIC) – entrepreneurship, innovation, future employees/residents
- America's Central Port, located on the Metro East river coast, is estimated to support \$282 million in annual economic impact and more than 1,450 direct and indirect jobs
- Award-winning public school system, including a new high school accommodating growth opportunities to the south and west
- Memorial Hospital and St. Elizabeth's, plus all the secondary economic impacts
- Longest Main Street in the U.S that does not have a highway designation (also a weakness)
- County seat and associated government functions/jobs
- Potential high-speed rail connection between Chicago and East St. Louis
- Established and organized neighborhoods reflecting diverse characters and tastes
- Collection of historic buildings, landmarks, and neighborhoods

- Unique "mom and pop" businesses that differentiate Belleville from the region
- 200th Anniversary celebration plus regional and national recognition for events and major tourist destinations (see page 5.16)
- Spirit of volunteerism and hospitality

Weaknesses / Threats

- Community image/perception
- Business flight to Interstate 64 and lack of direct Interstate access
- Aging infrastructure systems in mature parts of the community
- Sprawling size and shape of City puts strain on infrastructure and identity
- Relocation of retail stores from old to new; vacant commercial and residential buildings and properties
- Lack of larger industrial/business sites (100+ acre lots)
- Dependence on "eds" and "meds" employment sectors
- Belleville's moderate population growth in comparison to faster-paced neighboring cities and counties
- Multiple taxing jurisdictions
- Lack of political consensus
- Industrial competition from southern states; continued offshoring/outsourcing pressures in both manufacturing and services
- Ongoing business challenges (state fiscal health/taxes, health care)
- Resistance to changing demographics in business and residents
- "East-west" division by the Mississippi River; division within the City limits
- Continued loss of talent to more urban areas (availability of housing/entertainment)

In 2006, the Oliver C. Joseph Chrysler Dodge dealership relocated to Illinois Route 15. The Governor French Academy purchased the site to expand its Downtown Belleville campus, preventing a major vacancy that would have negatively impacted the Downtown area.



Street and West Main Street (west end example) and Carlyle Plaza (east end example). In part, this is due to the retail and office migration happening within Belleville and also to Interstate 64 (in Fairview Heights, O'Fallon, and Shiloh) noted below. When businesses leave and the building is not re-purposed or demolished, the vacancy has negative impacts on the surrounding commercial and residential uses (e.g., old Wal-Mart near 161/Carlyle Avenue). One of the key challenges is to diversify the types of new businesses, especially promoting ones that survive the seven- to 10-year retail cycle typical of "big box" commercial stores.

- Many health care facilities have relocated along the Interstate 64 corridor, commonly referred to as the "Medical Mile." Memorial Hospital has broken ground on a new \$124 million expansion campus in Shiloh, and St. Elizabeth's Hospital purchased 106 acres for \$18 million in O'Fallon in November 2011 for potential relocation. Of particular concern to Belleville residents is the relocation of St. Elizabeth's core services to O'Fallon. As the fourth largest employer in Belleville with 1,353 employees, this change would negatively impact the economic health of Downtown, Belleville's housing market, and retail - among other concerns. The City's population projections, which indicate modest growth over the next 20 years (in *Section 2, Growth Capacity and Infrastructure*), would need to be re-calibrated if this occurs.
- New retail and residential growth has opened up to the west with construction of Belleville West High School, the 17th Street road extension, and Illinois Route 15 intersection improvements (e.g., roundabout at Illinois Routes 15/158 and Centreville Avenue). This combination of infrastructure investments and retail growth, most visibly represented by the construction of Belleville

Crossing, will help to spur new rooftops (and associated retail development) as the economy rebounds.

- The country has seen a gradual industrial shift from overseas operations back to the U.S., as well as a regional transition from the Missouri to the Illinois side of the Mississippi River in response to increasing demand for distribution, supply chain management, and light industrial businesses; growing intermodal traffic access; and the availability of larger developable sites in the Metro East.⁷
- Unlike many surrounding bedroom communities in the region, Belleville has a strong manufacturing base and critical mass of industrial sites at Belle Valley Business Park. The City is currently developing Phase III, which will add 170 acres divided into two- to five-acre lots. Roadway expansion of Green Mount Road from two- to five-lanes will help to alleviate existing congestion and accommodate new business growth. One of the City's ongoing challenges is a lack of 100-acre industrial sites for larger businesses, which tend to be more prevalent in rural areas or closer to MidAmerica St. Louis Airport.
- Belleville is in the process of creating a second National Register Historic District, which will be centered on the original Town of West Belleville, which was platted in the 1830's and incorporated into the City of Belleville in 1882. This will increase businesses' access to historic tax credits and other benefits.
- According to anecdotal accounts, the majority of new business owners seeking Belleville office space are racially and ethnically diverse. This is consistent with the community's population changes over the

⁷ St. Clair County's *Comprehensive Plan* (2011)



last 10 years. According to the TOKY Branding and Design Study, Belleville should embrace diversity - "a safe, productive and successful diverse population will make Belleville stronger."

- As the region's largest economic engine that stimulates \$2.3 billion annually in economic impact, Scott AFB is one of Belleville's greatest assets and opportunities for growth. Recently, the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois teamed up with St. Clair and Madison Counties to form the Scott AFB Retention and Expansion Task Force. It has hired former Congressman Jerry Costello, retired four-star General Duncan McNabb, and the Washington, D.C.-based firm Smith Dawson & Andrews to serve as consultants, with the goal of retaining and expanding military operations at Scott AFB in context of federal sequestration and the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, which has resulted in some bases closing (while others have grown due to consolidation). Located on the same site, MidAmerica St. Louis Airport is actively recruiting new businesses and marketing new international cargo routes. Recently, 3,600 acres of land surrounding the airport was designated as a foreign trade zone, providing relief or deferment of duty payments associated with international trade.
- In recent years, three of the City's four major educational and medical institutions have expanded or are expanding their campuses, investing approximately \$75 million into the local economy plus associated economic spin-offs:
 - » \$20 million for SWIC construction of a 80,000-square foot liberal arts complex;
 - » \$24 million for Memorial Hospital construction of a new Orthopedic and Neurosciences Center;
 - » \$25 million for LU-B to rehab the 99-year-old former high school campus, with approximately \$6 million in the pipeline for new dorms and expansion of athletic facilities; and
 - » \$35 million for construction of a new State Crime Lab, which will have significant economic and educational benefits for LU-B located across the street.
- Planned and proposed regional transportation projects will improve Belleville's access to the Metro East and greater St. Louis metropolitan area. Representative projects include:
 - » Belle Valley Industrial Park expansion and roadway extension from Illinois Route 177 to Freeburg Avenue;
 - » Mississippi River Bridge construction and realignment and reconstruction of Interstate 70,

Guiding Principles for Economic Development

- We will increase our community capacity to "tell our story" of civic pride, accomplishment, and competitive advantages through collaborative marketing and dedicated personnel, allowing us to more widely broadcast our positive image and unique brand on a regional scale.
- We will use our business assistance programs and infrastructure investments to reinforce our community values – high-quality and attractive developments that create good jobs, respect the community's historic character, and focus investments in strategic locations throughout the community.
- We will use incentives, policies, and regulations to cultivate a "business friendly" environment, while at the same time, prioritizing the redevelopment and repurposing of land and buildings supported by existing social and physical infrastructure.
- We will facilitate entrepreneurship, targeted innovation, and "mom and pop" establishments by strengthening partnerships and increasing communication channels between businesses and resource providers.
- We will increase the linkages between jobs and housing by reducing commutes through mixed-use and transit-oriented development patterns, improving infrastructure access to/from Belleville businesses, and recruiting compatible job opportunities within existing retail and business centers.
- We will dedicate our resources to building the capacity of our neighborhoods, in part, with the economic development goal of improving our image and marketability to a wider variety of prospective employees and employers.
- We will continue to leverage and support Belleville's most successful physical and economic assets in order to expand the sphere of influence to surrounding areas and increase community benefit.
- We will embrace economic, cultural, and geographic diversification as we promote the growth of our businesses and neighborhoods.

Central West End

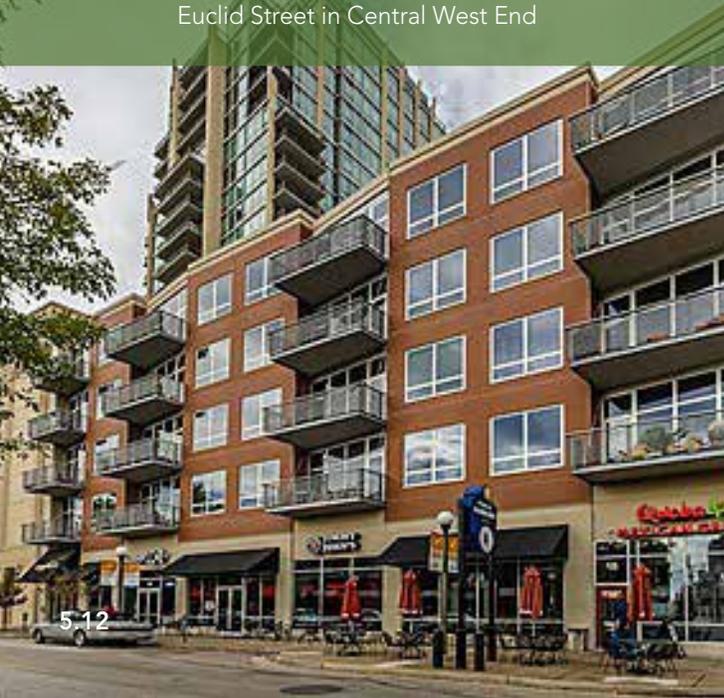


Central West End is now rated for some of the best restaurants and bistros, bars and pubs, and shopping and entertainment in St. Louis. The Euclid Avenue corridor of Central West End includes over 125 attractions. Central West End is also coveted by St. Louis residents and visitors due to its close proximity to Downtown, Clayton, Forest Park, Barnes Jewish Center (BJC), and Washington University Medical Center.

Central West End, like other historic neighborhoods in St. Louis, suffered greatly from population loss to suburban developments. **The neighborhood has since been restored and maintained through the collaboration and reinvestment by residents, business owners, politicians, and real estate developers.** For this area, the City of St. Louis recently adopted a form-based code overlay district as a way to guide redevelopment in a manner that is consistent with the existing neighborhood. The code received an award by the American Planning Association, Missouri Chapter. A key project that was a catalyst in the continued restoration of Central West End was the Pantheon Corporation’s successful work on rehabilitating the DeBaliviere Place in the western section. This project constituted one of the largest U.D.A.G.-funded (Urban Development Action Grant) Housing and Urban Development projects in the U.S.

Source: <http://cwescene.com>

Mixed-use development along Euclid Street in Central West End



- located one mile north of the Martin Luther King Bridge;
- » Interstate 64 interchange at Rieder Road, increasing access to Scott AFB/MidAmerica St. Louis Airport;
- » Enhanced ramp to connect Martin Luther King Bridge to Interstate 64;
- » Green Mount Road widening from two to five lanes;
- » Illinois Route 15 intersection improvements;
- » New alignment that connects the Tudor Piggott ramps at the Poplar Street Bridge with Illinois Route 15 in East St. Louis;
- » West Boulevard extension from Illinois Route 161 to Illinois Route 177, helping to divert traffic from Green Mount Road;
- » 74th Street Extension from Illinois Route 15 to Town Hall Road and improvements to Town Hall Road from the proposed 74th Street extension to Frank Scott Parkway West; and
- » Proposed high-speed rail connection between Chicago and East St. Louis.

Strategic Recommendations

- **Priority 1** | Promote and expand Belleville’s asset base.
- **Priority 2** | Grow, diversify, and expand businesses from within the community.
- **Priority 3** | Cultivate a “business friendly” environment to retain and attract businesses.

Priority 1 | Promote and expand Belleville’s asset base.

It is vital to the success of Belleville’s economic development strategy to portray a message to the outside world that conveys a positive image of the community. Belleville is known throughout the region for its strong volunteer spirit and ability to come together to overcome barriers. This trait is both rooted in and reinforced by the character awareness campaign championed by its schools and business community. Similar to those instantly recognizable images and slogans of private companies, communities must also “brand” themselves to form a unique identity.

Belleville is a community that is rich in history and the site of numerous positive attributes that contribute to its character and quality of life. Whether it is historic neighborhoods, the renewed activity and investment of Downtown, the presence of SWIC and LU-B, the proximity of Scott AFB and MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, or the natural beauty of the rolling terrain, each attribute



What are Belleville's top accomplishments in recent years?



Bringing Lindenwood University to Belleville

"Having an academic institution like Lindenwood is a tremendous asset to City, in addition to educational opportunities close to home..."

is worth promoting as assets that make Belleville "home." Community "promotion" involves virtually all aspects of the community. It is the process of identifying Belleville's competitive advantages in context of the region as well as its potential opportunities.

ACTION STEPS

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).** Invest in a TOD market study to specify a proposed land use mix (with and without apartments), scale, and development character for each viable station, starting with the Scheel Street station. The study will also provide specific directives for: public incentives, infrastructure requirements, land assembly, site design, financing, and marketing. The last planning effort to develop TOD at the Scheel Station failed in 2007 when the prospective developer, City Centre, proposed a design scheme with 150 apartments, 104 condos, and 58 townhomes.⁸ Citizens and City Council were uncomfortable with the density of apartments, and the developer walked after working on the project for nearly seven years. Several years later (and 20 years after the first MetroLink station broke ground), market research experts and developers will be better suited to assess the viability of different housing configurations. According to METRO, the MetroLink system has generated an estimated \$2 billion in residential and commercial transit-oriented development projects, such as the Emerson Park residential housing development in East St. Louis.⁹ The purpose of TOD is to create livable centers that support housing, retail, and civic uses within walking distance and with convenient access to the region. The MetroLink light rail system

⁸ "Scheel Street Plan Seems Dead." Belleville News Democrat. Lisa White. April 1, 2007.

⁹ "MetroLink celebrates 20 years on track." Belleville News Democrat. Will Buss. July 26, 2013.

connects Belleville to more than 17 million annual riders and 46 miles of track. As the City negotiates development agreements and incentive packages, preference should be given to business locations that are transit and housing accessible.

- **Aquatic Center.** Continue engaging school districts, colleges, hospitals, recreation centers, and other cities to develop an aquatic center and recreation complex. The City closed the Belleville Swimming Pool in 2012 due to the high cost of maintaining its aging infrastructure. Even prior to the closure, Belleville residents had voiced a need for a new aquatic center and recreation complex in the City's *Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Master Plan* (2008). This type of facility will not only improve the quality of life for Belleville residents, but it will also attract tourists from the region. The City should continue exploring creative financing strategies for constructing and operating such a facility.

Potential Funding Streams

- » Municipal bonds
- » Tax revenue (sales, telecommunications, hotel-motel, cable TV franchise)
- » Parks and recreation grants
- » User fees, concessions, and rentals
- » Endowments and private donations
- » Municipal tax district

Potential Partnerships¹⁰

- » *Public-Public Partnership:* Richmond Heights, Missouri - "The Heights" is a multipurpose fitness center run by Richmond Heights in partnership with the cities of Brentwood and Maplewood.
- » *Public-School District Partnership:* Clayton, Missouri - The City partnered with the school

¹⁰ "Does the city need a pool?" Belleville News-Democrat. Jacqueline Lee. September 29, 2013.

Intergovernmental, Institutional, and Public-Private Partnerships

Government

- City of Belleville
- St. Clair County
- Surrounding Cities and Counties
- State of Illinois
- Federal Government
- METRO Transit
- America’s Central Port
- MidAmerica Workforce Investment Board
- Scott Air Force Base / MidAmerica St. Louis Airport
- Southwestern Illinois Development Authority
- East-West Gateway Council of Governments

Educational and Medical Institutions

- Southwestern Illinois College
- Lindenwood University - Belleville
- Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville
- Memorial Hospital
- St. Elizabeth’s Hospital
- Primary and Secondary School Districts

Civic and Trade Groups

- Southwestern Illinois SCORE
- Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce
- Belleville Main Street Program
- Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois
- Belle-Scott Committee
- West Belleville Promotional Committee
- St. Louis Regional Chamber
- Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center
- ... and many more

Private Sector



district, allowing students to use the pool part of the time and the public at other times.

- » *Public-Private Partnership:* Highland, Illinois - The \$6 million Korte Recreation Center was jointly funded by the City, Highland Area Community Foundation, and an individual donor.

- **Hotel and Convention Center.** Consider funding a hotel and convention center feasibility study to facilitate recruitment efforts. These types of major attractions, which were identified in the public engagement process during this planning process, will expand Belleville’s tourist base and improve the quality of life for existing residents. The goal is to attract more tourists and business travelers, and then maximize their time and money spent in the community. If deemed feasible, these amenities should be strategically located in close proximity to other community assets - educational, cultural, medical, commercial, and recreational - to optimize positive externalities. Downtown revitalization and roadway improvements like the 17th Street corridor, Illinois Route 15 improvements, and expansion of Green Mount Road create several potential locations. According to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, there are 18 hotels and 1,145 rooms within a 10-mile radius of Belleville. Fairview Heights, Shiloh, and O’Fallon are capturing the majority of businesses, especially as more and more migrate to the Interstate 64 corridor. It is incumbent for Belleville to understand how it can differentiate itself from these areas. Key considerations for a feasibility study include:

- » Targeted locations;
- » User groups;
- » Numbers, types, and sizes of guest rooms appropriate for the market;
- » Utilization projections;
- » Rate analysis and amenities; and
- » Performance of comparable or competitive facilities

- **Gateways and Borders.** In the effort to improve Belleville’s visibility in the region, one strategy is to better define Belleville’s major gateways and borders – both at the periphery but also within sub-areas of the community. This strategy is discussed in more length in *Section 3, Mobility* and *Section 6, Land Use and Character*. The investment of the northern gateway entrance on North Illinois Street / Illinois Route 159 serves as a positive example.



What are Belleville's top accomplishments in recent years?



Art on the Square and revitalizing Main Street

"Main Street is becoming a destination. The community looks great and the new shops and restaurants are eclectic and interesting. Art on the Square is a great way to show off the community."

Select events listed by the Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce:

Major Events / Parades

- Art on the Square
- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Memorial Day Parade
- Ainad Shriners Circus Parade
- Labor Day Parade
- Santa Parade Optimist Club of Belleville

Major Community Attractions

- Belle-Clair Fairgrounds
- Belleville Philharmonic Society
- Eckert's Country Store and Farms
- Emma Kunz House
- The EDGE
- Gustave Koerner House Museum Foundation
- Lincoln Theatre
- National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows
- Old Town Market
- Scott Air Force Base / MidAmerica St. Louis Airport
- Skyview Drive-In
- St. Peter's Roman Catholic Cathedral
- Victorian House Museum
- William & Florence Schmidt Art Center and Sculpture Gardens

- **Collaborative Marketing.** Continue optimizing the City's economic development capacity through intergovernmental, institutional, and public-private communication strategies. The region is equipped with a diverse group of community marketers – spanning the spectrum from individual business owners to countywide economic developers. One interlocal example is the Belleville First Program, which represents a collaboration between the City of Belleville, Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce, Belleville Main Street, and citizens.

Potential Campaigns

- » Special places through the community (e.g., Downtown, Main Street, neighborhood districts);
- » Targeted industries: transportation and logistics, health care, and biotechnology/biomedical sciences;
- » Scott AFB/MidAmerica St. Louis Airport;
- » Health care and educational institutions;
- » Community events/attractions;
- » Shop local (e.g., Belleville First Program); and
- » Community safety.

Target Audiences

- » Prospective businesses interested in locating in Belleville, or partnering with Belleville businesses;
- » Prospective homeowners or business owners located throughout metropolitan area and potential re-locating to Belleville;
- » Existing residents and businesses considering relocation, such as St. Elizabeth's Hospital;
- » Tourists that might attend community events, attractions, or restaurant and service accommodations;
- » Realtors;
- » Local, regional, state, and federal elected officials that could assist with Belleville initiatives;
- » Prospective business partners with MidAmerica St. Louis airport;
- » Military operations that could be relocated to Scott AFB through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process; and
- » Newspaper, radio, television, and social media outlets.



Why Brand Belleville?

- Articulate Belleville’s “Defensible Difference” - what sets Belleville apart from other communities?
- Create a brand image – a coordinated look for all of Belleville’s signage, sales materials, website, social media, and advertising.
- Create a marketing plan to motivate target audiences to visit Belleville, shop Belleville, buy homes in Belleville, and create businesses in Belleville.

Direct Source: TOKY Branding and Design Study

- **Dedicated PR Staff.** Hire a dedicated public relations specialist or on-call professional services firm focused on implementing a strategic marketing and community relations plan with a multi-year budget. This person would be responsible for:
 - » Translating the findings of the TOKY Branding and Design Study and subsequent follow-up accomplishments into a short-, mid-, and long-range action plan.
 - » Determining the most cost-effective platforms for marketing: website development, brand ads, billboards and signage, housing ‘welcome’ packages, and other associated collateral. In recent years, the City has moved in this direction by expanding its marketing budget to increase Belleville’s visibility in the region.
 - » Guiding and assisting departments with training for City staff and elected officials on media relations, social media, and community outreach.
 - » Partnering with the City’s economic developers to identify target markets within and outside of the Metro East vicinity to cross-promote community attractions and events. He or she would also be responsible for soliciting buy-in from local businesses to contribute financially to these campaigns.
- **Scott AFB Expansion and Retention.** Through the leadership of the newly created Scott AFB Retention and Expansion Task Force, continue to identify and actively recruit missions that could relocate to Scott AFB, as well as strategies to retain the existing ones. The task force has hired former Congressman Jerry Costello (who is credited for having an integral role in securing federal money for the bi-state transit development of MetroLink), four-star General Duncan McNabb, and the Washington, D.C.-based firm Smith Dawson & Andrews to serve as consultants. These services

require extensive financial and political support from the region, as demonstrated by the task force’s ongoing campaign to raise \$3 million.

- **MidAmerica St. Louis Airport Growth and Associated Industrial Development.** Under the leadership of the County, continue to market and expand the operations at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, including industrial business parks adjacent to the airport. The County owns approximately 5,250 acres surrounding the airport. A large portion of this land is located within a Foreign Trade Zone and Enterprise Zone. New transportation improvements, such as the planned Interstate 64 and Rieder Road interchange, will improve regional access and stimulate business and industrial activity surrounding it. In recent years, the airport has become home to Boeing, North Bay Produce, AVMATS, the State Police and the Army National Guard. It has also been designated as a reliever airport, resulting in a yearly federal appropriation of \$1 million. The airport’s goals are to:¹¹
 - » Establish an international cargo trade route between Latin America and China through MidAmerica;
 - » Host leisure passenger service; and
 - » Serve as a hub for manufacturing and maintenance repair and overhaul services.

Priority 2 | Grow, diversify, and expand businesses from within the community.

The Belleville community is equipped with a wide range of programs, services, and financial resources for growing the economy from its existing residents and business owners. One of the biggest challenges is matching the diverse network of resource providers with individual and business needs. This information is highly valuable and of interest to existing and prospective businesses since they offer specialized training opportunities to their employees, as

¹¹“Exclusive: St. Clair County Board Chairman Mark Kern.” St. Louis Business Journal. January 3-9, 2014.



Scott Air Force Base contributes **\$2.3 billion** annually to the regional economy.



Image Source: Scott Air Force Base

well as higher learning institutions for the spouses and children of their employees.

One of the key assets to growing the economy from within the community is retaining Belleville's youth and young professionals. Currently, many high school graduates leave to attend college elsewhere or move across the river for greater employment opportunities and cultural amenities once they receive their degree from SWIC or LU-B. Creating strategies to entice students to stay or to return to Belleville upon graduation is essential to building the community's economy.

ACTION STEPS

■ **Linkages Between Industry and Education.**

As a primary workforce development strategy, increase the formality and frequency of dialogue between industry and education through target industry advisory groups. This should occur at the executive level of leadership between relevant industries and educational providers, involving key influencers that are responsible for customizing support services, training programs, and academic curricula. The colleges and social service providers offer essential economic development functions by developing targeted skill sets, recruiting and retaining prospective workforce employees, and supporting innovative business ventures. These conversations already occur on an individual basis, as demonstrated by new training and academic programs provided by the County, SWIC, and LU-B. The proposed advisory group will help to formalize these processes and align growth objectives. Based on the findings of this plan and St. Clair County's *Comprehensive Plan* (2011), potential target industry advisory groups include: transportation and logistics, health care, and biotechnology/biomedical sciences (see *Table 5.3, Employment Projections by Industry Sector*, for additional details).

■ **Online Library of Local Business and Workforce Development Programs.**

Develop an online resource library of local business and workforce development programs on the City's website. This would help to improve awareness of the different resources within the community and also help to clarify the mission of each organization. Belleville is fortunate to have both SWIC and LU-B, which offer higher learning opportunities for community residents. However, many ongoing or prospective business owners are unable to attend traditional classes and rely on the network of public and non-profit service providers, ranging from the County, Small Business Development Center of Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville, SWIC Selsius Corporate and Career Training, SCORE business counseling, and many others. Cumulatively, Belleville businesses have access to an impressive number of support services and resources.

■ **Small Business Financing.** Match available financial and human resources with any financing gaps for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Several community stakeholders expressed interest in a City revolving loan program to support local businesses, ranging from historic preservation to start-up funding. The public and private sectors already offer a number of programs for specific uses or targeted populations that assist small businesses. In the future, the City may want to explore a micro-loan program with less restrictive eligibility requirements than existing ones. Ongoing, representative financing programs include:

- » *City Façade Grants*: reimbursement of 20 percent of costs up to \$5,000, available for rehabilitation if the façade of the commercial building is located within a TIF District or Special Service Area;
- » *St. Clair County Business Revolving Loan Funds*: low interest, fixed-rate loans for small businesses defined by the Small Business Administration; purpose is to create employment for persons of low or moderate income;

Local Resources for Business and Workforce Development

Selsius Corporate and Career Training

Southwestern Illinois College - Belleville

Direct Source: <http://www.swic.edu/selsius/>

Selsius Corporate and Career Training is the business and industry center for SWIC. The center's mission is to help organizations improve profitability and protect their workforce investment by developing their most important resource - their employees. It equips a wide range of businesses, public agencies, organizations, and individuals with tools to meet their objectives and develop their workforce. The center provides training, skills assessments, needs analysis, pre-hire testing, consulting, computer lab rentals, and other resources specific to client and industry needs.

Small Business Development Center

Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville (SIUE)

Direct Source: <http://www.siue.edu/business/sbdc>

The SIUE Small Business Development Center is a service to the community supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and SIUE School of Business. All centers provide resources and information to southwestern Illinois entrepreneurs, business owners, small business service providers, and

the university community. By assisting entrepreneurs and companies in defining their path to success, the SBDC network positively impacts the southwestern Illinois region by strengthening the business community, creating and retaining new jobs, and encouraging new investment. The SBDC provides one-stop assistance to individuals by means of counseling, training, research, and advocacy for new ventures and existing small businesses.

Southwestern Illinois - SCORE

Source: <http://swillinois.score.org>

Southwestern Illinois SCORE is part of SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business," a national nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of the nation's small businesses. SCORE provides free business advice and counseling that fit the needs of local small businesses. The Southwestern Illinois SCORE branch provides services to 15 counties in Illinois, including St. Clair County; the local branch also partners with the Growth Association of Southwestern Illinois, Lewis & Clark Community College, and the U.S. Small Business Administration to offer support for start-up and in-business entrepreneurs.

Success Story: Illinois Business Journal

When Kerry Smith moved to southwestern Illinois, she realized that she lived within a six-county region with 30,000 companies that had no business journal. Smith decided she would write her own business journal for circulation. Smith contacted Southwest Illinois SCORE and got connected with her SCORE mentor Richard Rook. Rook played a large role in helping Smith develop her business plan. Smith says SCORE "provided literally hundreds of hours of support, especially during the initial stages. They didn't know much about newspapers, but they knew everything else." She served as President and CEO of the company for 13 years.

Source: <http://swillinois.score.org/>



Illinois workNet Centers

Direct Source: <http://www.illinoisworknet.com>

Illinois workNet Centers are a combination of agencies working in partnership that bring together employment and training services for all Illinois residents, including people with disabilities. The centers provide information about job vacancies, career options, relevant employment trends, and services such as: job search assistance, help with improving interview skills, and referrals to training programs and/or support services. Most services are free to local residents. The centers also provide services to businesses to assist with recruiting new employees, training employees, and connecting to information for managing a business. The primary resource center is located at:

Southwestern Illinois workNet
Comprehensive Center
4519 West Main Street
Belleville, IL. 62223

workNet Resources for Businesses

Hiring

- Hiring Mature Workers
- Hiring People with Disabilities
- Hiring Veterans
- Hiring Youth
- Recruitment Services
- Re-Entry Candidates
- Volunteerism

Training

- Customized Training
- Education and Training Programs
- Employer Training Investment Program
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Job Training Economic Development
- On-the-Job Training
- WIA Certified Training Providers

Business Services

- Business Resources
- Labor/Economic Data
- Lending
- Social Media
- Tax Credits/Compliance
- Rapid Response Services for Employers
- Videos
- Links

Table 5.4, workNet Resources for Individuals

IDES = Department of Employment Security

SWIC = Southwestern Illinois College

LINC = LINC, Inc. Disability Services

	workNet Center	IDES	SWIC	LINC
Workshops and Seminars				
Computer Skills	X		X	X
Job Readiness Workshop	X	X	X	X
WIA Assessment and Orientation	X			
Equipment Available				
Assistive Technology Equipment	X			X
Computers	X	X	X	X
Fax Machines	X		X	X
Internet Access	X	X	X	X
Printer(s)	X	X	X	
Telephone(s)	X	X	X	X
Services and Materials				
Assistance for Registering in Illinois JobLink	X	X	X	
Career Related Reference Materials	X	X	X	X
Individual Training Account	X			
Job Club or Networking Groups	X			
Job Counseling and Job Placement Services	X		X	
Job Postings	X	X	X	
Labor Market Information	X	X	X	X
Resume Writing Assistance	X		X	X
Workforce Investment Act Provider Information	X			X
Benefit/Supportive Services				
Assistance Completing Forms	X	X		
Referral to Community Resources and Supportive Services	X	X	X	X
Unemployment Insurance Assistance	X	X		
Unemployment Insurance Filing	X	X		
Translation Services				
Appointment Necessary	X	X		
English/Spanish Services	X			
Translation through Language Line	X			

Facade Improvement Program

The City's Facade Improvement Program is designed to assist business owners located within one of the City's three facade improvement districts (illustrated below) and within a TIF District or Special Service Area. The City offers reimbursements of 20 percent up to \$5,000 for rehabilitation of commercial business facades. Properties located along Main Street between Oak Street and 17th Street are subject to the Belleville Main Street facade improvement guidelines. See page 5.23 for eligibility criteria.

The City's Facade Improvement Program approved four grants between 2008 - 2013:

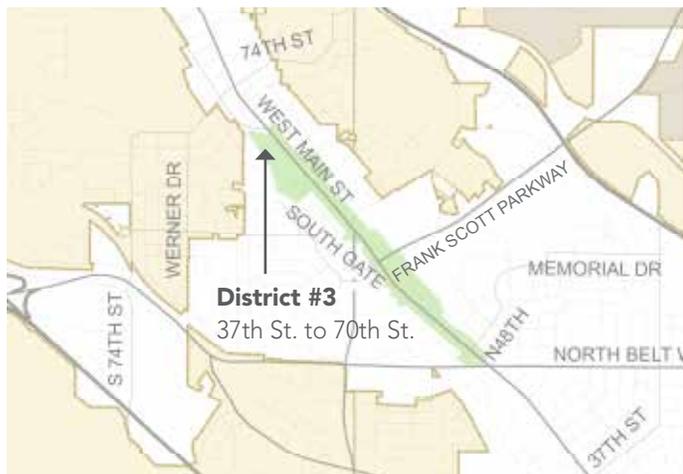
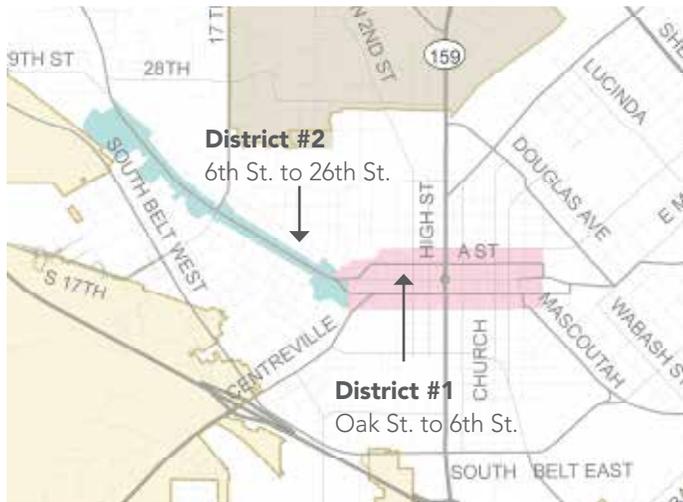
- HH Innovations, LLC 11/17/08 \$5,000
- ManPrit Hospitality 6/20/11 \$5,000
- Eye on Design 5/21/12 \$640
- Conkright, Inc. 6/3/13 \$5,000



4204 Main Street Brewing Company opened in 2014 after renovating its facade.

- » *Growth Corp's 504 Loan Program*: improved access to financing for small business expansion that may not be available through conventional financing; and
- » *Justine Petersen Micro Loans*: a comprehensive small business, technical assistance, and training program plus micro-loan financing for participating businesses.

CITY OF BELLEVILLE FACADE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS



- **Incubator Without Walls.** Partner office space owners and virtual businesses with one of the community's existing educational providers to develop an "incubator without walls" program. Many of Belleville's property owners already offer "incubator" space for entrepreneurs. This type of arrangement is frequently characterized by short-term leases, single office spaces or desks for rent, and communal access to office equipment and conference rooms. The goal of this program would be to enhance these spaces with a social support system paired with affordable technical and administrative assistance. Once fully established, the "incubator without walls" could help to launch a centralized resource center operated out of a City-operated building, as seen in other cities if desired.
- **Live/Work Accommodations.** Incentivize Downtown building owners to add residential components to office and retail spaces in the form of mixed-use buildings (first-floor retail or office, upper-floor residential) and split-level lofts. Typically, these spaces are filled by artisans and entrepreneurs. Incentives could be offered in the form of free marketing and advertising as part of the collaborative marketing effort to advertise Belleville regionally, as well as potential financial inducements. This type of program should be developed in collaboration with the arts community given the target audience for live-work units, as well as the regional and national visibility of "Art on the Square" and other community events.



For Belleville to be a "complete" city, what are the missing pieces?



More housing for young professionals

There is a lack of housing for people right out of school who may work Downtown but also want to live there.



Mixed-Use Live-Work Units in Downtown

Priority 3 | Cultivate a "business friendly" environment to retain and attract businesses.

To be successful, Belleville's economic development functions require a deliberate, proactive strategy, as well as significant, up-front investments in financial and human resources. The City has proactively engaged in numerous public-private partnerships and public infrastructure improvements to cultivate a "business friendly" environment – both for existing and prospective business owners. Economic development usually doesn't happen on its own, particularly in struggling parts of the community or undeveloped areas. Once development begins, though, it can have positive influences on all aspects of the community. It helps to hold the line on taxes through tax base growth, thus creating an even more attractive place for businesses and households. It brings new income into

the community, helping to spawn local spending and wealth creation. And most importantly, it impacts the City's ability to retain and return its best and brightest citizens by expanding local employment and creating opportunities for new businesses.

That being said, the public sector still has a role in facilitating program development and funding capital investments. *One of the biggest challenges is to discern where to place the City's and County's resources.* After all, economic development is not just about "growth." In fact, "growth", by itself, does not necessarily mean "development," which builds capacity and enhances quality of life. In Belleville, growth will likely occur at a modest pace, but the challenge is to optimize economic capacity and stimulate private-sector activity that is compatible with the community's character and aspirations.

Empire Comfort Systems

Relocation to the Stag Brewery

In the late 1990s, Empire Comfort Systems partnered with the City and State to rehabilitate the former Stag Brewery warehouse facility located off of North 17th Street. The building and facilities had been vacated by the principal tenant 10 years prior, creating a threat to public health and safety for the surrounding neighborhood. Empire had been a local Belleville business since 1932, employing more than 250 workers and operating as one of the country's largest manufacturers of gas space heaters, gas stoves, gas fireplace logs, and gas cooking grills. In 1998, the company worked with Laing Architecture to assess the costs for moving part of its operations to the former Stag Brewery location. As a priority redevelopment site, the City and State contributed funds to help improve the surrounding road system, expand the building, and build a truck loop. This assistance catalyzed \$1.5 million in private investment for the land alone, and millions more for additional site and building improvements. These types of infill rehabilitation projects are critical to preserving the character and integrity of Belleville's neighborhoods.



Sample Criteria for Evaluating Incentives

Some communities develop scoring systems for evaluating incentive proposals. The following criteria have been summarized from the City of El Paso's Incentives Policy:

Quality Jobs

- 80% of the jobs must be at or above median county wage

Targeted Location

- Located in an Empowerment or Enterprise Zone
- Located in a census tract with greater than 20% of its population at or above poverty level (to assist this portion of the community)
- Located in a City-defined Targeted Redevelopment Area

Business Type

- Market for service is regional, national, or global
- Primary and additional targets are identified in the City's economic development plan
- Member of "Creative Class" as defined by Richard Florida in "The Rise of the Creative Class"
- R&D, publishing, software, television and radio, design, music, film, toys and games, advertising, architecture, performing arts, crafts, video games design, fashion, design, arts

Capital Intensive Project

- 80% of jobs pay at least 90% of median county wage and capital investment is \$30 - \$49 million (30% grant) or \$50 million+ (35% grant)
- 90% of jobs pay at least 90% of the median county wage and capital investment is \$30 - 49 million (60% grant) or \$50 million+ (65% grant)

Bonus Incentives (50% Additional Credit)

- Company agrees to locate within the area covered by the Downtown Plan
- Company locates a headquarters with a minimum of 100 employees
- Company locates research and development operations (25% of total jobs must be R&D related)

ACTION STEPS

- **Updates to the Business Assistance Programs.** As the City updates its Business Assistance Programs, consider clarifying the City's incentives policy based on metrics for evaluating costs, benefits, and returns on investment for projects requesting business assistance. The City offers a typical set of economic development tools in the form of infrastructure development, tax increment financing, tax abatements and rebates, and façade grants (see **Table 5.5, Belleville's Business Assistance Programs**). These financial incentives serve as a competitive advantage for recruiting and retaining businesses, but they also function as a strategic opportunity to advance community objectives (e.g., increasing minimum standards, clustering development in targeted investment areas to prevent sprawl, and expanding and diversifying the workforce). In conjunction with the **Economic Development Guiding Principles** stated on page 5.11, key considerations for refining the City's incentive policy may include:

- » Location in proximity to targeted investment areas, transit, housing, and "shovel-ready" utility infrastructure;
- » Priority for business expansion (versus attraction of new businesses), infill or rehabilitation of site/structures (versus development on raw land), historic or cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability best practices;
- » Projected quantity, type, and wages of jobs created/retained;
- » Extent of economic impacts and private investments that remain in Belleville;
- » Quality/value of proposed project warranting incentive;
- » Projected longevity of intended use; and
- » Qualifications and track records of business owners.

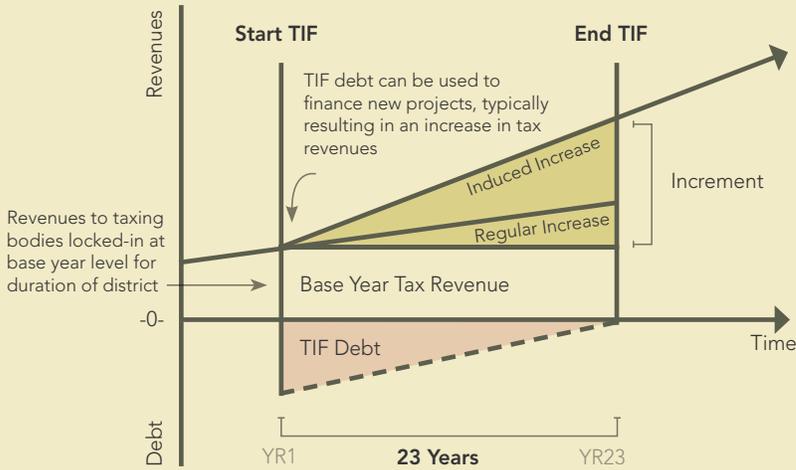
- **Availability of Commercial and Industrial Sites.** Increase the availability of developable industrial sites through the expansion of Belle Valley Industrial Park, as well as other commercial and industrial clusters illustrated in *Map 6.2, Future Land Use Plan*. The City's land use strategy accounts for convenience to multi-modal transportation infrastructure (roads, light rail, freight

Table 5.5, Belleville’s Business Assistance Programs

The City financially assists businesses on a case-by-case basis. Refer to the City’s Business Assistance Program manual for detailed guidelines.

	Enterprise Zone Since 1985 / Expires July 2016	Tax Increment Financing Since 1984	Facade Improvement Program Since 2011
Eligibility			
Location Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located in the City’s 10-square-mile Enterprise Zone ■ Program boundaries and stipulations will be redefined as the City applies for new status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located within one of the City’s 18 TIF Districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Located within the Facade Improvement District and within a TIF District or Special Service Area ■ Facade must face a public street (unique for corner lots)
	Eligible Business Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Retail and wholesale businesses ■ Service businesses including professional offices ■ Industrial firms including manufacturing and warehouse facilities 	Eligible Project Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Infrastructure improvements ■ Rehabilitation or renovation of existing public or private building ■ Property acquisition ■ Building demolition / site preparation ■ Low-interest loans ■ Professional services ■ Studies, surveys, and plans ■ Marketing within TIF District ■ Environmental cleanup 	Eligible Project Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exterior signage, awnings, canopies, sunshades ■ Exterior painting ■ Asphalt paving, repaving, pavers ■ Masonry walls, footings, tuck pointing ■ Security fencing ■ Windows and doors ■ Landscaping ■ Roof repairs ■ Public art ■ Window treatments ■ Cornice repair ■ Gutters or downspouts ■ Removal of inappropriate finish materials
Job Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create or retain 3 full-time permanent jobs within 24 months of project completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Job creation and private investment; stipulated in Development Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ None
Incentives			
Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sales Tax Exemption Building materials permanently affixed to the property and purchased from a qualified retailer; special multi-family dwelling requirements ■ Tax Abatement Based upon the assessed value of the physical structure to be constructed/renovated; must increase the assessed valuation of property by 10% over and above the current assessed valuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tax Abatement or Tax Rebate Amount determined on a case-by-case basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reimbursement 20% of approved projects up to \$5,000
		<p>Businesses in an overlapping TIF District and Enterprise Zone are <u>NOT</u> eligible to receive Tax Abatements on the increased assessed valuation based on improvements initiated. Instead, property Tax Rebates for overlapping areas are possible.</p>	
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Five years of benefit (subject to change based on existing life of the Enterprise Zone) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 23 years from the origination date of the TIF District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One-time event

How Does Tax Increment Financing Work?



Tax increment financing (TIF) is a mechanism to encourage reinvestment in blighted or underutilized areas that would not redevelop as quickly or extensively on their own. As an economic development tool, it helps to self-finance new development projects by capturing back-end tax proceeds to amortize front-end project costs. This happens by withholding new tax revenues generated within the district for the life of the TIF, 23 years. The withheld amount (the “increment”) is used to offset the district’s initial investment. Once debt is paid off, the increment can be used for additional investments and support of taxing bodies (e.g., school districts).

TIF does not mean an increase in property tax rates within the district. Instead, TIF helps expand the district’s overall tax base by stimulating private development with new TIF-financed infrastructure or developer incentives. Most private development would not otherwise happen in TIF-designated areas because of blighting factors or other impeding conditions.

In 2011, the East-West Gateway Council of Governments led a study analyzing the effectiveness and fiscal impact of development incentives in the St. Louis region. Generally speaking, the study found that focusing development incentives on expanding retail sales was an unsustainable economic development practice for the region.¹ However, the study supported the use of TIF in underserved or economically distressed areas or for businesses that provide quality jobs. Belleville’s use of TIF for Downtown revitalization was cited as a positive example.

¹ “An Assessment of the Effectiveness and Fiscal Impacts of the Use of Development Incentives in the St. Louis Region.” East-West Gateway Council of Governments. January 2011.



How is the Money Used?

The top three categories of expenditures from the City of Belleville’s TIF accounts:

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Infrastructure Improvements	\$6,717,259	\$13,896,536	\$9,042,577
School Payments	\$6,702,096	\$6,560,668	\$6,329,194
Property Assembly, Demolition, and Site Preparation	\$3,353,242	\$13,016,193	\$1,015,044

RECENT TIF INVESTMENTS: \$ FROM TIF ACCOUNTS

- **17th Street Extension Project:** \$5 million
- **Frank Scott Parkway Widening Project:** \$1.6 million
- **Lindenwood University – Belleville Improvements:** \$3.5 million
- **Bicentennial Park:** \$2.2 million
- **Dapron Drive:** \$1.2 million

What are “Blighting” Factors?

65 ILCS 5/11-74.4-3

Under state law, TIF districts must be characterized as a “blighted area,” defined as:

- Dilapidation or deterioration
- Obsolescence
- Code violations
- Excessive vacancies
- Overcrowding of facilities
- Lack of ventilation, light, sanitary facilities
- Excessive land coverage
- Inadequate utilities
- Deleterious land use or layout
- Lack of physical maintenance
- Lack of community planning

Special Taxing Districts

The City has a number of special districts to stimulate economic development activity. As a form of self-taxing, the property owners benefiting from the service or improvement bear a portion of the cost through sales or property taxes, which influence the redevelopment aspects of these areas. The physical nature of each area is discussed in more detail in *Section 6, Land Use and Character*.

BUSINESS DISTRICT (1% SALES TAX)

Belleville Crossing

- » Frank Scott Parkway Business District
- » Parkway North Business District

Green Mount Commons

- » Carlyle/Green Mount Business District

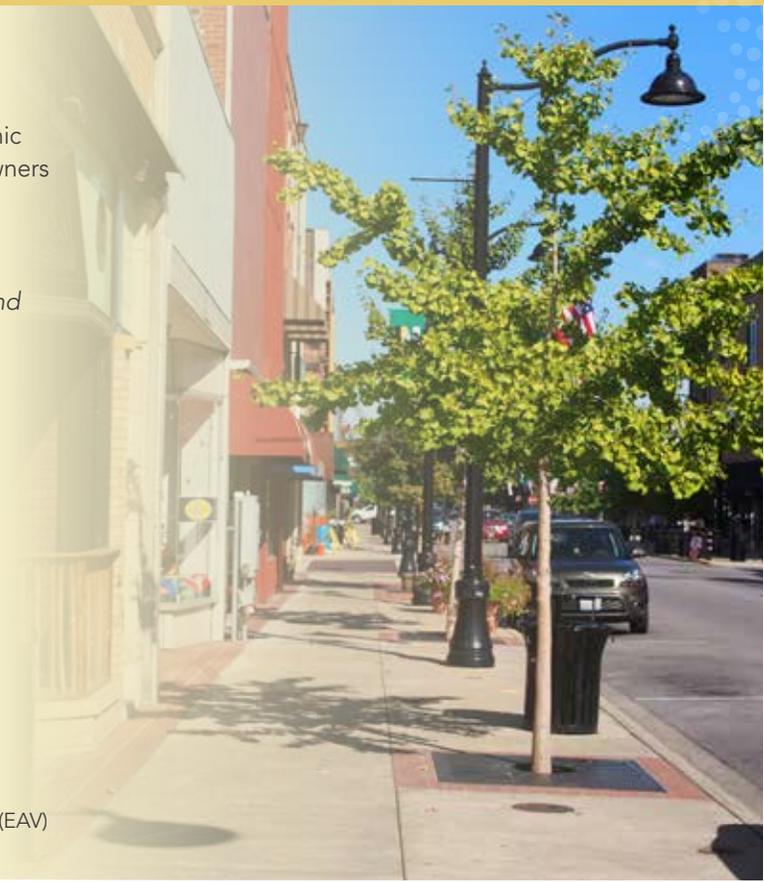
Eckert's Orchards

- » Illinois Route 15/Green Mount Road District

SPECIAL SERVICE AREA (~1-2% PROPERTY TAX)*

- » Downtown Special Service Area

* Adjusted annually based on the equalized assessed valuation (EAV)



rail, bike/pedestrian) linkages, availability of large parcels of land, existing development patterns, and environmental constraints. For the City to compete effectively, it needs to expand its footprint of “shovel ready” industrial sites. These properties are characterized by complete underground infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, electric, gas) and telecommunications (e.g., voice, T1) services. Advanced “states of readiness” allow the City to advertise lower site development costs and shorter approval processes.

- **Regulations and Guidelines.** At the conclusion of the comprehensive planning process, review the City’s land development ordinances and associated procedures to ensure they are consistent with the guiding principles and objectives of this plan. While executives and businesses often express concern about the cost of land, design regulations, or other factors that make the construction of a new building more expensive, they generally want to move into a place where property values are stable and where the character and use of neighboring property is predictable. Few businesses want to make a large investment in a new building if the

investment can be devalued by a poorly conceived adjoining use.

- **Content-Rich Website with Robust Data Analytics.** Increase the amount of information and resources available on the City’s economic development page to attract traffic. This might include partnering with the County to co-mingle online site selection resources (e.g., CoStar Property Search and Location One Information System). These services quickly match available sites and buildings with prospective business owner needs. It is generally estimated that 90 percent of site selection begins on the internet. Therefore, one of the primary advantages of increasing traffic is the ability to monitor who is visiting the City’s site. A variety of website analytics and prospect programs will provide a comprehensive picture of Belleville’s target market by quantifying the number and type of website visitors, what amenities they searched for, and where they are from.