

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Greater Egypt District

2025 Full Revision

Project Coordinator-Liz Lively – Economic Development Director

Assisted by-CEDS Committee

Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development Commission

3117 Civic Circle Blvd, Suite A. Marion, IL 62959

618-997-9351

www.greateregypt.org

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee

Lynn Andersen Lindberg, Southern Illinois University

Stephanie Robinson, Southern Illinois Workforce Development Board, Man-Tra-Con Corporation

Carrie Gilliam, City of Pinckneyville

Steven Mitchell, City of Carbondale

Jennifer Olson, City of Marion

Brian Calcaterra, City of Benton

Brooke Guthman, Jackson Growth Alliance

Tony Iriti, Jefferson County Development Corporation

Brian Harland, Jefferson County Development Corporation

Kelly Fenton, Regional Economic Development Corporation

Deborah Barnett, SI NOW

Darrell Bryant, Jackson Growth Alliance

Summary of Economic Conditions

Introduction to the Greater Egypt Economic Development District (EDD)

The Greater Egypt District is located in Southern Illinois. The District's center is 100 miles from the metropolitan areas of St. Louis, Missouri, and Evansville, Indiana, and 70 miles north of Paducah, Kentucky. Chicago is 300 miles to the north, and Memphis is 225 miles to the south.

The District is comprised of the five Illinois counties of Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Perry, and Williamson; an area of 2,478 square miles with a 2024 population estimate of 212,808 persons.

Throughout the District, community and economic development planning fosters partnerships between governments and the private sector. Regional collaboration led to the establishment of the Greater Egypt Regional Planning Commission in 1961. The increased, federal involvement from The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) led to the redevelopment of the Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development District in 1967. The Greater Egypt District has long held strong relationships with local, State and Federal agencies to promote the development of the District.

Since then, other local economic development corporations and individual economic development professionals have been utilized by the local communities to further their specific goals.

Greater Egypt maintains a multitude of partnerships with workforce, economic development, and other planning partners. Greater Egypt would like to include special recognition to the following agencies that have partnered on the development of the CEDS:

The Jackson Growth Alliance encourages economic and community development for all of Jackson County, Illinois and the greater Southern Illinois region. The Jackson Growth Alliance unites the efforts of the Jackson County government, City of Carbondale, City of Murphysboro, Southern Illinois University, Southern Illinois Airport Authority and the Jackson County business community for the achievement of economic development goals.

The Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation (JCDC) is a partnership of private industry, local and state government, local and state agencies, education, cultural entities, and faith-based organizations which provides a resourceful and flexible environment to meet ever changing demands and implement strategy for development.

Regional Economic Development Company (REDCO) is a collaboration between the cities of Carterville, Herrin, Johnston City, Marion, and the Carterville Chamber of Commerce, Herrin Chamber of Commerce, Marion Chamber of Commerce, Williamson County Airport Authority, and Williamson County Board of Commissioners. From the original partnership between the City of Marion and the Marion Area Chamber of Commerce has grown a unique network of communities, governmental units, business enterprises and private citizens who are all on the same page when it comes to promoting economic development. The purpose of this spirit of cooperation is to provide opportunities for employment for the citizens of Williamson County and Southern Illinois, a task that REDCO embraces enthusiastically.

SI Now is an initiative created to support Southern Illinois in becoming a thriving, economically diverse environment for business and industry with a growing population, labor force, per capita

income and expanding tax base, while elevating an already high quality of life and place. SI Now is working to attract and expand business in the region, partnering to support existing businesses, developing our workforce education through training and employment growth in high wage sectors and creating a “win mentality” by elevating perceptions both within the region and beyond.

Champion Community Investments is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that provides economic and community development support. They work with federal agencies, regional Small Business Development Centers, Entrepreneurship Centers, local economic developers, and commercial lenders in the District to ensure that sufficient capital is available to fuel business growth and job creation. CCI makes low interest loans to qualified borrowers, investing the proceeds of those loans into businesses, growth, and job creation and retention.

The City of Carbondale’s Economic Development Office coordinates the City’s economic development activities; manages economic development incentive programs; initiates activities to attract and retain new and existing businesses, and serves as the City’s liaison with state, federal, and local economic development agencies through participation in cooperative regional economic development initiatives.

The City of Marion Economic Development Office works with the existing businesses and industries in their retention and expansion. In addition, the office works with the State, Federal, and local planning agency in searching for new business and industries. This involves making sure that all entities are aware of all the sites and incentives available to them.

The Pinckneyville Economic Development Office focuses on building the long-term economic base of job retention, expansion of existing business, encouragement of new business, and the best use of the community's economic resources. This office coordinates new business recruitment and works to maintain a strong relationship between the city, surrounding area and state and federal resources.

The SIU Research Park is a nonprofit corporation affiliated with Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIU Carbondale) that serves as a catalyst for innovation and entrepreneurship development in Southern Illinois. Its mission is to establish and support an environment to foster innovation, commercialize University discoveries, and advance entrepreneurship and economic development within SIU and throughout the region. Core services include providing expert technical assistance and specialized business and research space to emerging and expanding companies.

The Southern Illinois Workforce Development board through its Workforce provider Man-Tra-Con has the primary mission to collaborate effectively with workforce partners to create quality workforce solutions throughout Local Workforce Area 25, comprised of Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Perry and Williamson counties. In addition, Man-Tra-Con collaborates with innovative partners in economic development, healthcare, community and social service and education to create unique solutions to the workforce challenges that face the region.

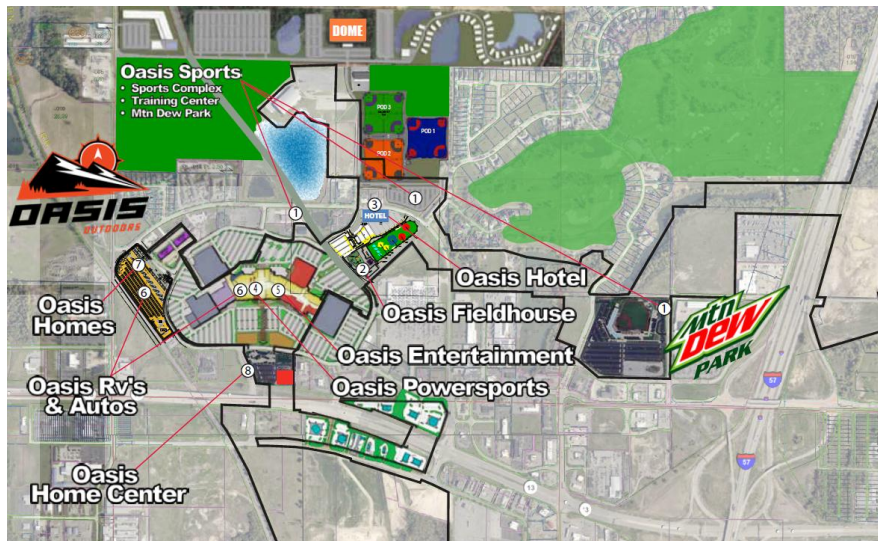
Summary Background

The Greater Egypt Economic Development District is located in the heart of Southern Illinois. Closer to St. Louis Missouri, Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee than Chicago Illinois, Greater Egypt is unlike the rest of Illinois. Void of major metropolitan hustle and bustle and farm fields as far as the eye can see Greater Egypt provides a scenic backdrop filled with trees and lakes with communities that are large enough to support modern amenities, but not so large that the rural feel is lost.

For decades Greater Egypt has been transitioning from coal and farming as the major industries in the region. The rapid decline of the coal industry left many in the region suffering from unemployment and poverty as it has taken many years for the economic shifts to take place. Through this transition many new opportunities have taken shape and are beginning to replace the old economy. Leading these changes are the Manufacturing and Healthcare sectors. Major employers such as Continental Tire, Aisin, Southern Illinois Healthcare, Deaconess Illinois, and St. Mary's Good Samaritan have grown in the last decade and replaced many of the jobs once held in the mining and agricultural industries. In addition to these key sectors new clusters are forming in the District such as aircraft maintenance and repair.

Developing Infrastructure is further changing the landscape in Southern Illinois. Major expansions to Interstate 57 which runs north and south through the center of the Greater Egypt District will be completed in 2028. The expansion will result in a six-lane interstate from I-64 to I-24. Route 13, the second busiest roadway in Southern Illinois, crosses the Greater Egypt District from east to west and is also being expanded to six lanes. New water mains, airport hangars, business parks, broadband, multi-use paths, and transit infrastructure are other key pieces of local and regional infrastructure that have either been recently constructed or are in progress. Efforts to secure reliable broadband have been successful in the Greater Egypt District. More than \$66 million has been awarded in the Greater Egypt District from various granting sources to get broadband to rural communities.

A new key economic driver in the District is the Marion Star Bonds District. Millennium Destination Development LLC has started work on a destination development in the Star Bonds District. The development is underway and will include entertainment and attractions Oasis Golf and Pickleball, go karts, virtual reality, laser tag, arcades, a climbing wall, and bowling alley. It also includes a multi-use sports complex that will host teams from across the country. The STAR bond district will be funded by incremental sales tax that the state and city have both pledged. It is estimated the project will bring in hundreds of thousands of visitors yearly and hundreds of employment opportunities.



With all of this exciting industrial and infrastructure growth it would be expected that the Greater Egypt District would be in a major growth pattern, but this is not the case yet. While Greater Egypt has been doing better than most regions in Illinois the reality is that Greater Egypt is still a rural area and recent trends in the United States have been hard on rural areas. Population growth in many rural areas has been declining or stagnant in recent years. This trend has been exacerbated in Southern Illinois by numerous sophisticated marketing campaigns over the last decade that attempt to pull our businesses and residents out of the state. However, with the addition of the Star Bonds, we expect to see change. Recent efforts and private investments have created opportunities to change the trends in the Greater Egypt District.

In order to combat the attacks, the region has created SI Now, a new regional economic development hub and unified voice to the southern 17 counties of Illinois. SI Now was created to encourage a positive ripple effect of positivity in Southern Illinois by creating jobs, being a hub of information for site selectors, partnering with existing businesses, equipping the workforce with specialized skills, and telling the positive stories of the region. SI Now continues to find success for southern Illinois and brings positive messaging to and about Southern Illinois.

Changing Landscape

In the past, Illinois was receiving consistently unfavorable remarks about growth and opportunity for business. In recent years, those sentiments have changed. Illinois currently boasts the 5th largest GDP in the nation, making it the 18th largest economy in the world. Illinois also ranked #2 in the nation for business expansions and relocations in 2022. Over 30 Fortune 500 companies have their headquarters in Illinois, which makes it one of the highest in the Midwest. Illinois continues to grow manufacturing coming in at the 4th highest manufacturing GRP in the United States.



Intersect Illinois and SI Now have forged a strong partnership focused on advancing economic development in Southern Illinois. Intersect Illinois' Vice President for Community Relations, Robert Stephan, meets weekly with the SI Now team to provide strategic support, facilitate state-level communications, and help move key projects forward. A consistent advocate for downstate development, Stephan ensures Southern Illinois remains engaged in statewide efforts. Intersect Illinois has been instrumental in uniting economic development partners across the state, and SI Now is proud to be part of "Team Illinois." Notably, Intersect organized SI Now's first-ever dedicated presence at SelectUSA in 2023, connecting the region directly to national and international business investment opportunities. Through continued collaboration—including invitations to Board of Directors Receptions—SI Now ensures that the southernmost 17 counties are represented in critical conversations that shape Illinois' economic future.

Recent Successes

Walker's Bluff Casino Resort boasts 31,000 sq ft of Casino floor with over 650 slot machines, live entertainment, a 12,250 sq ft event center that seats 1,200 and 113 room adjoining hotel. During construction, more than 1,100 construction jobs were created and the hotel employs over 330 people currently. The casino houses a luxury spa and four restaurant options including a fine dining steak house. The Walker's Bluff Casino Resort is open every day and continues to generate new tax dollars for the District.



EThOs Small Business Incubator & Coworking Space located on the square in Marion is undergoing a vast building remodel of their Citadel building funded in part by a \$3 million EDA grant. In addition to coworking space, EThOs offers programming for entrepreneurs, small business owners, and non-profit leaders in leadership, business planning and strategy, financial management, marketing and branding, sales, operations, technology, public speaking, and other topics that are helping grow businesses. EThOs provides workshops, coaching, business development and networking events to hundreds of small business owners every year. They partner with SIU Small Business Development Center on programming and offer office hours for SBDC in EThOs.

Mount Vernon has begun work to revitalize the 70,000 sq ft former US Bank building which now includes The Innovation Hub, located at 123 S. 10th St. The building now also houses the Jefferson County Development Corporation, Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, the University of Illinois Extension, a satellite office for Man-Tra-Con, Mt. Vernon Tourism, and Spero Family Services. The building also offers rentable space for small meetings and trainings. The Innovation Hub is currently creating both coworking and maker spaces that will be available for the public to utilize with membership. As the name implies, The Innovation Hub is working to become a one-stop resource to make members of the community successful.



Southern Illinois University Carbondale continues to invest in creating a vibrant campus. Two new projects include the Tedrick Welcome Center and the Gower Translational Research Center.



Named for Roger and Sally Tedrick, whose \$6 million leadership gift was instrumental in the funding of the building, the state-of-the-art Tedrick Welcome Center will be the first stop for

prospective students at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Student-focused open houses, campus tours, orientations, and other events will begin at the welcome center. Located just off U.S. Highway 51 near the previous location of McAndrew Stadium, construction of the building is 100 percent funded through the SIU Foundation. The multi-million-dollar facility will require no taxpayer dollars and no tuition or student fee monies. The SIU Foundation is funding the building through a combination of reserves, fundraising, and borrowing.

The 44,000 square foot building, scheduled to be completed in May of 2026, will include a visitor center capable of hosting conferences, lectures, seminars and catered events for up to 300 people, and the philanthropy center, which will be the new home of the SIU Foundation. It will also serve as a hub for donor visits, alumni activities, as well as campus and community events.



The Gower Translational Research Center, located on the west side of the Southern Illinois University Carbondale campus, is a hub of high-level research and entrepreneurial activities. With more than 60,000 square feet of space, it is currently the home of several centers and units focused on transdisciplinary research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and education. In April 2025, the University renamed the building to recognize the \$2.5 million donation by Bob and Beth Gower to advance SIU's strategic research and innovation mission and support research activities taking place on campus.

On October 4, 2024, SIU dedicated the newest program—BioLaunch—a \$7.2 million-dollar, 10,000 square foot facility. Consisting of five key components—biotechnology, analytical, and mass spectrometry labs; a meeting space; and a business incubator program—BioLaunch combines core research facilities and resources to support businesses in Illinois as leaders in value-added agriculture, biotechnology, and fermentation, by accelerating opportunities and innovative solutions that spur economic development in the state.

Our District continues to see success in the manufacturing/distribution sector with new facilities and job growth. The Marion Logistics Center is a newly constructed facility in Marion providing operations such as shipping, receiving, inventory control, and service parts control in a 463,000-sf building in the REDCO Industrial Park, which is currently home to three AISIN manufacturing

plants: AISIN Manufacturing Illinois; AISIN Electronics Illinois; and AISIN Light Metals. Aisin employs more than 2,300 team members across the three plants. Marion also has a new 251,000 sq ft Fed Ex distribution center with more than 130 employees on staff. Readerlink's Midwest Publishing Distribution Center, located in Marion employs more than 175 people and ships over 50 million books annually.

DuQuoin has a major construction project underway at their largest manufacturer, Prysmian. The \$63.8 million expansion will create 80 new high paying jobs and retain the existing 225. The expansion will boost cable manufacturing for renewable energy purposes.

Mt. Vernon continues to see growth in their manufacturing with the construction of a new 100,000 sq ft, solar powered facility, Manner Polymers. The new plastic compound making facility will employ more than 60 people from the region. Walgreens remains a large employer with more than 1,000 employees in Mt. Vernon. Continental Tire in Mt. Vernon continues to be a major employer in the region with more than 4,000 employees.

In 2024 Rend Lake College completed a 21,629 sq ft state of the art Manufacturing Academy for training in electronics, robotics, pneumatics, machining, welding, wiring, controls, MSSC, SACA, forklift operators, production skills, OSHA, and other employability skills. Participants will gain valuable skills and credentials to join the growing manufacturing sector of the region. In 2022, Rend Lake College was awarded a \$5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) to construct the new manufacturing academy. This project is funded under EDA's American Rescue Plan Economic Adjustment Assistance program. Grant awards under this program help hundreds of communities across the nation plan, build, innovate, and put people back to work through construction or non-construction projects designed to meet local and regional needs.



The Greater Egypt District continues to stay on trend in Illinois with strong manufacturing and distribution.

Advanced Manufacturing



Illinois' rich manufacturing history has evolved into an advanced, technology-driven sector. The state has the talent companies need and the infrastructure to move products efficiently and effectively.



 INTERSECT Illinois



4th highest manufacturing GRP in the U.S.; **accounts for 12.7% of Illinois GDP**



5th in the nation for private sector manufacturing R&D with **\$11.1B spent**



23,459 students graduate annually with manufacturing degrees; **more than 560,000 employed in manufacturing**

The Greater Egypt District continues to recognize place making as a critical asset to the local and regional economy. Local communities continue to invest in their downtowns/main streets to create a more vibrant environment. Marion, IL has invested over \$6 million to redesign their square that now boasts new sidewalks, lighting, crosswalks, parking, music, lighted fountains, and a central place around the clocktower to host community events. Their efforts have led to new businesses on the square and millions of private investment dollars in renovations to existing structures on the square.

The City of Benton has a large-scale project to revitalize their main street underway. The project will start just East of the I 57 interchange and continue right to the Benton Square. The purpose of the project is to enhance the appeal of the community and to provide much needed storm sewer on West Main St. The Right of Way will be widened and brand-new curb and gutter will be constructed. A multi-use path will be included through the length of the project as well.

The City of Herrin has redesigned their downtown with new lighting, bump outs, crosswalks, and a newly paved highway and new curbs that will be completed in 2025. New plantings in the bump outs were included to increase the aesthetics of the downtown.

Mt. Vernon, Illinois, is transforming its downtown with the development of "The Commons," a vibrant green space located at 911 Broadway on the former site of the Register-News building. This initiative aims to create a year-round, multi-purpose plaza that will serve as a central gathering place for community events, festivals, and everyday leisure activities. The Commons is envisioned as a catalyst for downtown revitalization, aiming to attract visitors, support local businesses, and enhance the quality of life for Mt. Vernon residents. In addition, Mt. Vernon has created the Downtown Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA) as a designated zone where patrons can purchase alcoholic beverages from participating establishments and enjoy them outdoors within specified boundaries. This encourages foot traffic and support of seven local businesses. The initiative is

part of the city's efforts to revitalize the downtown district and create a more vibrant community atmosphere.

Pinckneyville has a multi-million-dollar project completed by IDOT improving their downtown at intersection of highways 13, 127, and 154 meet. A new signalized intersection provided safe and efficient access to downtown businesses while creating a safer environment for motorists and pedestrians.

West Frankfort also has a major main street project with new roundabouts, resurfacing, and new sidewalks. The region continues to see communities partnering with various grant agencies to take advantage of opportunities to invest in their infrastructure.

The City of Carbondale has completed a multi-million-dollar investment in their downtown that includes new sidewalks and lighting with great efforts made for walkability and connection to local businesses and the new Southern Illinois Multi-Modal Station. In addition to the SIMMS, Carbondale has moved forward with an outdoor stage venue. The Event Stage is Phase 1 of a new Plaza and consists of a large, professionally-designed stage designed to accommodate live performances of all types, and a festival terrace that can accommodate thousands of guests. Phase one is currently under construction and partially funded (\$2,055,040) by the first round of the DCEO Rebuilding Downtown & Main Streets grant program. Phase two has been funded with another \$2 million grant from The DCEO Research in Illinois to Spur Economic Recovery Implementation Grant.



Carbondale continues to offer developers incentives to rehab buildings in their downtown with TIF funds to encouraging private investment. Murphysboro was awarded a \$1.8 Million IDOT grant to resurface IL Route 149 that includes downtown lighting and new sidewalks.

Murphysboro has launched a new organization for their community. Revitalize 62966 is a creative placemaking committee dedicated to fostering open communication and addressing local challenges to make Murphysboro a more vibrant and attractive community. Officially established as a 501(c)(3) in 2024, the organization focuses on identifying community gaps and leveraging local assets. Since its inception, Revitalize 62966 has played a key role in completing 11 murals, partnering with the City of Murphysboro and SIMPO to secure a \$1.8 million ITEP grant for downtown streetscape improvements, supporting the net opening of over 30 new businesses, and facilitating the restoration of several historic buildings. The committee also publishes a monthly community calendar and downtown map to enhance public awareness of local events and destinations. A hallmark of its success is the strong collaboration fostered among the Chamber of Commerce, Revitalize 62966, the City, and Main Street, enabling aligned initiatives and shared resources. Additionally, the group hosts the annual Big Muddy Monster Brew Festival each October, which generates funds for catalytic community projects.

Transportation

Major improvements have been made to the transportation system in the Greater Egypt District. IDOT continues to widen I-57 to six lanes from Marion to Mt. Vernon. Work has been completed on much of the project and has now begun on the areas over bridges in Franklin County and areas from Benton to Ina. The IL Rt 13 expansion to six lanes continues with the replacement over Crab Orchard Lake to be completed in 2028. That project will connect the heavily traveled route from Carbondale to Marion with six lanes.

In 2019 Marion constructed a 1.2-mile, two-lane concrete extension of Halfway Road south of West Main Street, connecting it to Westminster Drive. This project aimed to improve access for key local entities, including the Pepsi MidAmerica plant, Crisp Container Corporation, and the Marion School District. The extension was key in FedEx Ground locating to Marion, Illinois. By enhancing connectivity, the extension supports local businesses and facilitates smoother resident transportation within the city.

A new interchange from Interstate 57 has opened economic opportunities in West Frankfort creating increased access to commercially available property. Mt. Vernon has plans underway to create a diverging diamond that will clear congestion with commercial vehicles at their interchange. The proposed improvements will increase operational performance and reduce the number of anticipated crashes while providing safe access for pedestrians and bicyclists. In 2024, IDOT constructed two new bridges. The Westminster Drive bridge over Interstate 57 was reconstructed as part of the Rebuild Illinois capital program, a \$33.2 billion initiative to revitalize the state's transportation infrastructure. The \$7.3 million project replaced an aging structure, raising the bridge by approximately 2.5 feet to meet current safety and design standards. A notable feature of the new 200-foot-long overpass is its patriotic design: fencing that resembles the American flag, created from multicolored perforated metal, and illuminated at night with red, white, and blue LED lights. Emblems representing various branches of the U.S. Armed Forces are incorporated into the pedestrian and bicycle pathway barriers and displayed at the bridge's four corners. This design serves as a tribute to military personnel and veterans while reinforcing the


City's assertion that Marion Stands with Veterans, particularly given the bridge's proximity to the Marion VA Medical Center.

Veterans Airport of Southern Illinois has secured a new contract with Contour Airlines giving travelers in the region jet access to Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD). The round trip flights to ORD occur twice every weekday with one round trip flight on Saturdays and Sundays. The regional jet holds 30 passengers with flight attendants providing complimentary beverages and snacks during the flight which takes less than one hour. The move to Contour with access to ORD has created a 35% increase in enplanements for the airport. In addition, Veterans Airport is adding a new General Aviation terminal that will be completed in Spring of 2025. The nearly 5,000 square foot terminal will service the Fixed Based Operator, Midwest Aviation. The \$4.6 million project was funded in part by the FAA with other funding from the airport and IDOT.



Southern Illinois Airport Authority in Murphysboro continues to enrich their aviation economy efforts with expansions of existing companies on the campus. Recent growth includes an expansion to Hangar 9 that houses Code 1 Aviation funded in part by a grant from Delta Regional Authority. The expansion will create more Aviation Technology jobs with family sustaining wages. In addition, Crucial MRO has outgrown their space and is looking to add on to Hangar 11 or build a brand new hangar as their business sees steady growth. Enhanced Aero is also needing more room as their business also sees steady gains. SIAA continues to see exponential growth in landing fees and fuel sales as a result. In addition, financing is underway for a new housing development near the airport with 1-2 bedroom apartments in a short term lease, boutique style development.

Efforts continue to ensure more fixed bus routes for the Greater Egypt District. Rides Mass Transit has created fixed bus routes to major employers and health services. Marion has partnered with RMTD to also create fixed routes in Marion called the Wildcat Route which visits ten strictly Marion locations to assist citizens with Marion connections. It is the first route of its kind in Williamson County. Jackson County has rebranded their mass transit to Jax Mass Transit and is offering fixed routes, rural route services, evening micro-transit, and paratransit services across Jackson County. In 2024, they provided more than 200,000 rides to patrons in the region. Jax's newest additions to their bus fleet include larger buses that can transport more than 70 riders and bike racks for added rider service.

| WILDCAT ROUTE (MONDAY-FRIDAY)  | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|---------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|----------|----------------|
| RMTD-Park-and-Ride | Lamar Hi-Rise | The HUB | Sherman Apartments | Boyton Community Center | Marion Square/Library | Butler Hi-Rise | Shawnee Apartments | Marion Kroger | The Hill | Marion Walmart |
| 6:00 | 6:04 | 6:06 | 6:10 | 6:12 | 6:15 | 6:25 | 6:30 | 6:33 | 6:38 | 6:45 |
| 7:00 | 7:04 | 7:06 | 7:10 | 7:12 | 7:15 | 7:25 | 7:30 | 7:33 | 7:38 | 7:45 |
| 8:00 | 8:04 | 8:06 | 8:10 | 8:12 | 8:15 | 8:25 | 8:30 | 8:33 | 8:38 | 8:45 |
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| 14:00 | 14:04 | 14:06 | 14:10 | 14:12 | 14:15 | 14:25 | 14:30 | 14:33 | 14:38 | 14:45 |
| 15:00 | 15:04 | 15:06 | 15:10 | 15:12 | 15:15 | 15:25 | 15:30 | 15:33 | 15:38 | 15:45 |
| 16:00 | 16:04 | 16:06 | 16:10 | 16:12 | 16:15 | 16:25 | 16:30 | 16:33 | 16:38 | 16:45 |
| 17:00 | 17:04 | 17:06 | 17:10 | 17:12 | 17:15 | 17:25 | 17:30 | 17:33 | 17:38 | 17:45 |

Efforts continue by South Central Transit (SCT) Shuttles to have predetermined stops/times daily Monday-Friday to Carbondale, Nashville, Steeleville, Sesser, Mt. Vernon and between Du Quoin and Pinckneyville. Shuttle Fares are very affordable and scheduling is not required. Route details are available at . SCT covers the Greater Egypt District counties of Jefferson, Franklin, and Perry Counties in addition to Washington, Marion, and Clinton counties. SCT is busy adding new covered bus shelters to increase safety and protection of their riders. SCT provided 404,716 rides in their 6 county service area. SCT offers transportation to SIU and major employers like Continental Tire.



Bike planning efforts continue to bring tourism opportunities and enhance quality of life for residents of the Greater Egypt District. With more than 260 miles of bike infrastructure cyclists can take in the beauty of Southern Illinois. Greater Egypt has worked to create mapping of the bike infrastructure of the district, called Bike Solll. The GIS mapping can be found at <https://greater-egypt-gis-greateregypt.hub.arcgis.com/pages/bike-southern-illinois>.

One of the newest paths that will be completed in the coming years is the Crab Orchard Greenway. The Crab Orchard Greenway will be a multi-use trail with a total length of 20 miles from Lewis Lane in Carbondale to the Marion High School Sports Complex, running parallel to IL Route 13. 11.8 of those miles are within the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge. Additional spurs are planned to the new Oasis Center and Westminster Drive to connect with Rides Mass transit.

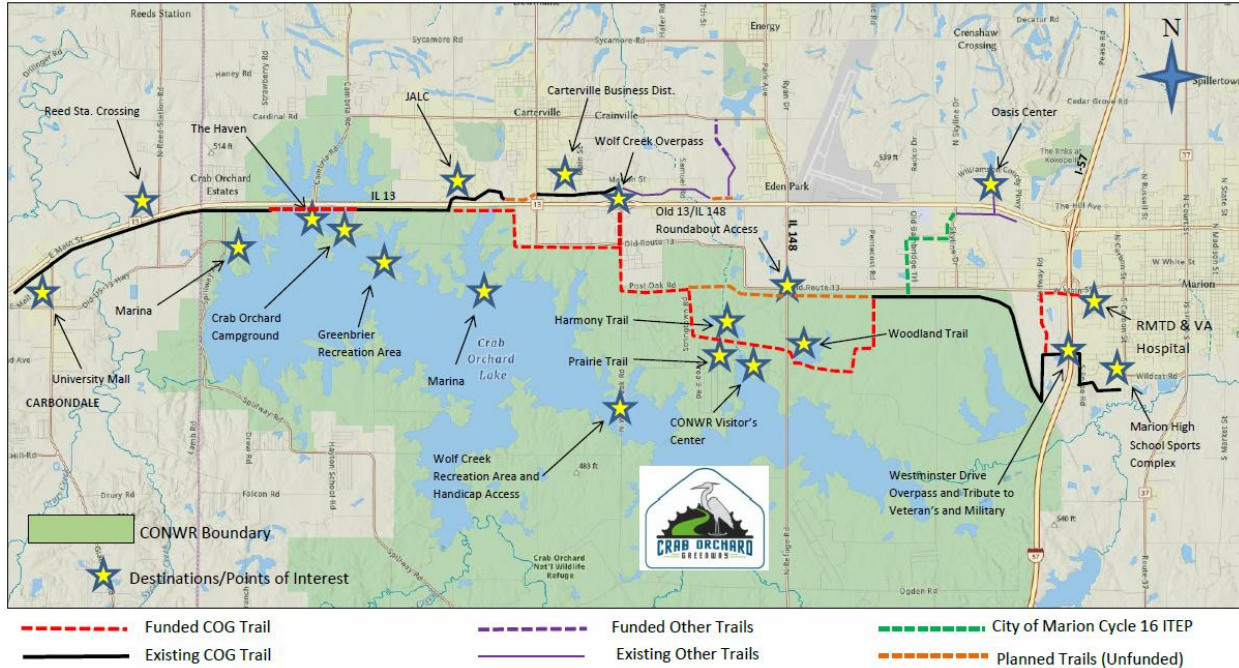
The Crab Orchard Greenway Trail Summary

- Total Length 20 Miles - Lewis Lane in Carbondale to Marion High School Sports Complex
- 11.8 Miles within the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge (CONWR)
- All of the main route of the COG trail is complete or funded
- 1.4-mile spur to the Oasis Center is planned
- 1.3-mile spur from Westminster Drive connecting to Rides Mass transit is funded
- Includes overpasses of IL 13 (Wolf Creek Road) and I-57 (Westminster Drive)
- Provides access to numerous destinations along IL 13 and within CONWR
- Provides access to 8 miles of low volume paved roadways within CONWR for additional cycling and wildlife viewing

IDOT District 9



CRAB ORCHARD GREENWAY TRAIL SYSTEM PLAN

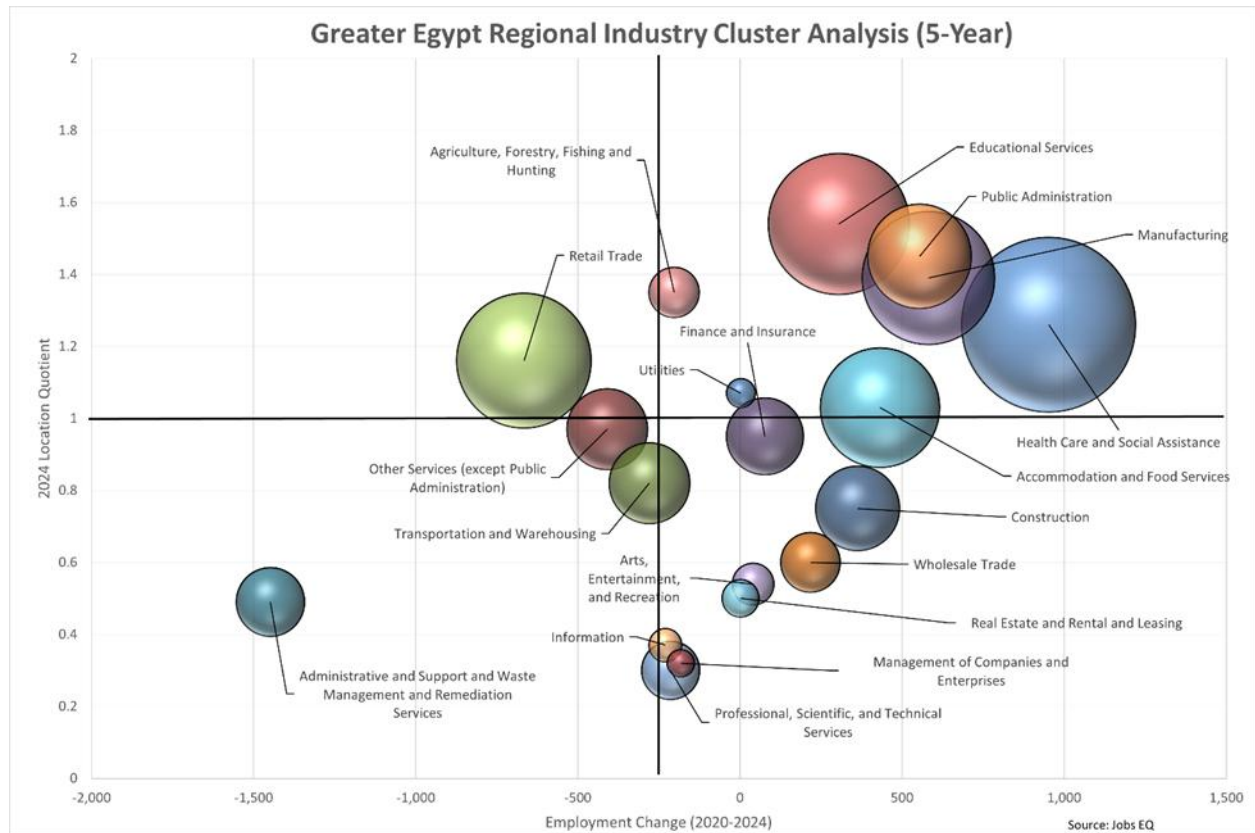


The City of Carbondale has a new addition to their downtown with the Southern Illinois Multi Modal Station that houses Amtrak, Greyhound, and regional transit. The 23,000 square foot facility will also have Carbondale Tourism, SIU, workforce provider Man-Tra-Con and flexible temporary work spaces for small businesses. The total project cost was over \$26 million utilizing grants from the U.S. Department of Transportation and Illinois Department of Transportation in conjunction with funding from the City of Carbondale. This transformative transportation hub was built to meet Silver standards of LEED certification. This first of its kind facility for the region will replace the old Amtrak station and provide travelers with a more comfortable environment and encourage more rail ridership. Estimated opening of Phase 1 is late May 2025.



Identifying Key Industry Sectors

Manufacturing, Education, and Public Administration have the highest location quotients in the district, have significant current employment, and have been growing in the last five years. Manufacturing specifically is more concentrated in the Greater Egypt District than in the US overall. It is growing in jobs and is a thriving, competitive industry cluster with large employment numbers. Health Care continues to show strong growth and is an important industry. Construction, Accommodation and Food Service are expanding but not highly specialized yet in the District. With the Star Bonds projects, those areas are expected to be opportunity areas and will grow in the short term. Retail Trade, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting remain specialized in the district but with declines in jobs. However, Retail Trade should see growth soon with the Star Bonds project. Manufacturing and Public Administration remain core strengths in the District and Education and Health Care will continue to produce long-term resilience. Transportation and warehousing remain less concentrated but not far from the national average. As the chart shows, our District does have competitive advantages and growing employment in in several industries that show a Location Quotient (LQ) of more than 1.2.



| Greater Egypt, 2024Q3 ¹ | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---------|---------------|------|----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| NAICS | Industry | Current | | | 5-Year History | | 1-Year Forecast | | | | |
| | | Empl | Avg Ann Wages | LQ | Empl Change | Ann % | Total Demand | Exits | Transfers | Empl Growth | Ann % Growth |
| 62 | Health Care and Social Assistance | 17,611 | \$61,539 | 1.26 | 952 | 1.1% | 1,733 | 781 | 933 | 19 | 0.1% |
| 61 | Educational Services | 11,567 | \$49,962 | 1.54 | 305 | 0.5% | 1,030 | 489 | 591 | -50 | -0.4% |
| 44 | Retail Trade | 10,555 | \$33,822 | 1.16 | -666 | -1.2% | 1,326 | 603 | 833 | -110 | -1.0% |
| 31 | Manufacturing | 10,238 | \$65,408 | 1.39 | 581 | 1.2% | 973 | 379 | 650 | -56 | -0.5% |
| 72 | Accommodation and Food Services | 8,328 | \$23,097 | 1.03 | -432 | -1.0% | 1,458 | 629 | 847 | -17 | -0.2% |
| 92 | Public Administration | 6,317 | \$54,859 | 1.45 | 554 | 1.9% | 543 | 231 | 346 | -34 | -0.5% |
| 23 | Construction | 4,175 | \$57,198 | 0.75 | 363 | 1.8% | 350 | 131 | 225 | -6 | -0.1% |
| | Other Services (except Public Administration) | | | | | | | | | | |
| 81 | Administration | 3,852 | \$29,527 | 0.97 | -409 | -2.0% | 427 | 178 | 258 | -9 | -0.2% |
| 48 | Transportation and Warehousing | 3,829 | \$51,910 | 0.82 | -279 | -1.4% | 402 | 168 | 246 | -12 | -0.3% |
| 52 | Finance and Insurance | 3,482 | \$73,113 | 0.95 | 77 | 0.4% | 272 | 110 | 177 | -14 | -0.4% |
| | Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | | | | | | | | | | |
| 56 | Management and Remediation Services | 2,768 | \$39,473 | 0.49 | -1,448 | -8.1% | 305 | 125 | 188 | -9 | -0.3% |
| 42 | Wholesale Trade | 2,110 | \$61,409 | 0.60 | 218 | 2.2% | 199 | 78 | 132 | -11 | -0.5% |
| | Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | | | | | | | | | | |
| 54 | Services | 2,014 | \$58,453 | 0.30 | -214 | -2.0% | 162 | 60 | 102 | 1 | 0.0% |
| 11 | Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 1,521 | \$39,626 | 1.35 | -203 | -2.5% | 170 | 88 | 98 | -16 | -1.0% |
| | Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | Extraction | 1,383 | \$101,187 | 4.07 | 151 | 2.3% | 51 | 43 | 82 | -74 | -5.4% |
| 71 | Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation | 1,044 | \$21,580 | 0.54 | 41 | 0.8% | 153 | 61 | 92 | 0 | 0.0% |
| 53 | Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 839 | \$43,492 | 0.50 | 2 | 0.0% | 76 | 35 | 44 | -3 | -0.4% |
| 51 | Information | 675 | \$46,855 | 0.37 | -230 | -5.7% | 52 | 21 | 37 | -6 | -0.9% |
| 22 | Utilities | 519 | \$115,147 | 1.07 | 3 | 0.1% | 43 | 17 | 29 | -2 | -0.4% |
| | Management of Companies and Enterprises | | | | | | | | | | |
| 55 | Management of Companies and Enterprises | 463 | \$104,053 | 0.32 | -182 | -6.4% | 39 | 15 | 24 | 0 | 0.1% |
| 99 | Unclassified | 0 | n/a | 0.00 | -6 | n/a | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -0.6% |
| | Total - All Industries | 93,292 | \$51,390 | 1.00 | -822 | -0.2% | 9,705 | 4,155 | 5,939 | -390 | -0.4% |

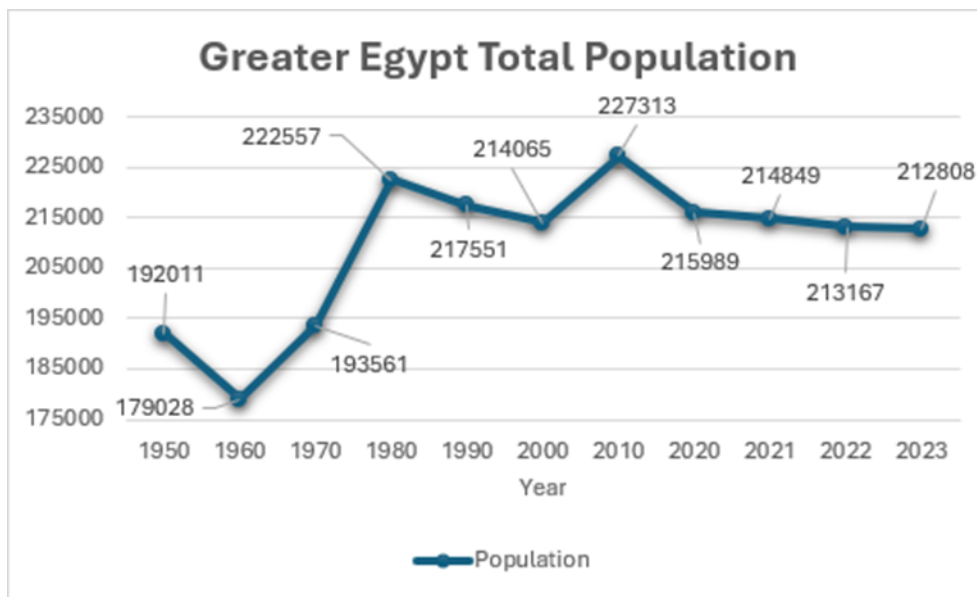
Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2024Q3

Key Economic Indicators

The following economic and socioeconomic indicators represent performance measures that are utilized to determine the success of the District. Each key indicator was chosen by the CEDS committee to measure general economic health within the District. While data is useful in identifying trends and providing an aerial view of the District, it is recognized that the key economic indicators are influenced by multiple variables.

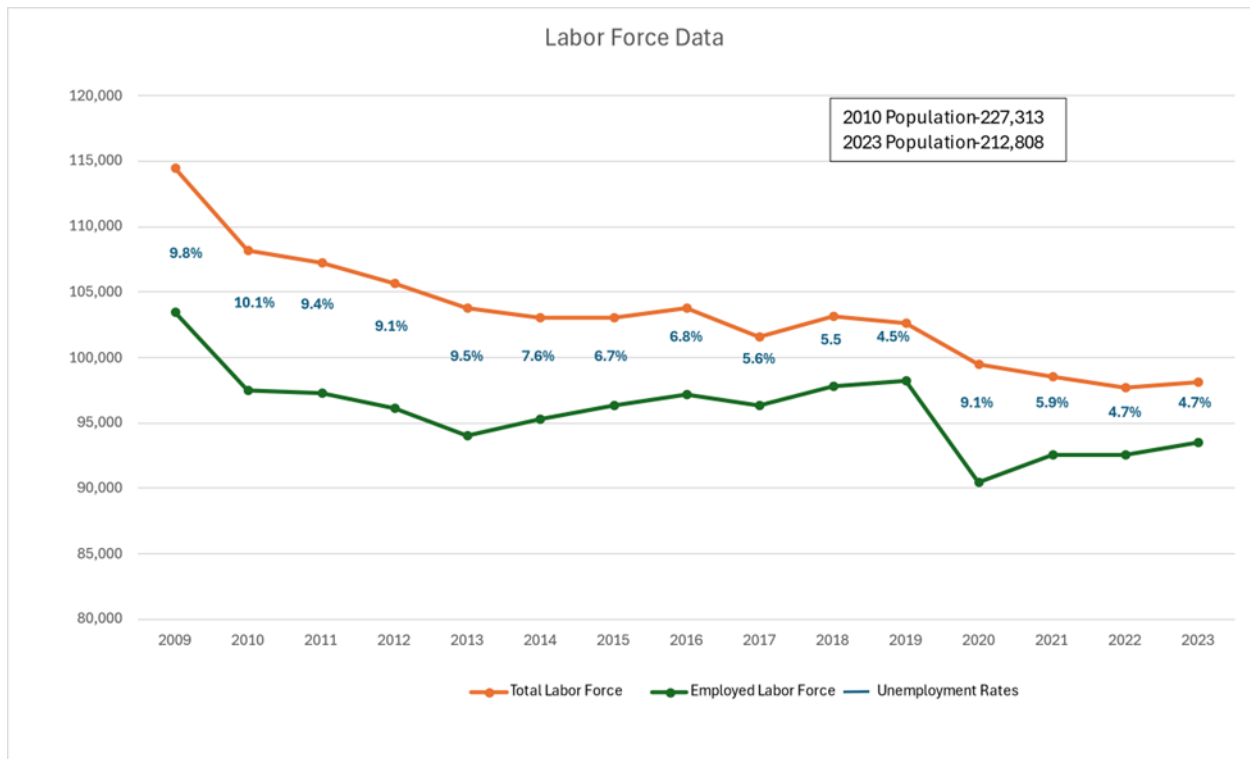
Population

The Greater Egypt District's population has decreased by 14,505 or 6.38% since 2010. Looking further back however, Greater Egypt District's population is only down 1,257 or 1.47% since the year 2000.

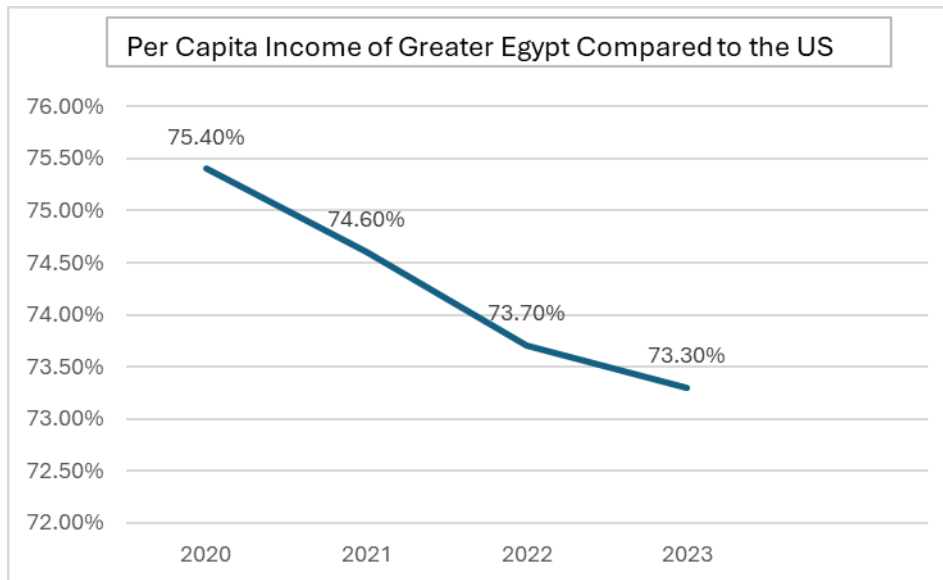


Source: Decennial Census 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020 American Community Survey

Labor Force Statistics

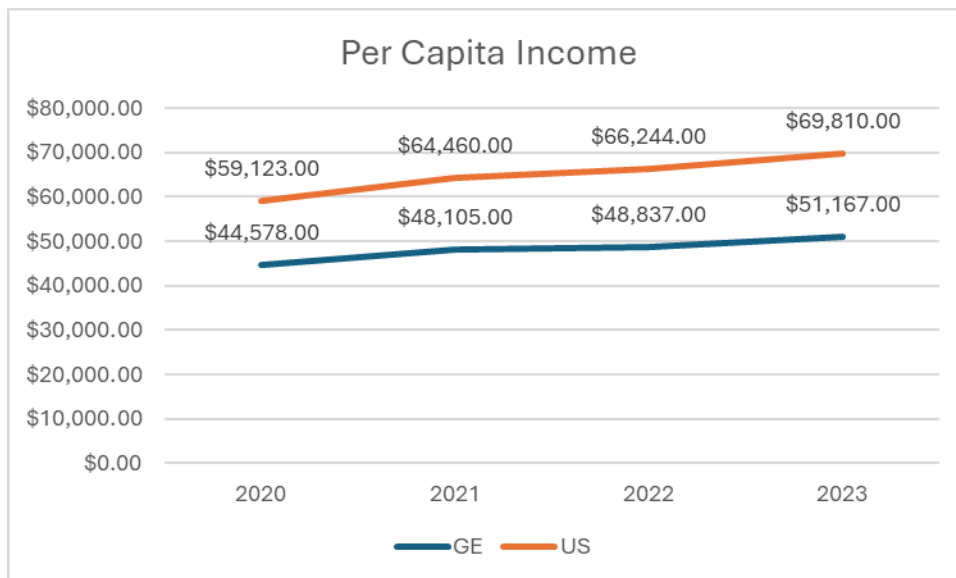


The shrinking of the Greater Egypt labor force continues to be one of the greatest challenges facing the District. While the unemployment rate is currently 3.7% which is down from 4.3%, the total labor force continues to stabilize while the unemployment rate is shrinking. Some residents in the district have abandoned the search for employment which has left them out of the labor force and they are not showing up in the unemployed numbers. The Labor Force participation rate for the region is 56.6% which lags behind the national rate of 63.3%. A key for the Greater Egypt District is to work with the Southern Illinois Workforce Development Board and educational institutions to continue making training programs and support systems designed for those not in the labor force to get the skills and support needed to enter into employment. Issues such as lack of transportation and childcare are hindering residents from entering employment.

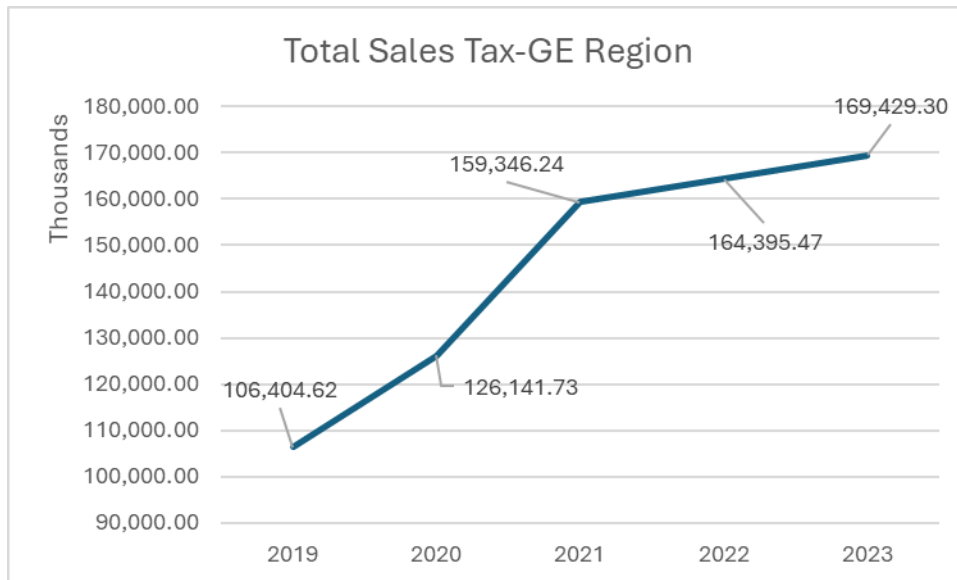


Source: <http://www.statsamerica.org/distress>

Per Capita Income



The Greater Egypt District is being left behind as the District's per capita income compared to the U.S. per capita was 75.4% in 2020 and continues to widen with the latest data showing the District's income at only 73.3% of the US Per Capita Income. While the income is increasing, which is positive, the gap continues to widen. The District must work to close that gap by continuing to create high wage jobs. With the addition of new retail and manufacturing jobs, competition can create higher wages helping to narrow the Per Capita Income gap.



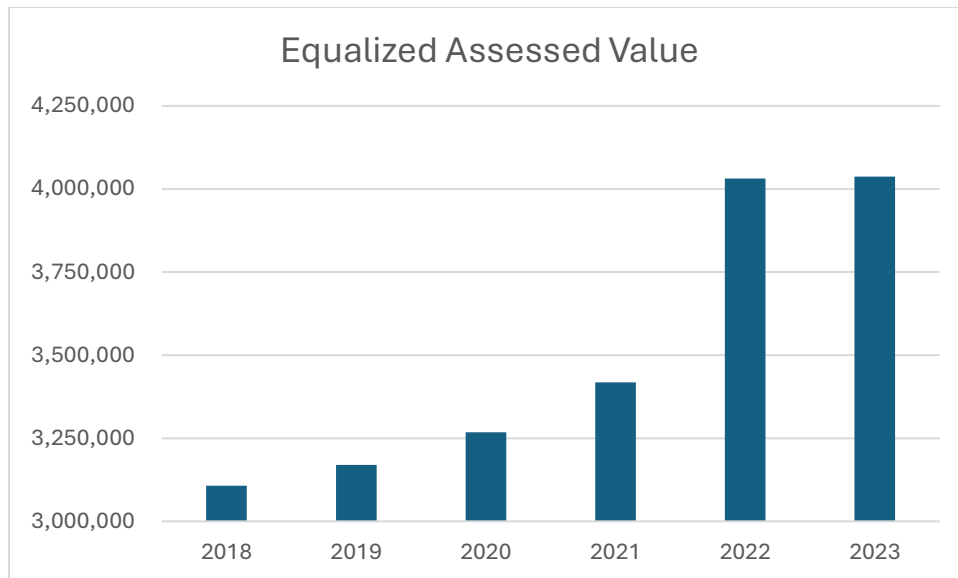
Source: Illinois Department of Revenue, Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Code Reporting

Sales Tax Receipts

The Greater Egypt District continues to see growth in retail sales. The upward trend is expected to continue with the addition of the Star Bonds District and upcoming developments related to it. The trend shows the District is committed to economic growth. As retail trends shift away from self contained malls and into strip style mall shopping, the District continues to see businesses building and locating to those developments. Both Carbondale and Marion have taken advantage of the trend and seen investment in strip mall style shopping. The rapid growth of dining options has also accelerated the sales tax receipts of the District. Marion has reached \$1 Billion in sales tax receipts in 2024 and 2025.

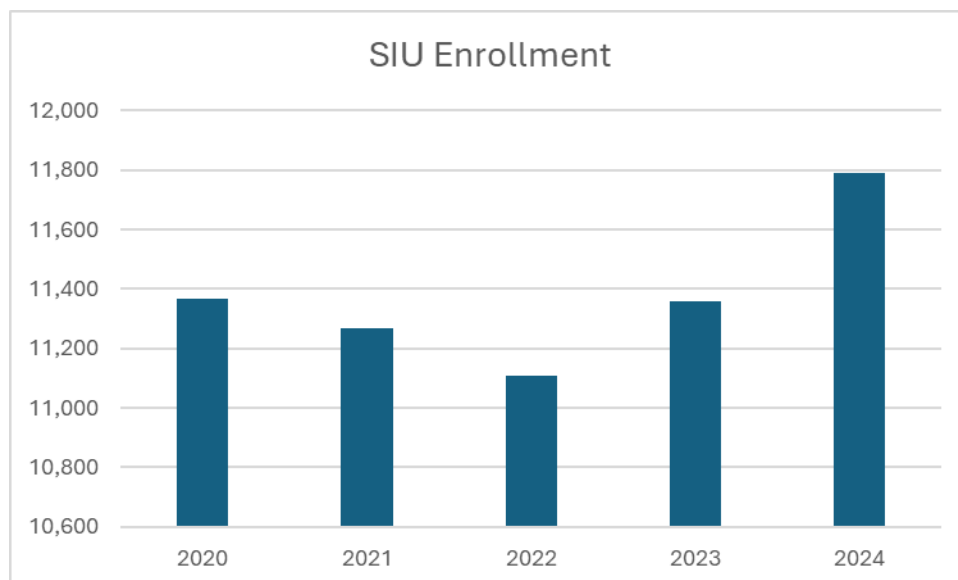
Equal Assessed Value (EAV)

Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) was also identified as a key metric in determining the ongoing development and value of the District's land. EAV is best known as a formulaic portion of property taxes and as such remains important to the CEDS process as a way to better understand governmental revenue throughout the region. However, it also acts as a proxy for ongoing development and desirability of developable land within the Greater Egypt District.

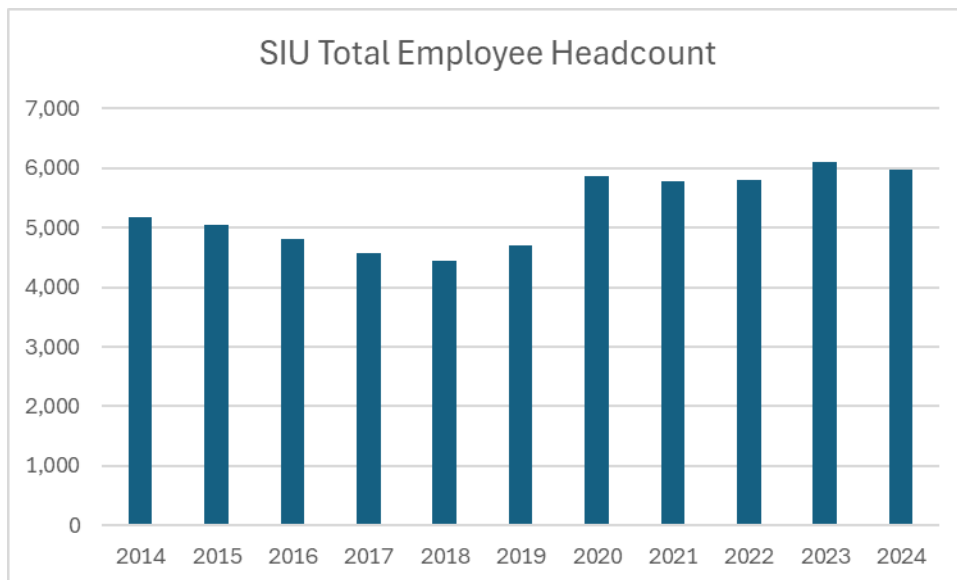


Southern Illinois University

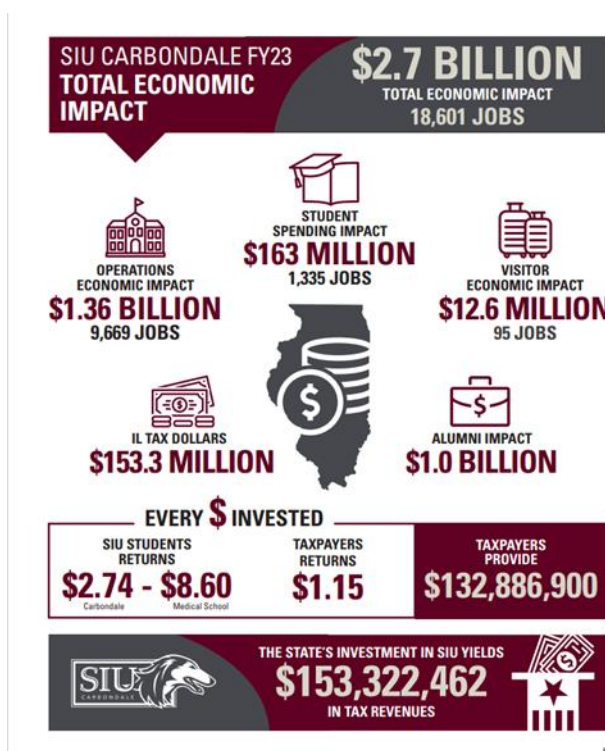
Southern Illinois University Carbondale's enrollment has seen positive growth after a period of decline in the past decade. SIU remains the largest employer in Southern Illinois and an economic engine for the region. Alongside positive trending enrollment numbers, the University has seen an upward trend in employee headcount. These positive trends speak to the work the University and the District continue to do to ensure SIU's success which is vital to the success of the region.



Source: <http://irs.siu.edu>



The economic impact of SIU cannot be understated. In 2023, SIU’s economic impact to the region was \$2.7 Billion. Their success is vital to the region’s success and the economic ecosystem of our communities.



Strengths

Strategic Location & Transportation Infrastructure – The region is well-positioned near major metropolitan areas like St. Louis, Evansville, and Nashville, providing strong market access. Major highways (I-57, I-24, and I-64) and three Class I railroads bolster logistics and transportation. Recent infrastructure investments, such as the I-57 expansion and improvements along Route 13,

enhance connectivity. The region continues to expand and improve rail, roads, and runways to have strong transportation infrastructure.

Diverse Economic Base – While historically reliant on coal mining and agriculture, the economy is shifting towards healthcare, manufacturing, logistics, and retail.

Higher Education & Workforce Development – Institutions such as Southern Illinois University (SIU) Carbondale, Rend Lake College, and John A. Logan College provide workforce training and higher education, supporting key industries. Community colleges continue to move forward with large investments including the Southern Illinois Manufacturing Academy at Rend Lake College. John A Logan College was the recipient of a \$4.2 Million grant from EDA to create a Career and Technical Center on their campus.

Tourism & Recreational Assets – The region boasts natural attractions like Rend Lake, Shawnee National Forest, Pyramid State Park, and Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, which drive tourism and recreation-based economic activity. Downtown revitalization efforts in several communities enhance cultural appeal. The outdoor economy of the Greater Egypt Region continues to grow.

Growing Retail & Commercial Sectors – The Route 13 corridor from Marion to Carbondale serves as a regional retail hub, with increasing sales tax revenues indicating strong consumer demand. Marion has reached more than one billion dollars in sales tax annually in both 2023 and 2024.

Economic Development–Assets including SI Now, Jackson Growth Alliance, Jefferson County Development Corporation, REDCO, STAR Bonds District, REV incentives, Enterprise Zones and TIF districts attract investment, encourage business retention, and foster economic diversification.

Low Cost of Living & Quality of Life – Compared to urban centers, the region offers affordable housing, strong community engagement, and outdoor recreation opportunities, making it an attractive place to live and work. The cost of living in the Greater Egypt District is 14.6% lower than the U.S. average.

Weaknesses

Population Decline & Aging Workforce – The region has seen a 6.38% population decrease since 2010, with outmigration reducing the labor pool and economic vitality. More than 19% of the District’s population is over 65 in comparison to the national average of 16.5%. Retaining young professionals remains a challenge.

Income Disparity – The per capita income is only 73.3% of the national average, indicating lower household purchasing power and economic inequality across counties.

Rural Economic Struggles – While infrastructure investments are improving, rural counties face challenges attracting large-scale business investments due to lower population density and workforce availability.

Limited Workforce Retention – Many SIU graduates leave the area for job opportunities in larger metropolitan areas, leading to a skills drain.

Economic Dependence on External Markets – Many residents commute to St. Louis or other areas for employment, reducing local spending and investment.

Opportunities

New Industry Growth – Recent private investments made in aviation, logistics, renewable energy, and healthcare create new economic opportunities. SIH Healthcare and Deaconess continue to grow and strengthen the medical sector.

Infrastructure Expansion & Development – The completion of major roadway projects, transit expansions, and business parks (such as the Southern Illinois Airport's Tech Park) provides avenues for industrial and commercial growth.

STAR Bond & Downtown Revitalization Projects – Ongoing STAR Bond developments in Marion and downtown Carbondale revitalization could boost retail, entertainment, and tourism-driven economic activity. In addition, Mt. Vernon's recent investments in their downtown show great promise for increased economic activity.

Growth in Manufacturing – Manufacturing companies continue to invest and grow in the Greater Egypt region. Industrial parks in the five counties are prime locations for business expansion.

Expanding Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Economy – With attractions like Rend Lake, Crab Orchard Lake, wineries, bike trails, and state parks, increasing investments in eco-tourism and hospitality could generate revenue and jobs.

Business Attraction & Retention Initiatives – Programs like SI Now and local incentives make the region more competitive for attracting new businesses, particularly in logistics, advanced manufacturing, and distribution.

Threats

The Greater Egypt region faces several economic development threats that could hinder long-term growth. One major challenge is population decline and workforce shortages. Many rural areas in Southern Illinois are experiencing outmigration, particularly among young professionals and skilled workers seeking better opportunities elsewhere. As the population shrinks, businesses struggle to find and retain employees, limiting their ability to expand and discouraging new industries from establishing themselves in the region.

Another pressing issue is the lack of workforce readiness and skills gaps. Employers frequently report difficulties in finding workers with the necessary skills, especially in industries such as advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and the trades. While technical schools and community colleges provide workforce training, a disconnect remains between available jobs and the qualifications of job seekers. Bridging this gap through improved education and training programs will be crucial for regional economic growth.

The shortage of affordable childcare and housing along with gaps in public transportation further exacerbates workforce participation issues. Many parents, especially single parents, struggle to

find reliable childcare, preventing them from entering or remaining in the workforce. Additionally, the limited availability of affordable housing discourages new residents from relocating to the area, which can hinder population growth and economic expansion. Expanding childcare options and incentivizing the development of diverse housing options could help alleviate these challenges. Gaps in public transportation limits workforce mobility, making it difficult for residents to commute to job centers.

Business attraction and site readiness are additional hurdles. Enhancing site readiness through strategic development initiatives will make the region more competitive in attracting new businesses.

Access to capital for small businesses remains another significant challenge. Many entrepreneurs and small business owners struggle to secure funding for expansion due to limited local investment resources. Strengthening financial incentives and partnerships with economic development agencies could improve access to capital, fostering a more vibrant local business environment.

Outdated electrical and utility infrastructure also poses a barrier to economic growth. An aging electrical grid and limited energy infrastructure can make it difficult for businesses, particularly energy-intensive industries, to expand. Investments in grid modernization and renewable energy sources could improve business attraction efforts while ensuring reliable power access for residents.

The public perception of economic stagnation can also hinder growth. When communities perceive their region as being in decline, it can discourage investment and reduce civic engagement. Strengthening local pride, improving community amenities, and marketing the region's assets can help shift this perception and foster renewed interest in economic development. Illinois continues to fight the perception that high taxes are hindering business growth and expansion in the state as well. Neighboring states have aggressive economic policies that can make it more difficult to attract and retain businesses in Illinois.

Finally, dependence on state and federal funding creates financial uncertainty for local economic development initiatives. Many regional projects rely on external funding sources. Developing self-sustaining revenue streams through local initiatives will be essential for ensuring long-term economic resilience and stability.

Addressing these challenges will require a coordinated effort between government agencies, businesses, educational institutions, and community leaders. By investing in workforce development, infrastructure, site readiness, and quality-of-life improvements, the Greater Egypt District can build a more sustainable and prosperous future.

Natural Disasters Threat

Major plant closures or natural disasters remain a major threat to our District. Our location continues to see severe weather including threats of tornadoes and dangerous winter storms.

In response to those threats, a Recovery and Resiliency Strategy has been developed.

SUMMARY:

The Recovery and Resiliency Supplement, attached as Appendix A, is comprised of activities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to an economic incident or shock within the five-county District of Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development Commission (Greater Egypt).

ASSESSMENT OF THE DISTRICT:

Community resilience is the capacity of individuals and households to absorb, endure, and recover from the health, social, and economic impacts of a disaster. When disasters occur, recovery depends on the community's ability to withstand the effects of the event. To facilitate disaster preparedness, the Census Bureau has developed new small area estimates, identifying communities where resources and information may effectively mitigate the impact of disasters.

Variation in individual and household characteristics determines the differential impact of a disaster. For example, some groups are less likely to have the capacity and resources to overcome the obstacles presented during a hazardous event. Resilience estimates can aid stakeholders and public health officials in modeling these differential impacts and develop plans to reduce a disaster's potential effects.

41.6% of the Estimated Population of the Greater Egypt District **has 1-2 of the Risk Factors**
24.4% of the Estimated Population of the Greater Egypt District **has 3+ Risk Factors**

***Risk Factors** from the 2023 ACS include:

- Income to Poverty Ratio
- Single or Zero Caregiver Household
- Crowding
- Communication Barrier
- Households without Full-time, Year-round Employment
- Disability
- No Health Insurance
- Age 65+
- No Vehicle Access
- No Broadband Internet Access

Individual and household characteristics from the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) were modeled with data from the Population Estimates Program to create the CRE.

Needs

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Needs Assessment for the Greater Egypt Region

The Greater Egypt region faces several critical challenges and opportunities in fostering economic development. Addressing these needs is essential to building a resilient and thriving regional economy. Below are key areas of focus:

Additional Investment in Planning

With limited resources short and long term planning initiatives are needed to guide investments in the Greater Egypt District.

Workforce Development & Soft Skills

A robust workforce is essential for regional economic growth. Employers consistently emphasize the need for enhanced soft skills among job seekers, including communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and adaptability. Workforce development initiatives should incorporate targeted training programs, mentorship opportunities, and partnerships with local educational institutions to ensure job seekers are equipped with both technical and interpersonal skills.

Childcare Accessibility

The availability of affordable, high-quality childcare remains a significant barrier to workforce participation. Many parents struggle to secure reliable childcare, limiting their ability to engage in full-time employment or workforce training programs. Expanding childcare facilities, offering employer-sponsored childcare solutions, and providing financial assistance programs for low-income families can improve workforce participation rates and economic stability. Additionally, finding ways to create childcare options for multiple shift workers is essential to supporting employees in industries that require non-traditional work hours.

Transportation Infrastructure

Reliable and accessible transportation is critical for workforce mobility and economic growth. Many residents in the Greater Egypt region lack adequate public transportation options, making it difficult to access employment centers. Investments in regional transit systems, expansion of ride-sharing and vanpooling programs, and the development of employer-sponsored transportation initiatives are necessary to bridge this gap.

Housing Development & Home Builders

Housing affordability and availability remain pressing issues. There is a growing demand for diverse housing options, including affordable rental units and entry-level homes. Encouraging home builders to invest in the region through incentives and streamlining the permitting process can accelerate housing development. Additionally, collaboration with developers to create mixed-income housing can enhance community sustainability and economic diversity.

Site Readiness for Business Expansion

A lack of shovel-ready sites has hindered business attraction and expansion. Strategic investments in site preparation, including grading, environmental approvals, and infrastructure development, are necessary to enhance site readiness. Establishing pre-certified industrial and commercial sites can expedite economic development efforts and attract new businesses.

Electrical Infrastructure Improvements

Modern, reliable electrical infrastructure is crucial for supporting business growth, residential expansion, and industrial development. Upgrading outdated electrical grids, expanding renewable

energy options, and improving power reliability will create a more business-friendly environment. Partnerships with utility providers and public-private investments in grid modernization can enhance regional competitiveness.

Workforce Pipeline Development & Career Awareness

Building a sustainable workforce pipeline requires early engagement with young people to create awareness of local career opportunities. Collaboration between schools, technical colleges, and local businesses can provide students with exposure to high-demand industries through internships, apprenticeships, and career fairs. Developing career readiness programs and enhancing vocational education options will ensure the region has a steady supply of skilled workers ready to meet employer needs.

Addressing these key needs will strengthen the Greater Egypt region's economic foundation, enhance quality of life, and position the area for long-term prosperity.

Goal # 1 Slow the annual decline of the labor force to -0.25% from -0.49%.

Goal #2 Slow the annual population decline to -0.25% from -0.49%.

Goal # 3 Slow the annual decline in the local per capita Income divided by U.S. per capital income to -0.35% from -0.7%.

Strategic Plan

Goal # 1 Slow the annual decline of the labor force to -0.25%.

Strategy 1.1 Retain and Expand Existing Businesses

Objective 1.1.A Coordinate a regional effort to conduct ongoing Business and Retention visits

Objective 1.1.B. Develop and implement plans and programs to address current and future staffing needs.

Objective 1.1.C. Provide easy access to sources of financing, accounting assistance, insurance, workforce training, legal advice, and management guidance/assistance

Objective 1.1.D. Identify successful small businesses in danger of closure due to unclear ownership succession planning. Assist owners in creating an action plan for the promotion and sale of said businesses.

Objective 1.1.E. Develop and maintain industrial and commercial infrastructure needed for maintaining existing and expanding employers.

Strategy 1.2 Attract new Businesses to the Greater Egypt District

Objective 1.2.A. Coordinate and expand local and regional business attraction efforts.

Objective 1.2.B. Develop industrial and commercial infrastructure needed to locate new businesses in the Greater Egypt District.

Strategy 1.3 Further Establish and Promote the Region's Entrepreneurial Support Framework

Objective 1.3.A. Create an awareness and marketing campaign in support of entrepreneurship and innovation. Focus shall be placed upon the identification of available resources and providing a consistent theme throughout the region.

Objective 1.3.B. Support efforts to establish a variety of comprehensive financial resources for scalable ventures.

Objective 1.3.C. Support a Collegiate Entrepreneurship Program and assist the implementation of a High School Entrepreneurship Program in each of the Greater Egypt counties.

Objective 1.3.D. Provide the resources to develop, attract and retain management talent for early stage scalable companies. This effort includes establishing an Entrepreneur-in-Residence program and providing other executive level education via businesses and higher education institutions. The district must also address sector-specific training, in particular IT and computer science training.

Objective 1.3.E. - Provide facilities that decrease the risk entrepreneurs experience in starting new businesses, such as easy access to sources of financing, accounting assistance, workforce training, legal advice, and management guidance/assistance. As well as low cost/flexible office space.

Strategy 1.4 Further Develop and Utilize Broadband Infrastructure

Objective 1.4.A. Identify and promote ways to utilize telecommunication technology.

Objective 1.4.B. Support broadband expansion projects.

Objective 1.4.C. Support broadband training in digital literacy and digital financial literacy.

Strategy 1.5: Develop and maintain safe and reliable transportation systems

Objective 1.5.A. Improve transportation connectivity and capacity in the region for all modes of transportation including truck, transit, pedestrian, bike, rail, air, barge.

Objective 1.5.B. Identify safety deficiencies in the roadway and implement countermeasures to increase safety.

Objective 1.5.C. Identify and implement transportation infrastructure improvements that can enhance transportation alternatives especially in downtown areas.

Objective 1.5.D. Maintain existing transportation infrastructure

Strategy 1.6: Increase the Region's Economic Resiliency to lessen the impacts from business closures, natural disasters, or pandemics.

Objective 1.6.A. Expand economic diversification efforts.

Objective 1.6.B. Maintain and implement multi-hazard mitigation plans

Objective 1.6.C. Maintain an ongoing regional forum for coordinating response to natural disasters.

Goal #2 Slow the annual population decline to -0.25% from -0.49%.

Strategy 2.1: Support local and regional positive campaigns.

Objective 2.1.A. Serve on committees and support positive initiatives.

Objective 2.1.B. Coordinate and expand local and regional resident attraction efforts.

Strategy 2.2 Improve Quality of Life and Place in the Greater Egypt District

Objective 2.2.A. Develop long-term plans for a connected system of multi-use paths in the Greater Egypt District.

Objective 2.2.B. Explore opportunities to partner with state and national parks to promote, develop, and maintain the region's vast protected lands.

Objective 2.2.C. Maintain and further develop quality of life and place through beautification efforts, historical preservation, natural resource protection, pedestrian & bike friendly destinations, diverse leisure and recreation opportunities, a family-centric and culturally diverse environment.

Objective 2.2.D. Support development and expansion of the outdoor economy of the District.

Strategy 2.3 Develop & Maintain Community Infrastructure

Objective 2.3.A. Maintain, upgrade, and make readily accessible the public services and utilities essential to orderly development, safety, and well-being.

Objective 2.3.B. Develop and restore a diverse housing stock, public housing, and other physical facilities that are healthful and attractive.

Objective 2.3.C. Provide incentives to aid in the attraction of new residents and to develop and restore residential property.

Objective 2.3.D. Provide and make accessible world class health and medical care to all residents.

Objective 2.3.E. Continue to connect and assist local and regional communities with grant opportunities to update and increase reliability of infrastructure of the District.

Objective 2.3.F. Enhance the electrical infrastructure and expand the amount of power available in the District.

Objective 2.3.G. Support accessibility and creation of 24/7 daycare facilities throughout the District.

Strategy 2.4 Increase the Labor Participation Rate

Objective 2.4.1. A. Complete a study for the region about the current labor force and barriers to entry.

Objective 2.4.1.B. Implement initiatives to increase labor participation rates.

Strategy 2.5 Create regional efforts to promote SIU to increase enrollment.

Objective 2.5.1. Expand participation in SIU community day events at sporting events.

Objective 2.5.2. Expand participation of local high school students in the on-campus SIU day events.

Objective 2.5.3. Create a culture within the region that welcomes students and supports SIU students.

Objective 2.5.4. Further develop relationships between regional businesses and communities and SIU faculty/student projects.

Goal # 3 Slow the annual decline in the local per capita Income divided by U.S. per capital income to -0.35% from -0.7%.

Strategy 3.1 Support growth in key existing high wage industry sectors and emerging high wage industry clusters such as Manufacturing, Healthcare, Biotechnology, and Aviation Maintenance and Repair.

Objective 3.1.A Expand enrollment in the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council certification training programs

Objective 3.1.B Expand the availability of and use of apprenticeship programs in manufacturing, construction, trades and for other high wage occupations

Objective 3.1.C Increase the use of incumbent worker training programs

Objective 3.1.D Increase the training pipeline for high demand occupations.

Objective 3.1.E. Seek external funding to support the expansion of enrollment in SIU programs that support emerging industry clusters in the region.

Objective 3.1.F. Recruit or establish new businesses in the region that can be supported by SIU's academic programs.

Evaluation Framework

To evaluate the impact of the CEDS we will detail progress and outcomes of the strategies and objectives for the goals above. To determine if the actions are truly moving the needle within the region, we will track changes to the region's key indicators listed above including population, labor force, per capita income, and tax revenues.

Performance measures will include tracking the number and types of CEDS aligned projects implemented, numbers of jobs created and retained, private investments made and change in the overall economic environment of the District.

Greater Egypt Action Plan

Greater Egypt will lead the implementation of the CEDS with the help of the CEDS committee. The strategic partnerships created to form the CEDS committee has resulted in the creation of a group with a tremendous amount of expertise and experience that is very well suited to assist communities and businesses through the implementation of the CEDS.

Greater Egypt will hold ongoing meetings of the CEDS committee to discuss current issues, new opportunities, and refine plans to improve the economic conditions of the region. Greater Egypt will assist partnering agencies who are working on projects or programs that are consistent with the CEDS by providing data, technical assistance and serving on committees.

Greater Egypt will assist the region in leveraging resources from many local, state and federal agencies to implement the CEDS. These include The Economic Development Administration (EDA), Delta Regional Authority (DRA), USDA Rural Development, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT).

The agencies listed above have annual grant programs listed below that will aid in the implementation of the CEDS. Greater Egypt will work within the district each year to identify and develop projects that align with the CEDS.

EDA

- Public Works and Economic Adjustment
- Planning and Technical Assistance

DRA

- States Economic Development Assistance Program
- Community Infrastructure Fund
- Strategic Planning Grant

IDOT

- Economic Development Program
- State Planning and Research
- Transportation Enhancement Program
- Highway Safety Improvement Program
- Safe Routes to School

USDA

- Rural Business Development Grant

DCEO

- Community Development Block Grant
 - Economic Development
 - Public Infrastructure
- Federal Grant Support Program

The list above is not all inclusive of the grants or agencies that could assist with the implementation of the CEDS, but they have a strong track record of consistently helping complete projects in the region that further the goals of the CEDS. From 2020 to 2024 Greater Egypt helped the region access over \$65,000,000 through programs like these. Helping the region access these funds will be the foundation of how we go about implementing the CEDS.

Appendix A:

Recovery and Resiliency Supplement Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

THE SUPPLEMENT:

Recovery and Resiliency focuses on economic recovery or resiliency based on impact, general needs, and capacities of Greater Egypt. The plan will enhance potential resiliency, mitigation, and economic recovery projects in disaster-impacted areas. Lessons-learned guide the work that will lessen the impact of future disasters. Work elements include but are not limited to the following:

Implement Plans:

- Implement economic recovery and resilience plans to build resilient and sustainable communities throughout the organization's region:
 - Continue implementation of the current approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
 - Work with local officials, governments, and economic partners to engage in comprehensive planning efforts involving extensive community involvement. These efforts will align with other current and future planning efforts.

Assist Highly Impacted Communities

- Assist in local, state, and federally led recovery planning efforts among the most highly impacted communities:
 - Assist area businesses through a network of Community Navigators, including local Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), Workforce Development, and Economic Development Originations. Navigators focus on supporting businesses and connecting them with resources to survive a natural disaster or economic shift and thrive in the future.
 - Educate local cities and governments on the importance of Hazard Mitigation.
 - Ensure that counties have updated Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans (MHMP) in place. Furthermore, see that all communities, especially the most highly impacted communities, have adopted MHMP plans to maximize funding.
 - Convene with county emergency response personnel and the emergency management office in each area to provide information and determine the response in the event of a disaster.

Identify Grant Eligible Projects

- Help identify economic development grant-eligible projects with state and federal resources for locally impacted communities to ensure these entities take full advantage of available funding opportunities:
 - Support cities and counties receiving funding to implement local grant programs to support small businesses.

- Assist healthcare providers and emergency management organizations in obtaining facilities and equipment to lessen the impact of natural disasters and pandemics. Needed resources include:
 - Secure necessary medical equipment
 - Outfit facilities that provide the capability to stand up a "nursing unit" with the appropriate patient monitoring equipment needed for medium to high acuity patients
 - Increase availability of EMS-related communication capabilities via portable communication equipment, radios & repeaters, Mifi's, and "point to point" wireless networks.

Partnerships

- Identify and foster private and non-profit partnership opportunities:
 - Utilize SPARC (Shawnee Preparedness and Response Coalition)
 - Maintain lines of communication with Region V Hospital Coordinating Center (RHCC) to understand what vital health services are currently in use during and after a natural disaster or man-made disaster
 - Maintain lines of communication with healthcare partners to understand what facilities and equipment are needed to lessen the impact of natural disasters. Those partners include healthcare providers, the Region V Hospital Coordinating Center (RHCC), the state's Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS), regional bomb squad, and Shawnee Preparedness and Response Coalition (SPARC).
 - Remain active in leadership roles with SI Now efforts, a regional economic development organization comprised of private and non-profit leaders. SI Now furthers resiliency by serving as a unified voice for the 17 southern counties of Illinois to advance our region.
 - Publicize examples of successful private and non-profit partnerships.
 - Gain an understanding of volunteer resources available within the District.

Liaison: Local, State & Federal Partners

- Serve as a liaison between local, state, and federal partners to speed the recovery process through strategic technical assistance and local capacity augmentation for the highly impacted communities within the organization's jurisdiction:
 - Make phone calls to local governments to ensure that they have all resources to access disaster funding.
 - Encourage citizens to participate in surveys and studies that result in reports that lead to funding.
 - Promote the services available to local businesses through the SIU Research Park / Office of Innovation and Economic Development. Supportive services and access to grant funding result in quicker recovery and improved resiliency.

Facilitate Local Recovery Projects

- Facilitate the implementation of locally generated disaster recovery economic development projects developed as part of the CEDS or CEDS-aligned economic recovery and resilience plan:

- The region has a continued need for dependable and affordable broadband internet service. Improved broadband is not only required for today's existing needs, including work-from-home, home-based learning, and telemedicine but is also vital for locating industry and remote workers.
 - Promote participation Broadband Mapping Projects.
 - Support broadband projects based at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.
 - Support broadband plans at the county levels within the District.
 - Meet with telecommunication companies that service the District to understand current service levels and plans.
 - Research and monitor other rural areas and what they are doing to provide services to their areas more efficiently.
 - Correspond with local utility service providers to explore the steps to ensure broadband can easily be provided when the opportunity arises.
- With the potential loss of use of physical sites, many businesses recognize the importance of e-commerce and alternate product and service delivery methods.
 - Connect local businesses with resources to help or further develop their online presence, such as courses offered through SBDCs and area Chambers of Commerce.
 - Expand training that supports expanded demand for delivery, such as truck driving training.
- Support start-ups and create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that enables citizens to support themselves rather than depend on an employer for financial stability.
- Avoiding dependence on one industry or employer can improve a community's resiliency.
 - Develop programs and incentives designed to attract and secure investment by underrepresented industries.
 - Work with targeted businesses to assist them with retention and expansion programs
 - Encourage continued expansion of workforce training as an essential component to economic resilience. By helping dislocated workers quickly and effectively shift between jobs and industries, the District will remain a strong and adaptable area.
- Preparedness for significant supply chain issues for communities and their businesses and residents remains critical.
 - Encourage communities to know the quantities and location of all emergency supplies and assets across all departments.
 - Promote purchasing local and regional to limit disruption and have multiple suppliers.
- Encourage employers to consider innovative workplace strategies, by
 - Expanding apprenticeships,
 - Providing or supporting childcare and transportation resources,
 - Considering job sharing or alternative schedules, and
 - Utilizing alternative populations

Providing Technical Assistance

- Technical Assistance and capacity building for member organizations, local businesses, and other local stakeholders impacted by natural disasters or economic shifts:
 - Disseminate the workbook and companion website created by Greater Egypt. These guides provide tools and resources to encourage and enable businesses to plan for disasters.
 - Support grant applications with data from JobsEQ, StatsAmerica, and Census resources.
 - Assist in maintaining contact lists, including names and cell phone numbers, so owners and managers can be reached if their physical location is closed.
 - Use Intersect Illinois and Location One to market available sites and buildings. Respond to RFIs to highlight available properties.

Expanding Capacity

- Organizational capacity support for natural disaster or economic shift response, including technology costs and personnel costs for staff members directly working on or supporting the work of the organization's disaster-related economic development response, including additional hiring as needed.
 - Seek continued funding allows for additional staff and equipment to maintain the workforce.
 - Expand and maintain VPN, web-conferencing, and other remote work and remote learning resources.
 - Fund the expansion of broadband to support the use of remote technologies, including telemedicine, in addition to remote work learning.
 - Expanding and sustaining Community Emergency Response Team training availability across the region. The program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks.
 - Grow the capacities of existing training available in the market, including
 - Intermediate Incident Command System Course
 - Advanced Incident Command System Course
 - Decontamination Training
 - Regional Decontamination Exercise Meetings
 - Public Information Officer (PIO) Training
 - Certified Hospital Emergency Coordinator (CHEC) Training
 - Basic Life Support in Disaster
 - Advanced Life Support in Disaster
 - Ebola Response
 - Mass Fatalities Planning and Response for Rural Communities
 - Medical Countermeasures: Point of Dispensing (POD)
 - Planning and Response Management

- Media Spokesperson Training
- Red Cross CPR Training
- Stop the Bleed Course
- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
- Emergency Medical Responder level training, primarily to volunteer fire departments throughout Southern Illinois
- Execute a Wellness on Wheels Program to allow culturally competent and linguistically appropriate services to be offered where and when clients need them. This program aims to reduce health disparities and health inequities in preventative health screenings and care within medically underserved, disadvantaged, and vulnerable communities in Southernmost Illinois.
- Working with the local EMS Systems on entry-level education, workforce development, and staff retention
- Applying for the Rural Emergency Medical Services Training Grant
- Continuing other training & exercise programs to prepare our healthcare workforce to maintain the continuity of the healthcare system following crisis or catastrophe
- Continuing other community education programs such as Stop the Bleed to build a prepared and resilient region
- Develop a Regional Emergency Operations and Training Center
- Utilize all resources available through the SIU Center for Rural Health

The Recovery and Resiliency Supplement comprises activities to build community resilience to improve the capacity of individuals and households to absorb, endure, and recover from the health, social, and economic impacts of a disaster.