

Business Case

SI NOW

A Southern Illinois Success Initiative

**Guiding Economic Transformation
to Sustained Prosperity**

#SouthernIllinoisNow

February 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SI Now Business Case A Southern Illinois Success Initiative

SI Now will serve as a regional economic development hub and unified voice for the 17 southern counties of Illinois to advance our region as a great place to live, work, and do business.

VISION

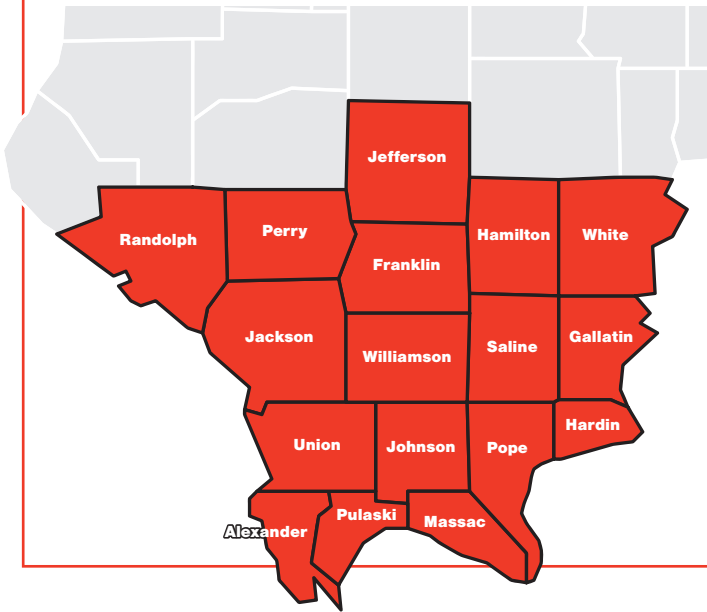
Support Southern Illinois in becoming a thriving, economically diverse environment for business and industry with a growing population, labor force, per capita income and expanding tax base, while elevating an already high quality of life and place

PURPOSE

Create a positive ripple effect for citizens, communities, business owners, and local governments in Southern Illinois by:

- Creating jobs and opportunities for upward economic mobility
- Improving well-being and quality of life
- Attracting new businesses and residents
- Equipping workforce with specialized skills
- Creating opportunities for existing businesses to increase revenue through increased sales/clients
- Increasing tax base for local governments
- Reducing or stabilizing tax burdens on citizens and businesses

SI NOW FOOTPRINT 17 Southern Counties of Illinois



CURRENT FOCUSED WORK

- Supporting existing businesses
- Attracting and expanding business in the region
- Developing our workforce education through training and employment growth in high wage sectors
- Creating a “win mentality” by elevating perceptions both within the region and beyond

WHY IS SI NOW NEEDED?

A regional economic development hub is needed in Southern Illinois to:

- Create alignment with a unified message and pooled resources to pursue common goals
- Create synergy – a win anywhere in southern Illinois is a win for all of us
- Eliminate silos as obstacles to regional economic development
- Achieve benefits of scale as it is more effective to negotiate with outside stakeholders as a region



INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This business case was prepared to demonstrate the value and benefits that SI Now will bring to the Southern Illinois region. The following key questions will be answered:

- What does SI Now aspire to be?
- Why is SI Now needed?
- How will SI Now build on successes of previous regional economic development initiatives in Southern Illinois while also incorporating the lessons learned?
- How will SI Now complement existing regional and local economic development efforts and avoid duplication?
- What does success look like?

SI Now's focus to support existing businesses, attract and expand businesses in the region, develop our workforce, and elevate perceptions of the region will have a positive ripple effect for citizens, business owners, communities, and local governments in Southern Illinois.

For Southern Illinois citizens, attracting new businesses could mean new jobs and opportunities for upward economic mobility, or could simply provide new leisure or recreation opportunities – all of which would improve overall well-being and quality of life. For Southern Illinois business owners, increasing the region's population and attracting new businesses could mean additional clients or patrons, and therefore the potential for increased revenue. Similarly, creating new jobs and equipping our workforce with specialized skills may increase discretionary spending and again, the potential for increased sales. Finally, increasing the region's population would increase the tax base for local governments, and in turn, stabilize or reduce tax burdens on citizens and businesses.

Although the return on investment for SI Now's work may not be immediate, alignment with a strategic regional initiative focused on long-term economic success will ultimately create opportunities for better livelihoods, health, and well-being for us all.

HISTORY

A Culture of Innovation and Resiliency: Entrepreneurship in Southern Illinois

A business case for a regional economic development initiative requires first acknowledging the business owners who have forged paths to success in Southern Illinois. Partnership and collaboration with this business community will be key to our success as we develop and implement SI Now's strategy.

From Rodney Cabaness and Shad Zimbardo starting Black Diamond Harley-Davidson in Marion and three years later leading the world in total bike sales – to Greg Cook co-founding Cook Portable Warehouses as an idea to get rid of excess materials and turning it into a multimillion-dollar corporation – to Teresa Katubig expanding her Southern Illinois-based workforce management company, HireLevel, to 12 locations nationwide – Southern Illinois is rich in entrepreneurs who are innovative, community-minded, and resilient. These are just a few examples of the countless awe-inspiring entrepreneurs in the Southern Illinois region.

These successful business owners have thrived in Southern Illinois. Listening to what the business community wants and needs from an economic development initiative will be core to the way that SI Now sets strategy.

Regional Economic Development Initiatives

Over the past three decades, there have been several regional, multi-county, and single-county economic development initiatives in Southern Illinois that have achieved varying degrees of success and longevity. Reflecting on the successes and barriers encountered through past initiatives is important to ensure we emulate successful approaches and incorporate lessons learned.

SI EDGE (Southern Illinois Enhancing Development, Growth & Expansion)

SI EDGE was founded in 1994 by area leaders in business, industry, labor, health, education, media, and government, to bring growth and expansion to the Southern Illinois region. SI EDGE largely functioned as a clearinghouse to help coordinate development efforts. The group chose not to establish bylaws or a budget and opted to meet on an informal basis.¹

Key learnings from SI EDGE include:

- More formal operations, organizational structures, and goals may help support an initiative's focus and longevity
- Convening stakeholders from a variety of industries and with a diversity of perspectives is key to identifying common goals and garnering support

ConnectSI

Connect SI was a not-for-profit organization that supported a collaborative, regional economic strategy for the southern 20 counties of Illinois and focused specifically on expanding broadband communication throughout Southern Illinois. Key leaders included Man-Tra-Con Corporation, Southern Illinois University, and four regional planning commissions— Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development Commission, Greater Wabash Regional Planning Commission, Southeastern Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission, and Southern Five Regional Planning District and Development Commission. The initiative was highly successful as it increased the percent of households with access to broadband in Southern Illinois from 12 percent in 2006 to more than 54 percent in 2013. Connect SI also expanded online health care education and services.²

Key learnings from ConnectSI include:

- Regional collaboration is integral to success
- Collaboration among public-private entities is key – from business owners, to the health care industry, to economic development organizations
- Synergy is created by identifying common goals that complement regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) and by leveraging existing resources and assets
- Securing sustainable funding sources is key for enduring success and longevity

Single- and Multi-County Initiatives

There are and have been numerous single- and multi-county economic development initiatives in the Southern Illinois region. A list of current economic development organizations and initiatives is included in Appendix A.

Key factors that often determine success and longevity include:

- Achieving early wins that generate momentum and support
- Generating public and private sector support
- Securing sustainable funding for specific projects

¹ Southern Illinoisan Newspaper. July 24, 1996

² National Association of Development Organizations. "Connect SI: Regional Prosperity through Collaborations in Southern Illinois." January 22, 2013

Recent Activities

SIU Chancellor Montemagno's Business Leaders Roundtable

Shortly after assuming the position of Chancellor at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIU) in August 2017, Dr. Carlo Montemagno created the Business Leaders Roundtable. Charged with revitalizing the University, he recognized and wanted to strengthen the critical symbiotic relationship between SIU and the region. The Business Leaders Roundtable brought together twenty business owners, economic development professionals, regional elected officials, and SIU leaders to identify both key issues affecting SIU and impediments to regional and individual business growth. The group met three times and planned to focus on six priorities at the time of the Chancellor's passing in October 2018.

Key learnings from the SIU Business Leaders Roundtable include:

- Align degrees and industry needs to expand growing employment sectors (SIU)
- Increase the number and quality of students in the region through a value proposition (SIU)
- Rebrand SIU's message and reconnect with the region (SIU)
- Get economic development groups together and think like a region (region)
- Underscore and support changes critical to SIU (region)
- Urge collaborative marketing and public relations efforts (region)

Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH) recognized the importance of building upon the Roundtable's momentum and brought together these leaders, as well as others from throughout Southern Illinois, to the Bridge to the Future initiative.

SI Bridge to the Future - Southern Illinois Healthcare (SIH) convener

SI Bridge to the Future was created in 2018 as a regional leadership group consisting of business leaders, community leaders, elected officials, and others to create regional growth and retention strategies through real-world solutions for the southern counties of Illinois. These leaders were successful in creating a platform for regional collaborative economic development and laying out a foundation and vision for the success of our region – this vision will be pursued through SI Now.

BUSINESS CASE ANALYSIS TEAM

SI Now Business Growth and Development Task Force

- First Southern Bank, John Dosier
- SIU Research Park, Lynn Andersen Lindberg
- Southern Illinois Healthcare, Woody Thorne and Sarah Gray

Regional Collaborators

- Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development Commission
- HireLevel
- Man-Tra-Con Corporation
- Pepsi MidAmerica
- Southeastern Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission
- Southern Five Regional Planning District and Development Commission

OVERVIEW & ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

Overview

SI Now is a collaborative initiative among business, community, and civic leaders focused on regional economic development in the seventeen southern counties of Illinois.

What does SI Now aspire to be?

SI Now aspires to be a regional economic development hub for Southern Illinois that:

- Works hand-in-glove with people and organizations within and across Southern Illinois to build inclusive wealth, increase local capacity, and create opportunities for better livelihoods, health, and well-being
- Focuses on the people, businesses, local institutions, partnerships and range of natural, built, cultural, intellectual, social, political, and financial resources of the Southern Illinois region
- Works to strengthen these critical components and weave them into a system that advances enduring prosperity for all³

Why is SI Now needed?

A regional economic development hub is needed in Southern Illinois to:

- Create alignment throughout Southern Illinois with a unified message and pooled resources to pursue common goals
- Create synergy across the 17 counties of Southern Illinois – a win anywhere in Southern Illinois is a win for all of us
- Reduce or eliminate siloes as obstacles to regional economic development
- Achieve benefits of scale as it is more effective to negotiate with outside stakeholders as a region than as one community

How will SI Now build on successes of previous regional economic development initiatives in Southern Illinois and incorporate lessons learned?

SI Now will incorporate key learnings from previous regional economic development initiatives in Southern Illinois by:

- Collaborating with key regional stakeholders from a variety of industries and with a diversity of perspectives
- Setting strategy by listening to what the Southern Illinois business community wants and needs
- Working closely with fellow economic development groups and initiatives to promote synergy and avoid duplication
- Aligning common goals with the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS)
- Seeking private and public sector support
- Establishing a formal operations plan
- Pursuing early wins to generate momentum and support
- Securing sustainable funding

Vision

SI Now's vision is to support the region 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.

Focused Work

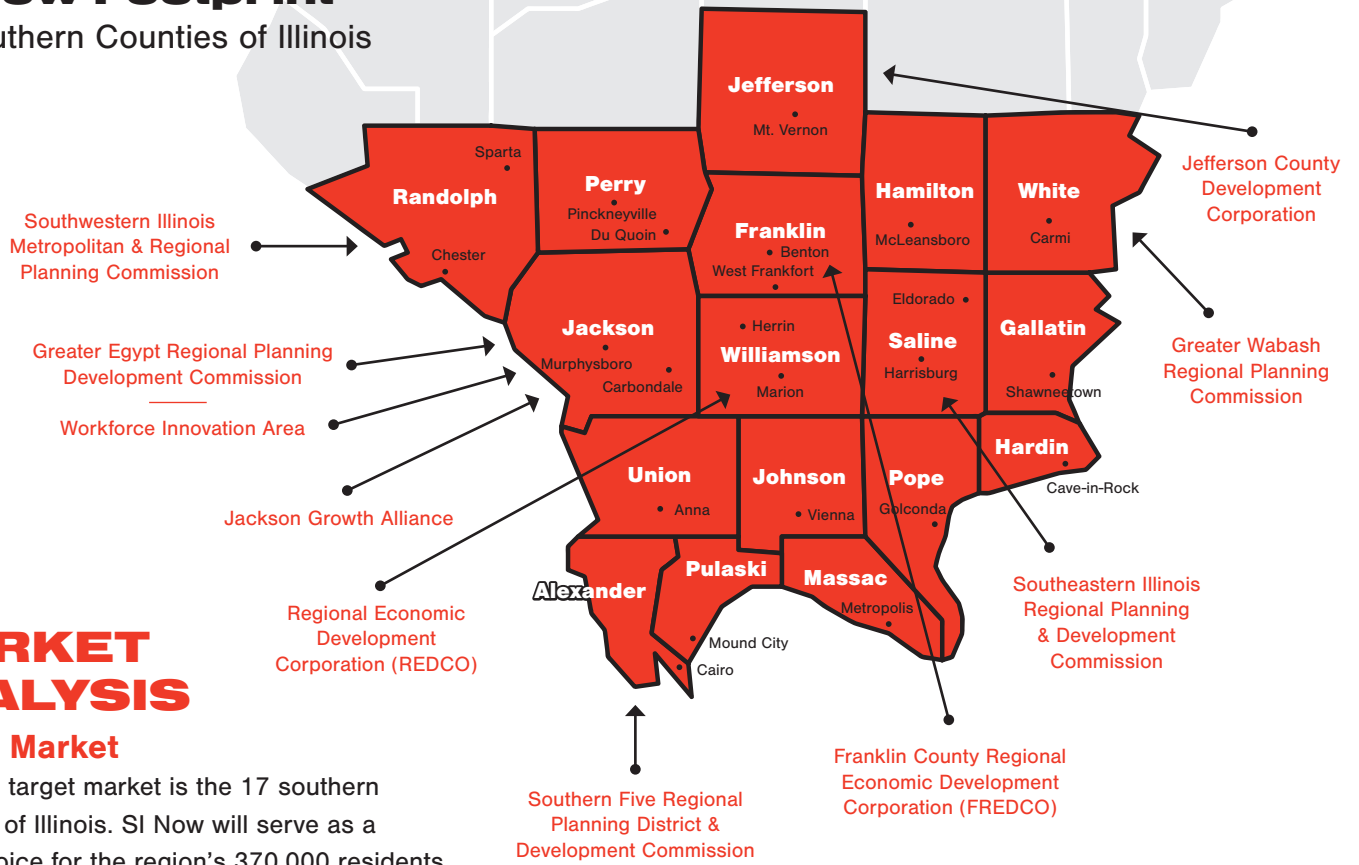
To attain this vision, SI Now's current work is focused on:

- Supporting existing businesses
- Attracting and expanding business in the region
- Developing our workforce education through training and employment growth in high wage sectors
- Creating a "win mentality" by elevating perceptions both within the region and beyond

³ Rural Development Hub: Strengthening America's Rural Innovation Infrastructure Community Strategies Group - the Aspen Institute, 2019.

SI Now Footprint

17 Southern Counties of Illinois



MARKET ANALYSIS

Target Market

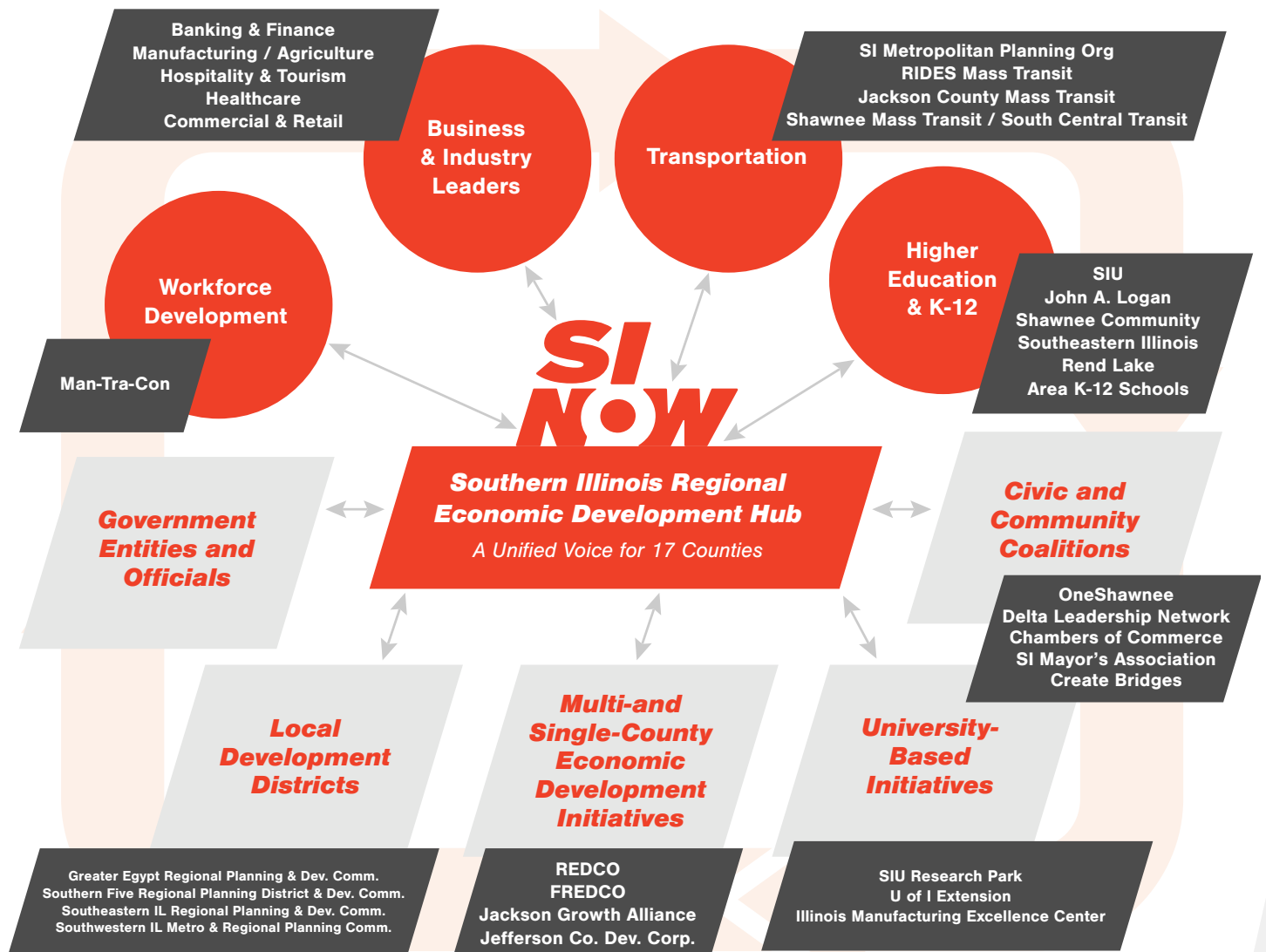
SI Now's target market is the 17 southern counties of Illinois. SI Now will serve as a unified voice for the region's 370,000 residents and as a hub to pool assets, resources and ideas, while overcoming joint challenges and pursuing common goals.

Existing Economic Development Organizations in Southern Illinois

The success of SI Now is dependent on collaborating closely with existing economic development organizations in Southern Illinois to ensure cohesiveness and synergy.

How will SI Now complement and bolster existing regional and local economic development efforts while avoiding duplication?

SI Now will collaborate closely with existing organizations as implementation partners and leverage existing assets and resources to reach common goals. Close attention will be paid to avoiding duplication of efforts as SI Now seeks to identify and fill voids while accelerating progress. For example, SI Now will seek to align with goals already identified in Southern Illinois and serve as an implementation partner to help all entities move these goals forward. The diagram below provides a visual depiction of how SI Now will serve as a regional hub and connector to advance identified goals among key stakeholders in our region.



SWOT Analysis: Regional Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats⁴

STRENGTHS



- **LOW COST OF LIVING**
- **HIGHER EDUCATION ASSETS** Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIU), John A. Logan College, Rend Lake College, Shawnee Community College, Southeastern Illinois College
- **STATE-OF-THE-ART HEALTHCARE FACILITIES**
- **SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST** and multiple state parks, lakes, and outdoor recreation opportunities
- **CENTRALLY LOCATED** within 100 miles to St. Louis and 200 miles to Nashville & Memphis
- **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK** interstate exchanges, state routes, airports, railroads, port access to Mississippi River & proximity to Ohio River
- **MAJOR EMPLOYERS** including SIU, Continental Tire, Gilster-Mary Lee, Southern Illinois Healthcare, Good Samaritan Regional Health Center, Pepsi Mid-America Co., Harrah's, and Aisin Manufacturing

WEAKNESSES



- **DISPERSED, LOW DENSITY POPULATION** that creates transportation challenges
- **STATE REPUTATION** as unfriendly towards business
- **HIGHER POVERTY RATE** than state and national averages
- **LOWER LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION** rate than state and national averages
- **LOWER PER CAPITA INCOME** than state and national averages

- **ELEVATING PERCEPTIONS**
- **OPPORTUNITY ZONES** tax incentives for investment in region
- **RETIREMENT INDUSTRY** expansion
- **QUALITY OF LIFE AND PLACE** cultivation
- **MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE** and legalized cannabis
- **MULTI-MODAL STATION CONSTRUCTION** in Carbondale
- **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES** linking to regional employers' needs
- **NEW INDUSTRIAL PARK** in Mt. Vernon
- **REGIONAL AIRPORTS** additional development opportunities
- **NEW SIU FAMILY MEDICINE CENTER**
- **WALKER'S BLUFF CASINO** resort plans
- **SOUTHWEST ILLINOIS CONNECTOR** renewed plans
- **RURAL RELOCATION** related to pandemic



OPPORTUNITIES

- **STATE POLICIES** impacting employers in Illinois including workers compensation, right-to-work, and minimum wage are frequently cited subjects of negative campaigns and articles about doing business in Illinois
- **MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE** while an opportunity to attract workers may present financial challenges for employers
- **LEGALIZED CANNABIS** while an opportunity for new business, may present challenges for employers to ensure drug-free workplaces



THREATS

NOW is the time for Southern Illinois leaders to come together as a region to harness our joint assets and strengths, pursue high yield opportunities, and overcome the threats that aim to deteriorate our region's economic success.

⁴ Changing Perceptions and Building Momentum: A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Greater Egypt Economic Development District, 2020.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Goals and Objectives



Marketing the Region

The collaborative regional marketing communications plan under development has the following objectives:

- Create a uniformed platform that helps deliver positive messages to enhance the overall reputation of and increase positive visibility for the 17-county region to internal and external stakeholders
- Leverage success stories and strategic partnerships to help convey the willingness to reinvest in people and businesses, inspiring people to want to live and work here
- Create an ongoing engine of opportunities and resources that bring continued momentum to the region and solidify it as a thriving, diverse environment for economic growth, maintaining a high quality of life and place for small businesses, professionals and families – through advanced health care, high quality education and outstanding tourism opportunities
- Enhance the overall reputation of and increase positive visibility for the SI Now region by leveraging its best and most compelling assets

Southern Illinois Advocacy

Another key function of SI Now will be to jointly advocate for issues and legislation that would benefit the Southern Illinois region. A united voice representing 17 counties is more impactful than any one voice alone. SI Now can meaningfully affect legislative decisions at the local, state, and federal levels.

Through SI Bridge to the Future, the group has already seen success in advocating for joint priorities. For example, SI Bridge to the Future successfully advocated for the development of a local undergraduate nursing program. In May 2020, the Illinois State Board of Nursing and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation approved an undergraduate nursing program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. The first class started in fall 2020.

One immediate advocacy opportunity could be related to the Southwest Illinois Connector Highway project – the construction of a four-lane rural expressway which would provide a safer, faster, and more reliable route from Southern Illinois to the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Additional priorities may include:

- Pandemic support including personal protective equipment (PPE) supply, testing materials/equipment, vaccines, and monoclonal antibody treatments
- Fair and adequate Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement
- Protecting 340 B reimbursement and assuring fair prescription prices
- Advancing health equity, especially for mothers and infants
- Telehealth infrastructure and reimbursement
- Rural technology development including broadband and equipment
- Investing in workforce development for the health professions
- Expanding and coordinating behavioral healthcare

SI Now Performance Measures

What does success look like?

Examples of what success looks like include:

1. Increasing average household income by x%
2. Increasing labor participation rate by x%
3. Increasing population by x%

Specific and meaningful metrics for success will be collaboratively agreed upon by SI Now leaders.

SI Now Assumptions and Constraints

One assumption is that SI Now will have the ability to secure long-term funding sources as it will be imperative for the initiative's success.

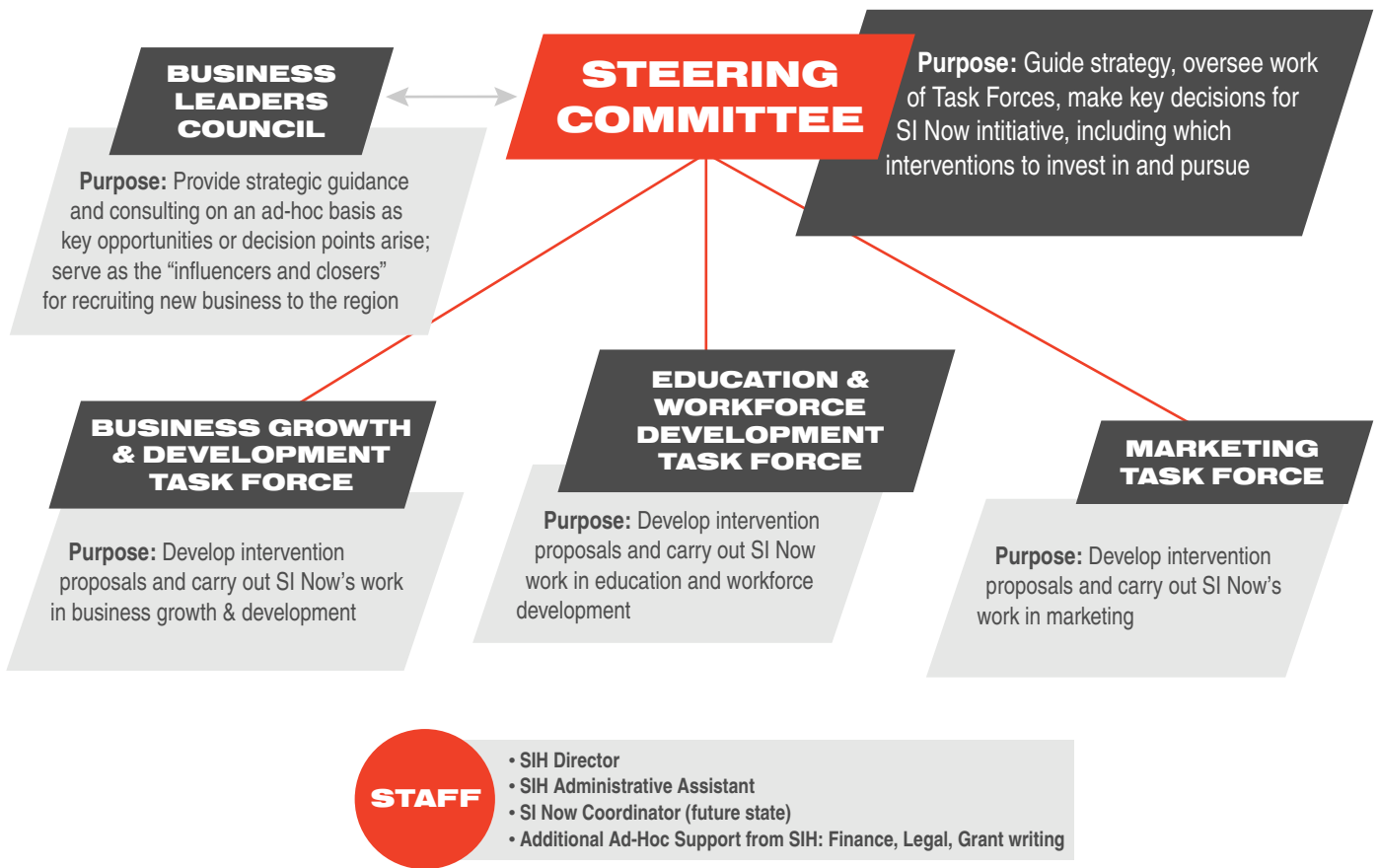
NEXT STEPS – DEVELOPING AN OPERATIONAL PLAN

Upon the SI Now Steering Committee’s approval of this business case, the next step will be to develop a robust operational plan to determine the initiative’s structure, membership, management, and decision responsibilities. The sections below outline a glide path for the SI Now Steering Committee to reach consensus on an operational plan.

SI Now Committee Structure and Governance

The committees listed in the straw model below are currently functional but developing an operational plan provides the opportunity to assess the following:

- Leadership, structure, purpose, and membership criteria for each committee
- Process for setting goals, selecting interventions/projects to pursue, and metrics for success
- Decision responsibilities within the committees and SI Now overall
- The appropriate governance structure for SI Now



SI Now Budget and Funding Sources

Additionally, as part of the operating plan, a budget will be drafted for the SI Now Steering Committee’s review. SI Now will seek unique sources of funding and it is anticipated that grant funding will be pursued once specific projects are selected.

NEXT STEPS – JOIN US

Get Engaged

If you would like to join one of the SI Now Task Forces leading the change in the Southern Illinois region, contact us at info@sinow.org

Follow SI Now on Social Media

Like and follow SI Now on social media where we will be sharing the good in Southern Illinois and advancing the region as a great place to live, work, and do business.



Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram: [@SouthernIllinoisNow](#)



Twitter: [@SouthernILNow](#)

Add the [#SouthernIllinoisNow](#) hashtag to your positive social media posts that highlight businesses, community events, and/or the quality of life in Southern Illinois.

Submit Content for the SI Now Website

Submit content such as good news stories about businesses and life in Southern Illinois, photography/videos, or testimonials for our website www.southernillinoisnow.org by emailing info@sinow.org.

APPENDIX

A. Existing Economic Development Organizations and Initiatives in Southern Illinois

Group	Services	Service Area	Organization Type
Champion Community Investments (CCI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider of capital to small businesses. Makes low-interest loans to qualifying companies, investing the proceeds of those loans back into more businesses. • Works closely with partnering federal agencies, regional Small Business Development Centers, Entrepreneurship Centers, local economic developers, and commercial lenders. CCI helps ensure that sufficient capital is available to fuel business growth and job creation. 	Perry, Franklin, Williamson, Jackson, and Jefferson	501(c)(3)
City of Carbondale Economic Development Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates the City's economic development activities • Manages economic development incentive programs • Initiates activities to attract and retain new and existing businesses • Serves as the City's liaison with state, federal, and local economic development agencies through participation in cooperative regional economic development initiatives 	Carbondale	Governmental
Create Bridges	<p>A two-year pilot program designed to strengthen the economy of a rural, economically distressed region by building capacity in the retail, accommodations, tourism, and entertainment sectors. The process is designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the role these important businesses play in the region's economy • Determine challenges and barriers negatively impacting those businesses • Develop and implement strategies to strengthen the retail, accommodations, tourism, and entertainment sectors within a region. 	Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski, Union	A partnership among the Southern Rural Development Center, University of Kentucky, University of Arkansas, Oklahoma State Extension, University of Illinois Extension, North Carolina State Extension, and New Mexico State Extension.
Delta Regional Authority (DRA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works to improve regional economic opportunity by helping to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the 10 million people who reside in the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state Delta region. • Fosters local and regional partnerships that address economic and social challenges to ultimately strengthen the Delta economy and the quality of life for Delta residents. 	252 counties and parishes of the 8-state Delta region	Governmental
Elevate Illinois	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate and unite the 95 Illinois counties which lie outside of the Chicago Metropolitan Planning area while enhancing the state of Illinois as a whole. 	95 Illinois counties outside of the Chicago Metropolitan Planning area	501(c)(3)
Franklin County Regional Economic Development Corporation (FREDCO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Training Assistance • Provide information regarding financial incentives, healthcare services, educational opportunities, workforce training assistance, etc. • Consult on available properties • Partners with six (6) ED services • Four industrial parks, two enterprise zones, 6 TIF districts, a municipal airport, highway & rail access, loan programs, business incubator, workforce training 	Franklin	501(c)(3)
Greater Egypt Regional Planning & Development Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development planning and assistance, • Transportation planning and assistance, • Multi-hazard mitigation planning and assistance, • Water quality management planning, • GIS & UAS services, • Planning, grant writing, and administrative services for local, state, and Federal programs such as: Economic Development Administration grants, Delta Regional Authority grants, Community Development Block Grant, Enterprise Zone, and the Southern Illinois Metropolitan Planning Organization. 	Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Perry, and Williamson	Governmental
Greater Wabash Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, technical assistance, and project development in the areas of community and economic development, transportation, housing, land use, public facilities, and natural resources. 	Crawford, Edwards, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne, and White	Governmental

Group	Services	Service Area	Organization Type
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Selection • Customized Workforce Training • Regional & Local Collaboration • Expedited Permitting, Licensing & Other Approvals • Connection to Key Stakeholders and Civic & Business Partners • Potential Financial Support 	Wayne, Edwards, Wabash, Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union, White, and Williamson County	Governmental
IMEC: Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with companies to plan critical business improvements in Leadership, Strategy, Customer Engagement, Operations, and Workforce. • As a NIST MEP approved Center, IMEC is the official representative of the MEP National Network in Illinois. The MEP National Network is a unique public-private partnership that delivers comprehensive, proven solutions to U.S. manufacturers, fueling growth and advancing U.S. manufacturing. 	Offices in Carbondale, Chicago, Peoria (headquarters), DeKalb, Rockford, and Schaumburg	Public/private partnership
Jackson Growth Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult on the availability of land and facilities for development in the area. • Introduce clients to the different incentive sources. • Introduce clients to local partners such as lenders, educational institutions, healthcare providers, utility providers, etc. • Assist clients with any local and state government interactions. Permitting, zoning, enterprise zones, TIF districts, etc. • Refer clients to regional services such as workforce development, business advisement services, government contracting, etc. 	Jackson	501(c)(3)
Jefferson County Development Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development entity for Jefferson County comprised area industry representatives, economic development allies, and local government representatives. • Provides a resourceful and flexible environment to implement a strategy for economic development, focusing on business attraction, expansion, retention, workforce development, and entrepreneurship assistance for Jefferson County, Illinois, and its communities in collaboration with the Southern Illinois region and our neighboring communities. 	Jefferson	Public/Private 501(c)3 non-profit corporation
Man-Tra-Con	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man-Tra-Con provides no-cost workforce development solutions through state, grant, and private funding. <p>Employer Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance in recruiting and screening qualified applicants • Assistance in funding training new staff, and retraining existing staff <p>Job Seekers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career and Job Search Assistance • Scholarships for college training • Referrals to programs offered by partnering agencies, including GED exam preparation, English as a second language, financial literacy services, and legal assistance with expungement and concealment <p>Youth Assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides eligible youth 16-24 years of age assistance with developing and achieving career and educational goals including, but not limited to: Paid and unpaid work experience with willing employers <p>Economic Development Partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customized workforce demographic reports • Workforce incentive letters • Discussions with Economic Development, Site Selectors, and Mayors • Recruitment services for incoming employers • Partnerships with all Economic Development partners 	Alexander, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Massac, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Union, White, and Williamson	501(c)(3)
One Shawnee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate planned action that culturally and economically rebuilds the Ohio River and Shawnee National Forest regions of southernmost Illinois on a shared vision of the future using a focused alliance of community groups, leaders, resource partners, and stakeholders. 	Alexander, Gallatin, Johnson, Hardin, Massac, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Union	501(c)(3)
Pinckneyville Economic Development Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates new business recruitment • Works to maintain a strong relationship between the city, surrounding area, and state and federal resources 	Pinckneyville	Governmental

Group	Services	Service Area	Organization Type
Randolph County Progress Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees economic and community development efforts for Randolph County Its mission is to increase the wealth of the community by creating jobs while preserving the culture and quality of life 	Randolph County	501(c)(3)
Regional Economic Development Corporation (REDCO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on the availability of land and facilities for development in the area. Introduce clients to the different incentive sources. Introduce clients to local partners such as lenders, educational institutions, healthcare providers, utility providers, etc. Assist clients with any local and state government interactions; Permitting, zoning, enterprise zones, TIF districts, etc. Assist clients with any other items they may need, such as engineering services, excavation companies, builders, etc. <p>Work with local partners on projects, currently working with Greater Egypt on the CEDS program.</p>	Williamson	501(c)(3)
Saline County Industrial Development Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Coordinator for Saline County Manages Enterprise Zone Operates and Develops County Industrial Parks for low-cost business development options. Assists businesses in their growth and expansion needs by coordinating development assistance options 	Saline	501(c)(3)
SIU Research Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation and business development services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBDC: Small Business Development Center COVID Assistance / Information State Agency Resources Office/Lab space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saluki Ventures Coworking Memberships Student Opportunities Dunn-Richmond Economic Development Center <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Business Incubator Business Incubator Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business coaching & planning Resource networks Internet 3D Printing lab Mentoring access Flexible lease terms SIU Research Park Linkage 	Southern Illinois region	501(c)(3) university-related organization
Southeastern Illinois Regional Planning & Development Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securing and administering grants for public works, housing rehabilitation, economic development projects and operation of the Revolving Loan Fund Planning, grant writing, and administrative services for local, state, and Federal programs such as: Economic Development Administration grants, Delta Regional Authority grants, Community Development Block Grants Administer an Enterprise Zone Serves as a Local Development District for Delta Regional Authority 	Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Pope, Saline	Governmental
Southern Five Regional Planning District & Development Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loan fund programs Public infrastructure and housing rehab programs Rural development loan and grant assistance Economic development assistance Technical planning assistance Geographical information systems lab Center for regional statistics 	Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski, Union	Governmental
Southern Illinois Workforce Development Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SIWDB serves as the premier source for information about and access to the array of workforce development programs and services offered for citizens and employers in Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Perry, and Williamson Counties in Southern Illinois. To that end, the Board makes an unswerving commitment to meet the workforce development needs of all youth and adults in the region as well as the training and retraining needs of the southern Illinois business community. 	Williamson, Jefferson, Jackson, Perry and Franklin.	501(c)(3)
Southwestern Illinois Metropolitan and Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services include planning, zoning, project development, and technical assistance in the areas of community and economic development, transportation, land use, public facilities, and natural resources. Grant writing and management for selected Federal and State grant programs. 	Bond, Clinton, Madison, Monroe, St. Clair, Randolph, and Washington	Governmental