

Executive Summary

The South Central Illinois Region is made up of five counties (Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper and Marion) with a 2016 resident population of 119,338 a net increase of six since year 2010, showing a rather stable population growth rate. The region's leading employment by industry includes Manufacturing; Agriculture; Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; and Health Care and Social Assistance. The public infrastructure includes above average ground transportation with two interstates (I-57 & I-70) and four US Highways (US 40, 45, 50, 51) stretching through the five-county EDD, along with 10 combined Main Line and Short Line rail road companies, five general aviation imports and 11 formally established industrial or business parks.

The process of re-writing, the previously published 2017-2020 CEDS document was accomplished through the generous volunteer participation and support of many civic leaders, local governments, development groups and affiliate state and federal agencies, etc. However, at the center of the local and regional public participation process for writing the 2020-2022 document is the District's CEDS Advisory Committee.

The central purpose of the CEDS is to provide up-to-date demographic information, review the economic development performance of the region since the last regional CEDS publication, encourage the continued implementation of a regional plan of action, as well as identify and prioritize the investment opportunities and funding sources for the SCIRPDC region.

Specifically, the SCIRPDC EDD, along with District's Voluntary CEDS Committee, developed a SWOT analysis, describing the region's strengths; weaknesses; opportunities; and threats. The SWOT analysis is summarized below.

The next step in producing an effective economic development strategy is utilizing the developed SWOT analysis to further create a regional strategic direction and action plan. To this end, the CEDS provides a list of eight essential economic development priorities for the South Central Illinois region created with the region's SWOT analysis in mind. Furthermore, within the CEDS each priority is accompanied by several defined objectives to encourage achievement. Below is a sequential list of those top economic development priorities.

- (1) Quality of Life/Workforce Attraction
- (2) Infrastructure
- (3) Economic Development Competitiveness
- (4) Workforce Development
- (5) Technology
- (6) Freight and Transportation
- (7) Disaster Preparedness
- (8) Conservation & Development

The SWOT analysis, located below, and economic development priorities, discussed above, are the two most essential pieces of this CEDS document and put in place specific investment priorities for the region going forward. In sum, the South Central Illinois CEDS is a roadmap to encourage the diversification and growth of the regional economy and attempts to serve as a guide for future local, regional, state and federal investment priorities in the SCIRPDC EDD.

SWOT Analysis Summary

Regional Strengths	Regional Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EDD Location 2. Adequate Public Utilities 3. Local Economic Development Efforts 4. Workforce Development 5. Private and Public Development Organizations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Need for Manufacturing Technical Training 2. Need for Industry Cluster Growth 3. Lack of Consistent Broadband Access 4. Lack of Entrepreneurship 5. Lack of Local Government Participation
Regional Opportunities	Regional Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on Regional Assets 2. Region-based Thought Process 3. Invest on Economic Strengths 4. Encourage Entrepreneurs and Innovation 5. Career-Based Workforce Development 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of Technology-based Workforce 2. Regional Employers' Financial Burden 3. Cost of Essential Public & Private Services 4. Reduced State and Federal Funding 5. International Corporations' Land Purchasing