

Economic Development: Community

## Innovative office configurations expand opportunities offered in Fairview Heights

Fairview Heights continues to live its brand as “the retail hub of Southern Illinois.” The recent opening of the first pOpshelf location in the St. Louis region and the move of Play It Again Sports from O’Fallon are among positive signs that the city’s fifty-year retail parade is continuing full speed ahead.

At the same time, disruptive trends in staffing and retail space requirements are impacting real estate redevelopment and re-use in Fairview Heights just like they are in other cities nationwide. Local business owners and public officials are cooperating to seek innovative ways to use facilities so as to anticipate and capture future opportunities.

A signature example of this trend is Storyboard Living, new headquarters for the former Gateway Multifamily Group as it moved from O’Fallon last year. This fast-growing company, now branded Storyboard Living, has trans-



Storyboard Living Founder Raj Tut, left, meets with Steve Krajczar, Director of Operations, at the company's new headquarters facility in Fairview Heights. (Photo courtesy The FOURCE)

formed a former Ethan Allen furniture showroom with a commanding location directly across I-64 from St. Clair Square into a showcase office center.

Founder & Principal Raj Tut has acquired, transformed, and managed more than \$90 million in multifamily real estate over nine years to designation as

one of the Forbes “Next 1000” leaders in 2021. Last summer, he moved operations into a newly remodeled facility with common space, a community area and restrooms that will be shared with a curated list of complementary businesses.

Tut is partnering with the BAR-BERMurphy real estate brokerage, The

FOURCE public relations consultancy and the City of Fairview Heights to market the five suites ranging from 637 – 4,545 square feet. “We’re looking for creative, dynamic co-tenants that will fit well with our corporate culture,” he explains.

Another example of the trend is Café Biz 618, which opened in the Crossroads Centre near TJ Maxx in May 2020. The brainchild of investor Kim King, a black female veteran, Café Biz is a full-service coworking center that offers daily, hourly, weekly, and monthly workspace options for business professionals. Café Biz provides a much-needed, affordable “step up the ladder” for entrepreneurs to grow from homes or garages to full time leased premises.

Whatever type of space growing businesses need, Fairview Heights can offer the market access and the community support to help them put down roots and grow!

## Moran Economic Development shares company changes, projects

Moran Economic Development recently announced the promotions of Jared Kanallakan to Vice President and Jake Zambaldi to Director of Development Programs.

“Both Jared and Jake have been integral parts of the firm’s overall success and growth, and we are thrilled to give them the opportunity to take on more responsibility within the company in their new leadership roles,” said Keith Moran, president of Moran Economic Development. “With Jared and Jake’s promotions and the recent addition of Emily Calderon as Director of Planning, I am very proud of our team and am excited to see all that they accomplish for our clients.”

The firm is also expanding its services with the launch of a planning division. With Emily’s 17 years of experience in this area, Moran Economic Development is pleased to offer additional consulting services, including comprehensive planning, zoning and subdivision code updates, subdivision and site plan review, as well as permitting workflow and operational efficiency. The other service areas include tax increment

financing, business districts, enterprise zones, and economic development and comprehensive planning.

**Recent Projects:**

**Orchard Town Center TIF and Business District**

MED worked with the Village of Glen Carbon on the Orchard Town Center Business District and Tax Increment Financing District to assist with extraordinary costs associated with the site, including the remediation of undermining and improvements to the adjacent street network. The first development in the area was recently completed with the grand opening of the Chic-Fil-A restaurant.

**East St. Louis TIF 1, 3A, Lansdowne TIF**

The City of East St. Louis recently completed several TIF projects, including the extension of the City’s TIF District 1 and 3A and establishment of the Lansdowne TIF District, which allow a critical revenue stream to continue for redevelopment projects in the City. The Lansdowne TIF project was established to develop a new housing project in the City, led by the Lansdowne Up organization.



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**Granite City Route 3 TIF District Amendment**

Granite City completed the amendment to the Route 3 Industrial Park Redevelopment Project Area to include additional properties adjacent to the existing area. The amendment broadens the scope of the original plan to include retail projects in areas such as the Nameoki commercial corridor.

**Shiloh Amended Business District**

The Green Mount Business District in Shiloh was amended to include additional parcels of property, with the continued goals of the project to provide for the mitigation of the undermining in the Area. Additionally, street improvements were identified in the Amended

Area, which include a bridge construction project along Green Mount Road.

**Gateway Commerce Center Enterprise Zone Amendment**

MED worked with the municipalities of Edwardsville and Pontoon Beach on an amendment to the Gateway Commerce Center Enterprise Zone. Both communities are focused on Downtown revitalization.

**Highland Amended Business District**

The City of Highland has had recent successes with the existing Business District program and amended the existing district to provide an economic development tool for newly annexed properties to assist in infrastructure and utility improvements.

## Mascoutah’s accomplishments girded by strong sense of community spirit

Mascoutah has a strong sense of community spirit, pride, and engagement as evident in the number of community organizations, volunteerism, and community involvement. Mascoutah owns and operates its own utilities (electric, water, and sewer). Economic development incentives include two TIF districts, enterprise zone, and a business district.

Located just off Interstate 64 and adjacent to Scot AFB, Mascoutah is in

close proximity to St. Louis, Missouri. Mascoutah is easily accessible to St. Louis and Lambert Airport by Metrolink with stations minutes away from town.

Mascoutah is home to MidAmerica Airport recently noted as in the top six of Illinois airports with just under 400,000 passengers yearly.

Mascoutah is home to the new Boeing Aeronautical Production Facility and Campus located near MidAmerica Airport for the production of U.S. Navy MQ-25

Stingray drones, the first carrier-based unmanned aircraft. The new facility is expected to be completed in early 2024.

Mascoutah has what it says are some of the first-rate public and private schools in the area and the School District has more than 4,000 students. Mascoutah is 15 minutes away from McKendree College and Southwestern Illinois College, and thirty minutes away from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, St. Louis Uni-

versity, and Washington University.

Mascoutah is a growing community and is well positioned for growth in both commercial and residential, community officials say. Mascoutah’s population has increased by more than 1,200 residents in the past 10 years and has a current population of 8,754 residents. There have been numerous construction projects in the past year that have provided many new homes and businesses in the community.





## Mascoutah

ILLINOIS

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