

FY 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Fiscal Year 2015 City of Carbondale Budget included four Community Goals that guided City Government activities during the year. The four Community Goals and accomplishments within each category are highlighted below:

I. Economic Development and Community Growth:

In FY 2015, the City's top priority remained Economic Development and Community Growth. The City's commitment to economic development was demonstrated through financial support for the City's Economic Development Division, Jackson Growth Alliance, Carbondale Main Street, Carbondale Tourism and the City's continued emphasis on expanding and improving its infrastructure.

In FY 2014, Governor Patrick Quinn announced an investment of \$1.5 million to build an ultra-high-speed broadband network in Carbondale. In FY 2015, the partnership between Frontier North, Inc., the City of Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Carbondale and Connect SI used the funding to build a high-speed fiber optic network to Carbondale's businesses, schools, hospitals and neighborhoods.

During FY 2015, work continued on the largest economic development effort the City of Carbondale has seen in the downtown district in more than 30 years. The City approved a tax increment financing agreement with Tartan Realty for the property located at 710 South Illinois Avenue. Tartan Realty/Evolve is building a four-story, mixed-use building with space available for student housing on the upper floors and retail shops and restaurants on the ground floor. In early FY 2015, demolition of the existing structures and construction of the new building began. One commercial tenant, Insomnia Cookie, was announced and occupancy of the entire building is on schedule for August 2015.

In FY 2015, in addition to the downtown multi-use facility, the Illinois-University Corridor TIF #2 saw two other new development agreements during its second year of operation. Redevelopment agreements were completed for properties located at 518 South Illinois Avenue (American Tap Property), and 400 South Illinois Avenue. In total three redevelopments account for

\$20,565,000 of private investment and the creation or retention of 10 permanent jobs and more than 100 temporary construction jobs.

In FY 2015, the Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC) conducted public meetings soliciting input from residents, students and business owners in the following topic categories: Vision and Strategy, Downtown Traffic & Other Transportation Modes, Business Development, SIU/Hospital (SIH) Downtown Interface, Signs and Streetscapes, Arts and Entertainment, Economic, and Civic and Neighborhood Viability. The DAC compiled the information and presented an Interim Report to the City Council in December. The City then selected the consulting firm of Houseal Lavigne to advance the work of the DAC and complete the preparation of a new Downtown Master Plan that will guide the further development of the Downtown District.

In FY 2015, the City continued its partnership with the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce and WDBX Radio on Talk of the Town, a City and business talk show. The weekly program showcases Carbondale businesses as well as community events. The show will continue to be offered in FY 2016.

The Economic Development staff continued to represent the City in the Jackson Growth Alliance, Greater Egypt Regional Planning and Development Commission and other regional economic development organizations. The Jackson County-Murphysboro-Carbondale Enterprise Zone (EZ) continued to be a driving force for economic development during FY 2015. A total of 23 EZ projects were completed in FY 2015 with an estimated value of \$22,798,692 million.

In FY 2015, the City continued working with the Small Business Development Center at Southern Illinois University to provide assistance to new and expanding businesses. Such assistance included the creation of business plans, securing financial assistance and locating potential sites for development.

In FY 2015, the Economic Development staff provided assistance to parties interested in Carbondale as the site of a new business which included distributing printed material, providing data electronically, and meeting with business prospects, and tour available properties.

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In FY 2015, construction was completed on the City's new west side fire station with a dedication ceremony in October 4, 2014. The new facility is a 12,400 square foot single-story brick building designed to meet the present and future needs of the Fire Department with four apparatus bays, seven bunk rooms, living and kitchen space, a workout room, a training room and office space for the Assistant Fire Chiefs and Training Officer. There is also space allocated for the City's Emergency Operations Center and Storm Watch Center. The building was designed to be energy efficient and meets or exceeds all relevant energy codes as well as seismic standards. Some design features will include a backup generator capable of powering the entire building, geothermal heating and air-conditioning for the living area and provisions for the addition of future solar equipment.

In FY 2014, Carbondale Tourism office relocated adjacent to the Carbondale City Hall and Civic Center, directly across from the Carbondale Chamber Office and the Carbondale Main Street office in the Historic Downtown Depot. This move provides historic space that will highlight the local history of Carbondale and serve as a hub for local information through its established Carbondale Visitor's center. In addition, it provides for a convenient location for persons attending events at the Civic Center, and provides for a more collaborative effort between the City's economic development efforts and Carbondale Tourism, Main Street and Chamber.

In FY 2014, the City, Carbondale Main Street, SIU and the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce partnered to create a downtown design center in a space at the Historic Depot. The room provides seating for up to 40 people and will be used to display design projects, house design conversations, community meetings and workspace for SIU students and faculty to do real-world work on downtown projects and concepts.

In FY 2015, the City issued more than 150 Zoning Certificates authorizing new construction or additions and more than 125 Sign Permits. In total more than \$60 million in new construction permits were issued in FY 2015.

II. Provide Quality Services With Fiscal Responsibility:

In FY 2015, the City of Carbondale residents continued to experience cost savings as a result of the City's agreement with Select Energy Partners Energy Aggregation Consortium that utilizes Homefield Energy as the electricity supplier for Carbondale and participating surrounding Southern Illinois communities. A new contract was negotiated in late FY 2015 and remains in effect through June 2017.

In FY 2015, the City received its 28th Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. To be eligible to receive this honorable award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets specific program criteria as a policy document, as an operations guide, as a financial plan and as a communication tool.

In FY 2015, the City received its 22st consecutive GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting award. This prestigious award evaluates financial reporting based on the standards as set forth by the Financial Accounting Standards Board for reporting the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), a government's public financial document.

In FY 2015, the Carbondale Civic Center hosted approximately 650 events in its facility, which included banquets, receptions, reunions, dances, workshops, conferences, trade shows and exhibitions. Public meetings held at the Civic Center included the City Council, Planning Commission and the Carbondale Park District. Donated space for City sponsored groups such as the Human Relations Commission, the Preservation Commission, the Sustainability Commission and Study Circles continued.

In FY 2015, the Equipment Maintenance Division received the ASE Blue Seal of Excellence status for the 14th consecutive year. This is accomplished through the continued training, testing, and certification of all Equipment Maintenance staff personnel.

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In FY 2015, the City continued to provide funding for social service and economic development agencies in the community. Services provided by these agencies support economic development, tourism promotion, art and cultural activities, youth programs, transportation services, senior citizen programs and shelter programs for victims of domestic violence.

In FY 2015, the City continued to assist the Carbondale Community High School District with debt repayment funds for the high school and annual payments continued to be made to Southern Illinois University for the Saluki Way Project.

In FY 2015, the City of Carbondale continued to implement the National Incident Management Systems (NIMS). This system provides a consistent approach for federal, state and local governments to work effectively together to prepare for and respond to disasters by standardizing management processes, protocols and procedures.

In FY 2015, the National Weather Service reaccredited Carbondale as a Storm Ready Community. The Storm Ready program assists community leaders and emergency managers in building communications and safety skills necessary to save lives and property before, during and after a severe weather event.

In FY 2015, the City continued to pay a portion of the operating expenses for the Amtrak Station in Carbondale. The Carbondale station averages 400 passengers per day and is served by six passenger trains. The station is the fifth busiest station in Illinois. In FY 2014 artwork was placed behind the Amtrak Station by the City which was provided by Carbondale Middle School, to provide an attractive backdrop for arriving and departing passengers to the Carbondale Amtrak Station.

In FY 2015, the City continued to provide matching funds for the Jackson County Mass Transit District. The City of Carbondale is one of several local governments that provide funding to the Transit District as a match for state and federal funds to support funding and availability of public transportation in Carbondale and Jackson County.

In FY 2015, the City continued to provide assistance for Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Saluki

Express Bus System. Although the service is primarily used by students, it is continuing to be used by an increasing number of Carbondale residents. The City's funds provide half of the cost of running the service when the university is not in session, so that there is not a break in service for those that rely on its service.

In FY 2015, the City continued to maintain 21 public parking lots within the City of Carbondale, including 17 lots located in the downtown business district and worked on plans to develop future parking areas for the downtown to respond to growth and expansion in the downtown district.

III. Encourage Citizen Participation and Community Pride:

In FY 2015, the City website continued to expand to increase functionality, content accessibility and include more information for the public. Of particular note is the addition of an area designated to the history of and future redevelopment of the downtown. In addition, the City continued hosting a series of videos created to promote Carbondale and the surrounding area as a cultural hub of Southern Illinois. The City website is visited 11,367 times per month which computes to an average of 375 times per day. The City website boasts 8,183 unique visitors per month.

In FY 2015, Carbondale's internet presence was again recognized by an organization that rates local government's commitment to transparency. The website was one of forty three Illinois municipal web sites to earn a "Sunny Award" from The Sunshine Review, a non-profit, pro-transparency organization.

In FY 2015, the City continued to see increased usage of internet video streaming services for public and private meetings. Streaming video allows citizens to watch meetings that are live or have been recorded on any computer connected to the internet. This was the first phase of a multi-phase project to implement expanded technology to manage City Council Agenda processes and other processes for City government.

In FY 2015, the Police Department continued to enhance its web site to provide citizens with interactive tools to help them become more informed about crime in their neighborhoods and to help fight crime in their community.

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In FY 2015, the Police Department completed its third year as a partner with Carbondale Community High School District No. 165 in the School Resource Officer Program. The program is staffed by a Carbondale Police Officer who is assigned to the Carbondale Community High School on a full-time basis when school is in session. This program provides an extra layer of safety and security for the students and faculty at the CCHS campus and also promotes positive relations between students, faculty and law enforcement officers.

In FY 2015, the Police Department continued to develop partnerships among agencies and resident groups to address community problems while maintaining a strong commitment to prevention and suppression. In cooperation with the Arbor District, the Department developed enhanced regulations on noise created by large house parties and crowds of people. The Department will continue active participation in groups dedicated to improving the quality of life in our community.

In FY 2015, the Police Department continued its commitment to a volunteer services program. Volunteers provide essential services which enhance the productivity of Department operations while serving the community through public service.

In FY 2015, the Police Department continued Community Service Officer (CSO) program. The CSO program was developed to recruit young women and men from all ethnic backgrounds to work in the Police Department in various police related duties and functions. This program has resulted in five CSO's being hired as Carbondale Police Officers and one CSO being hired as a Police Telecommunicator. .

In FY 2015, the Fire Department continued its partnership with other communities in the region through continued participation in the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, MABAS Division 45. Member agencies have worked to develop standards of operation, communication, incident command, equipment and safety. The department participated in major disaster exercises with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, as well as Southern Illinois University, Jackson County Emergency Management Agency and surrounding county Emergency Management Agencies. In FY 2015 the Fire Department continued its

commitment to education and prevention. In partnership with Elementary School District #95, fire department instructors provided formal fire prevention and safety lessons to all fifth grade students. Staff members also participated in this year's Senior Fair at the Carbondale Civic Center.

In FY 2015, the Fire Department continued its commitment to community safety with its fire smoke detector and battery replacement program. Under program guidelines, the department will provide and install, free of charge, a smoke detector or replacement battery to citizens that cannot afford to purchase one.

In FY 2015, the Fire Department received equipment and safety grants totaling \$261,801. These funds enabled the department to purchase a heavy rescue truck designed for a variety of technical rescue applications including auto extrication, trench rescue, high angle rescue and structural collapse. The department also purchased an inflatable boat and outboard motor for use on area lakes, ponds and streams. Remaining grant funds were used to purchase a full complement of ice rescue equipment and to provide ice rescue training for all department members. The Fire Department also upgraded its fleet with the budgeted purchase of a new pumper truck.

In FY 2015, the Emergency Management Services Department staff continued to participate in public information presentations and displays at the Senior Adult Services, and schools in the community.

In FY 2015, EMS staff conducted exercises and table top disaster drills in conjunction with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC), Southern Illinois Healthcare and other local agencies. EMS and City of Carbondale staff also participated in the Great Shakeout Drill, a nationwide earthquake simulation drill sponsored by Federal Emergency Management Agency and the United States Geological Survey. EMS staff also partnered with Jackson County Emergency Management to offer weather radio programming assistance to community members.

In FY 2015, City funding to the Boys and Girls Club continued to provide educational and recreational programs for Carbondale youth.

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City funding in FY 2015 to Carbondale Main Street was again provided to ensure quality events for Carbondale residents and visitors continue to be held in the City's Downtown District. Some of the events included Brown Bag Concerts, the Great Pumpkin Race, College Fest, SIUC Welcome Fest events, Friday Night Fairs and the annual Lights Fantastic Parade.

In FY 2015, the City continued to provide financial support of the Sunset Concert Series which provides family entertainment in the Community. This event is a partnership between the SIUC Student Programming Council, the SIUC Student Center and the Carbondale Park District.

In FY 2015, the City continued to provide funding for the Science Center to operate a Children's Science Museum in Carbondale and provide outreach services and activities to promote the sciences for youth.

IV. Strengthen and Promote Neighborhood Living

In FY 2015, the City completed its three year financial assistance to the Carbondale Park District for the construction of the Super Splash Park being constructed into the Superblock complex on Lewis Lane. In the Spring 2015, the community turned out in great numbers to protest the State's suspension of the construction of this long awaited facility. Due to fiscal irresponsibility by the State the \$2.5 million grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources was placed in suspended status. The project is 80% complete and unfortunately will not be completed and operational in time for the summer 2015.

During FY 2015, the City continued to take a pro-active role in providing public resources to ensure that the housing stock in Carbondale is maintained in a safe and decent manner. The City has updated housing codes and property maintenance standards that are in place and aggressively enforced and applied city wide. In addition, there are a number of state administered grant programs that the City has successfully used over the years to improve the housing stock and enhance the older neighborhoods. These grant programs are used in concert with other regional and local programs and resources that have had positive impacts on improving the overall livability of the community.

In FY 2015, City staff continued the Mandatory Rental Housing Inspection Program to address the structural integrity, health and life safety violations of dwelling units and continued to address the general aesthetic appearance and condition of the entire property and grounds during inspections.

In FY 2015, City Neighborhood Inspectors conducted more than 2,500 rental property inspections. The department strives to respond to the needs of citizens. The Building and Neighborhood Services Division continued to improve on the procedures in place to respond quickly to resident inquiries and complaints on property maintenance and issues impacting the viability of the City's neighborhoods.

In FY 2015, the Building and Neighborhood Services staff continued to pursue demolition of unsafe structures that have been vacant neighborhood eyesores for years. Several dilapidated structures were demolished as efforts to remove blighted structures continued.

In FY 2015, the City's Single Family Housing Conversion Program served to convert three homes previously used as rental property back to single family owner-occupied residences, making a total of twenty-seven since inception of the program.

The City received \$168,000 in grant funds from the Illinois Housing Development Authority for a Single Family Owner Occupied Rehabilitation (SFOOR) Program. The City used these grant funds to rehabilitate four homes in FY 2015 for low to very low income residents in Tatum Heights, northeast Carbondale, and northwest Carbondale. The City anticipates applying for additional funds once they are made available.

In FY 2014, the Illinois Housing Development Authority awarded the City a \$168,000 HOME Homebuyer grant to enable four low to moderate income persons to purchase and rehabilitate their homes. The City of Carbondale assisted the final two grant recipients for this program in FY 2015. The City anticipates closing out this program in early FY 2016 and applying for additional funds once they are made available.

In FY 2015, the City received \$397,800 in grant funds from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Community Development Assistance Program for Housing Rehabilitation. The City plans to assist eight homes through FY 2016 and FY 2017.

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In FY 2015, the City completed updating the Neighborhood Business District classification to respond to growth and change in residential sections of the community. Considerable staff and resident time was spent to provide a comprehensive document that addresses changes in the Carbondale landscape over the years.

In FY 2015 the City of Carbondale continued to encourage the growing number of neighborhood organizations that are establishing themselves within the City. These organizations have regular gatherings and work together through Study Circle's Neighborhood Action Group to identify shared issues and solutions to neighborhood issues, to share best practices and solve related concerns for the overall improvement of the community.

In FY 2015, the City continued to bring awareness to the importance of historic preservation and to encourage and reward those who have taken an active role in preservation in Carbondale's residential neighborhoods and business districts. Annual Awards and guided tours continued to be held to inspire other community members to invest in restoration of their properties.