

## FY 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Fiscal Year 2014 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 2014 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 Southern Illinois. The partnership between Frontier North, Inc., the City of Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Carbondale and Connect SI will use the funding to build a high-speed fiber optic network to Carbondale's businesses, schools, hospitals and neighborhoods.

In FY 2014 the City of Carbondale launched the largest economic development effort 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 is planning to build 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. Purchase of the property and demolition of the existing structures is proposed to occur in May of FY 2015 and construction is scheduled to begin during the summer of FY 2015.

In FY 2014 in addition to the downtown multi-use facility, the Illinois-University Corridor TIF #2 saw several new development agreements during its first year of operation. Redevelopment agreements were completed for properties located at 114 S. Illinois Avenue (former Mary Lou's), 126 S. Illinois Avenue (the Tourism office), 703 S. Illinois Avenue (Virginia Building), and 901 S. Illinois Avenue (Harbaugh's). A single agreement was executed in TIF #1 at 104 S.s. Marion Street (Smith Works). In total, these redevelopments account for \$647,000 of private investment and the creation and retention of 24 jobs.

In FY 2014 the City Council approved the preparation of a new Downtown Master Plan that will guide the further development of the Downtown District. In early FY 2015 a Steering Committee will be established to identify a consultant to assist in the development of the plan and lead the downtown planning and development efforts.

In FY 2014, the Economic Development staff and the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce continued a business retention program focused on improving customer relations between the City, Chamber, and Carbondale businesses. The City partnered with the Carbondale Chamber and WDBX Radio to begin Talk of the Town, a City and business talk show. Hosted by the Chamber Director and Economic Development Coordinator, the weekly program showcases Carbondale businesses as well as community events. The show will continue to be offered in FY 2015.

In FY 2014 a second Farmer's Market was opened at the Carbondale Community High School after a very successful indoor winter market was held at Thomas School. Discussions have been initiated to ensure that citizens have access to Farmer's Markets in Carbondale year round and a permanent location is being researched.

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 2014. A total of 26 EZ projects were completed in FY 2014 with an estimated value of \$4.7 million. Construction was also completed on the \$36 million new Student Services Building which will house admissions and registration departments for SIU.

In FY 2014 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 2014 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

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Development reviewed applications and provided funding through the Community Development Assistance Program Revolving Loan Fund and Downtown Facade Loan Program Fund.

In FY 2014, construction continued on the City's new west side fire station. The new facility will be 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 will also be space to relocate the City's Emergency Operations Center and Storm Watch Center. The building has been 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 2014 the City issued more than 130 Zoning Certificates authorizing new construction or additions and more than 100 Sign Permits. In total more than \$16 million in new construction permits were issued in FY 2014.

### *II. Provide Quality Services With Fiscal Responsibility:*

In FY 2014 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 contract remains in effect with Homefield Energy for a two year period through March 2015.

In FY 2014 the City received its 27<sup>th</sup> 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 2014 the City received its 21<sup>st</sup> 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 2014 the Carbondale Civic Center hosted approximately 604 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 2014 the Equipment Maintenance Division received the ASE Blue Seal of Excellence status for the 13th consecutive year. This is accomplished through the continued training, testing, and certification of all Equipment Maintenance staff personnel.

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In FY 2014 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 2014 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 2014, 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 2014 EMS obtained reaccreditation as a Storm Ready Community certified by the National Weather Service. Storm Ready helps community leaders and emergency managers strengthen local severe weather operations.

In FY 2014 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 2014, 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 2014 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 2014 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 2014 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 a green resource to highlight City wide efforts that promote and encourage environmental sustainability. In addition, the City began 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 10,694 times per month which computes to an average of 352 times per day. The City website boasts 7,699 unique visitors per month.

In FY 2014 Carbondale's internet presence was again recognized by an organization that rates local government's commitment to transparency. The website was one of 19 Illinois municipal web sites to earn a "Sunny Award" from The Sunshine Review, a non-profit, pro-transparency organization.

In FY 2014 the City saw 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 2014 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.

In FY 2014 the Police Department partnered with Carbondale Community High School District No. 165 in

the development of a 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.

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In FY 2014, 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. The Department will continue active participation in groups dedicated to improving the quality of life in our community.

In FY 2014, 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 2014, 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 four CSO's are being hired as Carbondale Police Officers.

In FY 2014 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 2014 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 participated in this year's Senior Fair at the Carbondale Civic Center and provided informational talks for the Carbondale Senior Citizens Center, Jackson County Housing Authority, and Mill Street high rises to name a few. The department also attended the Carbondale Community High School career fair and spoke at the Boys and Girls Club.

In FY 2014 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 2014 the Emergency Management Services Department staff continued to participate in public information presentations and displays at the Old School Community Center, Senior Adult Services, and schools in the community.

In FY 2014 EMS staff conducted exercises and table top disaster drills with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) and local agencies. EMS and City of Carbondale staff participated in the Great Shakeout Drill, a nationwide earthquake simulation drill. EMS and other City departments participated in a National Earthquake Full Scale Disaster Drill which involved eight states. Participation required activation of the Emergency Operations Center and communications with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency as well as other participating agencies.

In FY 2014 City funding to the Boys and Girls Club continued to provide educational and recreational programs for Carbondale youth.

City funding in FY 2014 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 Art Around the Square, Brown Bag Concerts, the First Great Pumpkin Race, Downtown Art and Wine Fairs, College Fest, SIUC Welcome Fest events, Friday Night Fairs and the annual Lights Fantastic Parade.

In FY 2014 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 2014 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 2014 Carbondale Park District and City Officials broke ground on the Super Splash Park that will be located

at the Superblock complex on Lewis Lane. The community turned out in great numbers to celebrate the groundbreaking for this long awaited facility. City funding was provided to

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the Carbondale Park District over FY 2013 and FY 2014 to assist with the match requirements for the \$2.5 million grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Construction of the pool is scheduled to begin in FY 2015.

During FY 2014 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 2014 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 2014 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 2014 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 2014 the City's Single Family Housing Conversion Program served to convert two homes previously used as rental property back to single family owner-occupied residences, making a total of twenty-five since inception of the program.

The City received \$252,000 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 six homes for low to very low income residents in Tatum Heights, northeast Carbondale, and northwest Carbondale. The City has applied for an additional \$250,000 through IHDA's SFOOR Program to rehabilitate an additional six homes in FY 2015.

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. This grant period will run through FY 2015.

In FY 2014 the City began working on updating the Neighborhood Business District classification to respond to growth and change in residential sections of the community. Considerable staff and resident time has been spent to provide a comprehensive document that will address changes in the Carbondale landscape over the years. Work will continue on the Neighborhood Business District in FY 2015.

In FY 2014 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 2014 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.

