



LEADERSHIP COUNCIL AND ST. LOUIS REGIONAL CHAMBER TEAM UP TO LAUNCH ST. LOUIS GATEWAY

October 17 2014 9:44 AM

Debut of www.stlgateway.com is first piece of new branding initiative aimed at promoting the region as a multimodal hub



St. Louis, Mo., Oct., 16, 2014 . . . The Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois and St. Louis Regional Chamber today announced the launch of St. Louis Gateway™, a collaborative initiative to create a new brand identity for the St. Louis region - and for Southwestern Illinois within that region - as a multimodal hub poised for growth. At the heart of the effort is the new website, www.stlgateway.com, that highlights the bi-state St. Louis region's strategic location and seamlessly integrated transportation infrastructure, underscoring how it is ideally suited for multimodal logistics and supply chain solutions.

The new website will serve as the first step of what will be a focused marketing campaign to get the word out about St. Louis Gateway™. Information and videos on the site tout the region's key advantages, including multiple Foreign Trade Zones,

shovel-ready sites available throughout the region, and an educated workforce centered on transportation and supply chain solutions for decades. Even the region's bi-state composition signals strength, providing twice the leverage on major infrastructure projects, evidenced by the brand new Stan Musial Veteran's Memorial Bridge spanning the Mississippi River.

The collaborative effort was conceived by the regional leaders involved in the Leadership Council's Southwestern Illinois Transportation Enhancement Initiative (SITE), and the St. Louis Regional Chamber's Multi-Modal Logistics Forum. Both groups include representatives active in transportation, logistics and economic development across the region. The launch of St. Louis Gateway is part of the regional response to recommendations made in the 2013 Saint Louis Regional Freight Study commissioned by East-West Gateway Council of Governments to ascertain existing capabilities, gaps, and potential for growth in freight movement as an economic engine fueling the region's economy.

"The St. Louis region's location at the center of the U.S. is the envy of many metropolitan areas, but we need to make sure that the decision makers involved with freight movement are aware that our central location is paired with superior multi-modal transportation infrastructure, including six Class I rail lines, four major interstates, three airports, several pipelines, and of course, the most northern ice-free, lock-free river and port capability," noted Mark Harms, co-chair of the Leadership Council's SITE initiative. "Attracting additional logistics and manufacturing operations to avail themselves of these multimodal assets represents our highest probability of growing jobs here in the Southwestern Illinois portion of our metropolitan area, so we consider the launch of St. Louis Gateway as essential to fulfilling our mission of uniting the region for growth."

From the St. Louis Regional Chamber's perspective, the new initiative ties in directly to the Logistics Cluster that represents the third area of focus for the chamber's economic development efforts, with Financial Services and Health Science and Services as the first two clusters that the chamber has already gotten off the ground.

"We're excited to now be working with the Leadership Council to promote the logistical strengths and attributes of the bi-state region and particularly those on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River," said Louis Copilevitz, director of Logistics & Advanced Manufacturing for the St. Louis Regional Chamber. "Working together to make this aspect of our region better known the outside world, we can help to drive our region forward."

The initial marketing efforts will incorporate both traditional media relations and social media efforts to tell the region's multimodal story in targeted trade publications, on

Linked-In and in key markets with prospects who would be interested in learning more about Southwestern Illinois' compelling advantages and opportunities for those in the manufacturing, logistics and distribution arena. The Leadership Council also serves as the coordinator for the broader Economic Development Network of Southwestern Illinois, which is made up of approximately 80 leaders in economic growth in the region and practitioners active in economic development roles in Southwestern Illinois. These individuals also will be using the new website as an economic development tool and steering prospects to the site, which will continue to be expanded so that it becomes an even more robust resource.

“Already, our unmatched multimodal infrastructure, coupled with available, affordable property, has attracted over 14-million square feet of distribution/logistics space in the Metro East alone for companies such as Walgreens, Hershey's, Dial, World Wide Technologies and FedEx, to name just a few,” noted Harms. “With strong signs the region is emerging from the economic downturn and the improvements to the Metro East Levees on target for completion in 2015, there has never been a better time to tell our story, and we're pleased to be partnering with the St. Louis Regional Chamber to tell it.”

The Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois is a member-based, economic development corporation representing Madison and St. Clair counties. The Council works to attract/retain jobs and stimulate capital investment through its coalition of leaders in business, industry, labor, education and government. These effective partnerships serve as a driving force behind successful economic development efforts throughout the Metro East region. For more information, visit www.leadershipcouncilswil.com.

The St. Louis Regional Chamber is a broad community of leaders united for economic prosperity throughout the entire St. Louis bi-state region. Our aspiration is for St. Louis to be one of the Top 10 U.S. regions in prosperity by 2025. Our one purpose is to inspire a greater St. Louis. Together, we will make St. Louis a more attractive place for people to live, work and invest. We will win on today's regional strengths in focused economic clusters: biosciences; financial services; health; and multimodal logistics. We will champion a better tomorrow through community leadership on three priorities: greater educational attainment; inclusion and talent attraction; innovation and entrepreneurship. For more information, visit www.stlregionalchamber.com