



# **Investments in Metro East Educational Facilities Emerge as a Highlight Of Leaderships Council's Latest Market Review & Investment Update**

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EDWARDSVILLE, ILL., Aug. 10, 2011 . . . Bright spots in the construction industry have been few and far between in recent months, but the Leadership Council's 2010 Market Review and Investment Update highlights a few, including the level of investment in the education sector. This sector was the only one of the six routinely tracked by the Leadership Council that experienced investment growth during 2010, with almost half a billion dollars in projects in the planning stages, under construction or completed during the calendar year. The report was released Friday at the Leadership Council's monthly board meeting, which featured a timely update from the Metro East's two Regional Superintendents of Schools, Brad Harriman and Dr. Robert Daiber.

The \$493 million in educational projects contributed to the overall report's \$6.56 billion in the development pipeline in Madison and St. Clair counties during 2010. A breakdown of the report reveals that \$4.69 billion in projects were under construction during the year with an additional \$919.4 million in projects completed. Announced projects that have yet to break ground topped out at close to \$1 billion (\$956.3 million).

"Given the recent sluggishness of the economy, we're surprised and pleased to see that significant levels of investment capital continued to flow through Madison and St. Clair counties this past year," notes Leadership Council President Gerard Schuetzenhofer, president of Coldwell Banker Brown Realtors. "The strength of these numbers is a clear signal of the resiliency of the Metro East region."

Taking a closer look at the education sector during 2010, \$138 million in projects were completed, \$90 million had yet to break ground and \$264.7 million in projects were under construction.

The largest projects underway were the \$79 million science building at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, the \$55 million Mascoutah High School, the \$39.5 million Belle Valley District 119 Middle/Elementary School and \$29 million in East St. Louis schools construction. Edwardsville topped the list as the most active community, with 21 different projects representing almost \$173 million. Belleville also has been seeing significant activity with 10 separate projects, over \$100 million of which were under construction or completed during 2010. As in prior years, investments in this sector were fairly evenly split between K-12 and higher education projects, with \$232 million in K-12 and \$261 million being invested in higher education facilities.

Between them, Lewis and Clark Community College, McKendree University, SIUE, Southwestern Illinois College and Lindenwood University-Belleville employ just over 1,000 full-time faculty members and an additional 1,563 part-time faculty, while serving almost 41,000 students.

"The continuing high level of investment in our educational institutions is encouraging," noted Patrick McKeehan, executive director of the Leadership Council. "As we learned through our recent Vision 2020 initiative, it will be essential to the future growth of our region that we are teaching and learning the skills that match the jobs that will be available in the years to come."

The commercial sector findings for 2010 mirrored those of the educational sector, with approximately 55 separate projects totaling \$494.7 million in varying stages of development. Public sector investment accounted for just over \$767 million during the same timeframe, while institutional sector investments totaled \$216 million, and investments in office facilities topped \$155 million. The industrial sector once again accounted for the largest number of dollars being invested in the region with almost \$4.5 billion in projects, however, the \$3.6 billion ConocoPhillips expansion at its Wood River refinery accounts for almost 80 percent of that total.

"Since that project has received extensive media coverage over the past couple of years as work has progressed, we wanted to delve a little deeper into the other sectors tracked for the Market Review to see what trends were evident in those sectors and how those investments were impacting our communities," notes McKeehan.

"The Leadership Council is pleased to shine a spotlight on all of this economic activity that provides work for our skilled labor force, supports our region's families, strengthens our communities and helps fuel our economy," added Council President Schuezenhofer.

"We also acknowledge that the investments we're highlighting are occurring here in Southwestern Illinois because of the hard work from our elected officials, public institutions and those that have been willing to invest on our economic foundation for many years. The same commitment and collaboration that helped to build that foundation will be vital for our region's continued growth and development as we implement our Southwestern Illinois Vision 2020 initiative and pursue opportunities to replenish our capital investment pipeline in the coming years."

For additional information, please refer to the 2010 Market Review and Investment Update, which is available online at [www.siteselection-il.com](http://www.siteselection-il.com)<<http://www.siteselection-il.com>>. Limited hard copies of this edition also are available by calling the Leadership Council at 618-692-9745.

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 in Southwestern Illinois and the metropolitan area.