

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a document. The document has large, bold, black text that is partially obscured by several colorful sticky notes (yellow, orange, and pink). The visible text on the document includes "How will we", "the com", "University Collabor", "We change", and "lives?". The sticky notes contain handwritten notes in various colors and fonts, some of which are also partially obscured by other notes.

# CONNECTING CARBONDALE

## On Track to Becoming One of America's Best Communities

A Playbook from which to transform our  
city into a regionally, nationally, and globally  
recognized innovation community

Version 1.0

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special thanks to the Carbondale Downtown Advisory Committee.

Supported by: Carbondale Main Street, the City of Carbondale, Connect SI, and The America's Best Communities Prize Competition.

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In December, 2014, using Illinois state grant funds and partnering with the City of Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC), Jackson Growth Alliance, and Connect SI, Frontier Communications Corporation completed installation of the first phase of a new, faster, more reliable, and more affordable Internet network that enhances Carbondale's ability to compete on a global scale. This Next Generation network is fifty times faster than what was currently available, making Carbondale southern Illinois' first "Gigabit City."

Concurrently, the City of Carbondale's Downtown Advisory Committee was formed and put forth an initial report outlining the goals and desires of the community for Carbondale's downtown. With this report, the City hired a consultant to complete a Downtown Master Plan. The Carbondale ABC Grant Writing team used the initial report to inform the original application, and because of the extensive feedback from the community extension, have chosen to focus on leveraging our "Gigabit City" status for the revitalization of downtown Carbondale.

Carbondale Main Street partnered with The City of Carbondale and Connect SI and was named a quarterfinalist in the America's Best Communities (ABC) Prize Competition. Sponsored by Frontier Communications, DISH, CoBank, and The Weather Channel, the first round of the ABC competition process initially awarded the top fifty communities with \$50,000. Today, the fifty communities will compete for \$100,000 and eventually for \$1 million, \$2 million, and \$3 million in prize money for community development projects.

The Carbondale community leveraged its ongoing Downtown Master Planning process, the ABC funds, and its Gigabit City status to produce the Connecting Carbondale Playbook.

Given this unique timing of events, the Playbook will act as a public document to provide a strategy and road map of actionable items that will primarily guide downtown Carbondale from a city that was initially defined by railroads and the industrial revolution in the 19th century, into a globally connected and nationally recognized innovation and entrepreneurial community for students, businesses, and residents alike. As the revelation of the downtown area begins to occur, benefits will spread across the region.

"Carbondale's future success relies on our ability to be creative, innovative, and open to new ideas." – Carbondale Mayor John M. Henry

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND VISIONING SESSIONS

The need for many diverse perspectives to imagine opportunities for Carbondale and Southern Illinois University, and the opportunities afforded to us by the America's Best Communities Prize Competition, means that we should embrace community collaboration on a dramatically different scale.

In September 2015, The Carbondale ABC Grant Writing Team with the assistance of Sandel and Associates held two community collaboration workshops involving nearly two hundred participants. A three-hour workshop held the evening of September 21, 2015, at Southern Illinois University of Carbondale focused on the students, faculty, and staff of the university. A six-hour workshop at the Carbondale Civic Center the following day, September 22, 2015, included invited guests from across the Carbondale community.

During the workshops, attendees shared their hopes, aspirations, ideas, concepts, and challenges for revitalizing and shaping Carbondale's future. They participated in a series of strategic and creative thinking exercises directed toward Carbondale's opportunities, issues, and possibilities. Among the specific exercises, participants shared ideas about:

- Gaps in the Carbondale cityscape and experience that remain to be filled.
- Opportunities for Gigabit Internet speeds to change and improve university life.
- Dramatically moving Carbondale ahead in attracting businesses, boosting collaboration, and retaining SIUC students as Carbondale residents.
- Factors leading to future economic development, revitalization, and entrepreneurial successes.
- Priorities for community revitalization.
- Fantastic aspects of Carbondale that those outside the city should know about.
- Community-generated plays for inclusion in our Playbook.
- The input and ideas from both workshops helped shape development of the Playbook to best reflect Carbondale's diverse interests.

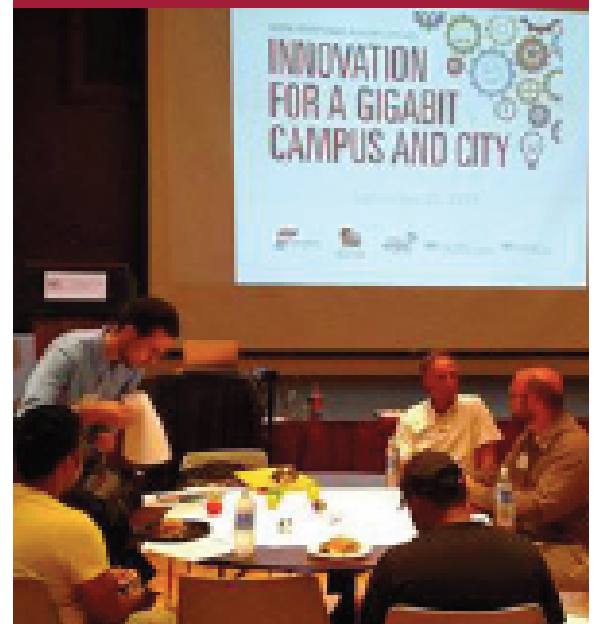
By collaboratively working together, the community can revisit the community vision and Playbook implementation on an annual basis. The community can then begin to propel Carbondale's economic development and community revitalization forward, and position Carbondale as a leading innovation community – regionally, nationally, and globally.

"I realized things that would work for my organization as well as the community as a whole. I will try to implement these ideas within my organization."

"The question about what we wish people knew about our community really identified our values and strengths as a community."

See our community visioning process in action:

<https://vimeo.com/144552122>



Just as Carbondale developed around the railroad system, Carbondale will be revitalized again out of community collaboration, entrepreneurship and ultra high-speed Internet access.

Figure 1 · Carbondale, Illinois 1902



# CARBONDALE IN CONTEXT

In 1852, 360 acres of undeveloped land was purchased in rural Southern Illinois due to its proximity to the future Illinois Central Railroad. The City of Carbondale was later born from this purchase as it capitalized on the new and innovative commerce surrounding the railroad. The Carbondale train station became the center of community life, exchanging passengers, freight, and opportunity. Carbondale's immediate access to the expedient transportation of products, services, and information contributed to Carbondale's success as a community and its development as the economic hub of Southern Illinois.

With the ability to transport information and services via the Internet, economies are experiencing a different revolution. Ultra high-speed Internet has become what the telegraph, the railway, and the train station were one hundred fifty years ago. That's what the Carbondale train station represents today, the node of instantaneous communication for the industrial revolution.

Today, Carbondale is entering into a new industrial revolution and a period of economic transition from the railroad to a new form of community collaboration and ultra high-speed Internet access. While the Frontier Gigabit grant and the Community Revitalization plan are in many ways the catalysts for this Playbook, it is really not about grants and plans. It is about Carbondale becoming a connected, smart, and innovative community that will attract on national and global levels, students, residents, businesses, and opportunities.

This is about how Carbondale organizes itself to lead regionally, nationally, and globally as an innovative rural community.

Carbondale and SIUC have an unprecedented opportunity to harness community collaboration and ultra high-speed Internet access to revitalize the city by improving neighborhoods, institutions, and lives.

Today, residents can begin to realize the benefits of collaboration, innovation, and ultra high-speed Internet access, but to succeed, Carbondale must be willing to commit the appropriate resources of people, funding, and time to work together with intentional focus.



The Community must embrace a mindset that will bring forth the community Champions who will realize the vision of the Playbook and this unprecedented opportunity. Ultra high-speed Internet access will usher in the next industrial revolution for Carbondale, but how residents collaborate, innovate, and work together will define success.

There is high potential for increasing the momentum and vibrancy of what already exists within Carbondale's current entrepreneurial ecosystem. Increased collaboration between people and organizations is the key to building on the existing framework and taking the entrepreneurial culture of Carbondale to the next level. The focus areas of the Playbook discuss in further detail how this can be accomplished.

Each Play will require:

- **Champions:** Energized individuals who are passionate about a particular Playbook or interest area. These people are the catalysts that often cause quick progress with little resources.
- **Organizations:** New and longstanding stakeholders that collaborate and create new levels of entrepreneurial activity.
- **Resources:** Time, people, assets and capital that are deployed to create momentum and energy.
- **Relationships and Education:** Building on current relationships by collaborating more deeply. Forming peer-to-peer entrepreneur and entrepreneur to mentor relationships that increase Carbondale's Entrepreneurial IQ.
- **Downtown Infrastructure:** Repurposing underutilized assets and overlaying high-speed digital assets to create an entrepreneurial energy and culture that attracts people, businesses and resources.
- **Metrics:** Measure entrepreneurial development and economic development to inform the community about ways to continually advance the entrepreneurial ecosystem and its future.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystems are powerful forces that advance society, communities and economies.

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The key to success is always to be advancing from a current state to a higher level future state.



When we collaborate as a community, we are able to generate the ideas and inspiration which create economic growth and prosperity.

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When we share our ideas and opportunities with others, and welcome regional and national collaboration, our community will grow exponentially.

# STRATEGIC ORGANIZING PRINCIPLES

In today's digital economy, a sense of place and creating and implementing new ideas and strategies faster, creates economic growth. Below are the strategic organizing principles which will allow Carbondale to transform itself from an industrial-era economy into a regionally, nationally, and globally recognized innovation community.

## Collaboration

Working together, the community can share aspirations, goals, and ideas to produce or create something original. This collaboration can generate the ideas and inspiration which create economic growth and prosperity. Exponential growth can be realized only when ideas and opportunities are shared.

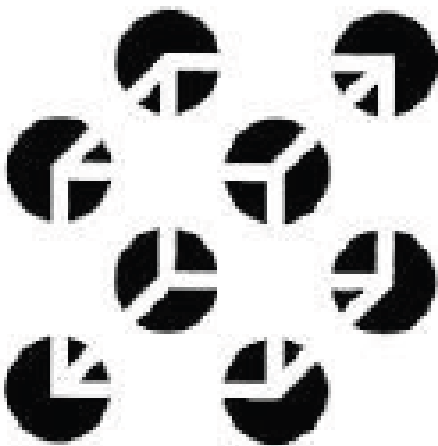
## Entrepreneurship

Community members need to be willing to try new things, to explore new ideas for our community, for our families and businesses. If the Carbondale team builds and educates its community around entrepreneurship, they will be building a stronger community with more economic opportunity for our students, families and businesses.

## Digital Inclusion

To achieve the greatest degree of economic and educational opportunity, everyone must move forward together. Community collaboration, entrepreneurship and ultra high-speed Internet access should extend to all of Carbondale, particularly to small businesses, schools, community centers, start-up firms, and the disadvantaged.

It is critical for leaders and community Champions to develop strategies for digital inclusion to help all residents and families to drive education and economic growth.





## Regional, National, and Global Leadership

Regional and national leadership positions can be achieved by supporting community Champions now and bringing Plays to life. This will lead the way of economic recovery for the rural community and also serve as an example regionally and nationally of how a community can make the jump from the industrial revolution to the creative economy. Putting an effective marketing and story campaign in place will be essential as the city adopts these organizing principles.

For Carbondale to reach this goal, it is entirely up to the community at large. The Carbondale team must support community Champions and commit resources to bring the Playbook to life.

To achieve the greatest degree of economic and educational opportunity, we must all move forward together.

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For Carbondale to reach this goal, it's entirely up to us. We must support our community Champions and commit resources to bring our Playbook to life.



Our future will depend on sharing information and providing resources that enable the success of our Champions.

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The Carbondale community should begin to identify Champions for our Playbook now.

# OUR COMMUNITY CHAMPION STRATEGY

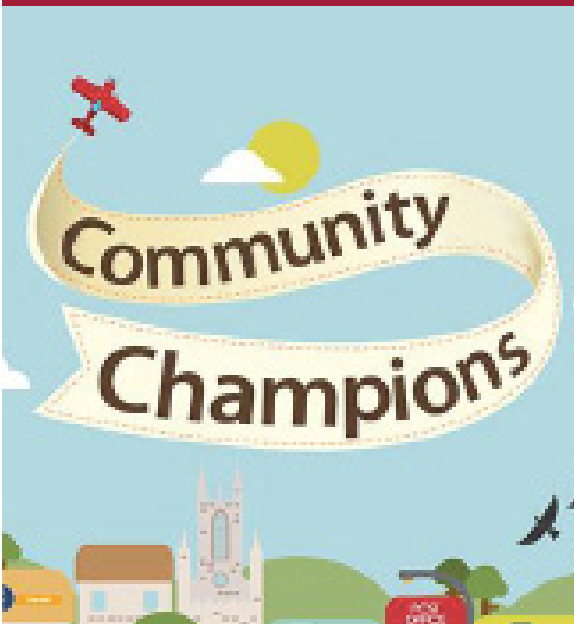
For Carbondale to realize the benefits of this opportunity, Champions must come forward who will act as the stewards for each of the Plays and for the Playbook itself.

Champions are energized individuals who are passionate about a particular area of interest and act as the catalysts that often cause quick progress with little resources.

Champions can come from any walk of life, from any neighborhood, business or institution. They could already be in a leadership position, or might work the night shift at a local business. The key is that they have strong interest in a particular area and that they passionately pursue the realization of that interest as challenges may arise.

In reality, everyone “owns” the Playbook. It is up to each and every citizen, business, and student to create a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship as a pathway to economic growth and prosperity for Carbondale. This Playbook will grow and evolve as the community learns to work in this new way, and our Champions will document Carbondale’s progress and continuously update the Playbook.

To further enable the success of the community and the mission of the Champions, it is essential to create a greater point of intersection and bring Champions and community conversation together. Current relationships can be enhanced by collaborating more deeply and forming community or peer-to-peer mentor relationships that will help Champions achieve their economic mission sooner.



# THE PLAYS

The Plays are short and long term tactics. They are also a foundation for the future growth of the innovation community. The Plays put tactics and strategies into immediate action by creating exciting pilot projects across the Carbondale community.

When the future is built around these plays, the community gives itself, the Champions, and entrepreneurs the opportunity to put the best ideas forward. These ideas will hold the greatest promise for economic and educational opportunity. When a Champion and a Play are brought together, the potential for community impact is even greater.

Plays also give Carbondale greater regional and national visibility. As Carbondale markets the community to attract students and new business opportunities, others can see and experience pilot projects and the new business and educational opportunities those Plays will bring. The initial Plays are categorized under the following themes:

## Entrepreneurship

- Entrepreneur Development Ecosystem Programming: Undertake a number of entrepreneur development initiatives that release latent entrepreneurial potential and energize the community.
- World Class Ecosystem Measurement System :Create a set of metrics that measure ecosystem momentum and economic outcomes.

## Our Innovation Neighborhood

Community Co-Working Site: A place where anyone can go to work, meet others and share new ideas or inspirations.

Downtown Transformations: A more walkable place to meet.

Base Camp Carbondale: An industry cluster for the great outdoors and related businesses.

Transit Oriented District: A tax district and central downtown location for all forms of transportation including rail, bus, walking and biking trails, bike and ride sharing.

Attracting and retaining students: Education and the student population is a central theme to the economy of Carbondale. Everyone should be working to attract more students.

Other adjacent markets also have entrepreneurial ecosystems. Carbondale has great potential to collaborate with St. Louis, Memphis and Nashville.

Education and the student population is a central theme to the economy of Carbondale. Everyone should be working to attract more students.



High speed wireless  
for our community, for  
entrepreneurs, small  
business and students.

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Ensure that high speed  
fiber is widely available  
throughout Carbondale.

**The Arts Downtown:** A part of town that includes a creative sense of place, as well as local arts displays and venues.

**Downtown Hostel:** A place where students and travelers can spend the night. A hostel can also become part of our regional and national entrepreneurial community.

## Economic Vitality

**Ongoing Community Visioning:** A regular, ongoing collaboration forum that brings Carbondale, SIUC, and other key community constituencies together.

**Ongoing SIUC & Carbondale Collaboration:** Create additional pathways for the faculty and students of the university and the leaders and residents of Carbondale to build toward common community goals.

**Developing Adjacent Markets:** Adjacent markets are also currently developing entrepreneurial ecosystems. Carbondale has great potential to collaborate with cities such as St. Louis, Memphis, and Nashville.

## Digital Inclusion

**Champions and Community Education:** Allows the city to utilize the entrepreneurial Champions as teachers to create new community education programs.

**Magnet for SIUC Alums in Retirement:** Ultra high-speed Internet together with the natural assets of Carbondale, SIUC and Southern Illinois creates a strong attraction for retiring alums.

**Distribute Laptops and Devices:** Put to good use computers, laptops and devices that can be refurbished and distributed to those in need. Provide training to those in need.

## Inclusive Community Infrastructure

**Community Wireless:** High speed wireless for our community, for entrepreneurs, small business and students.

**Fiber Deployment:** Ensure that high speed fiber is widely available throughout Carbondale by tracking existing assets and working with our community stakeholders to steadily increase the fiber footprint.

# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## PLAY: ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM PROGRAMMING

Entrepreneur Development Ecosystem Programming, gives Carbondale the ability to undertake a number of entrepreneur development initiatives that release latent entrepreneurial potential and energize the community.

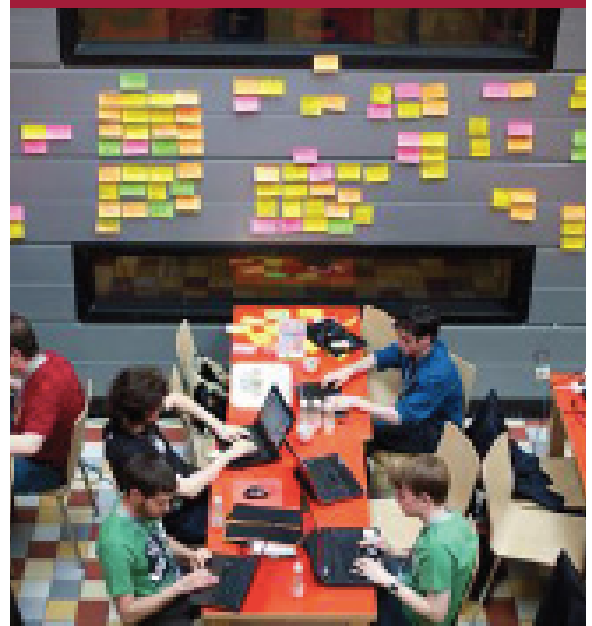
Carbondale's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Inventory provides a framework for discussing and collaborating. It also identifies seven high potential Entrepreneur Development ideas for building a more vibrant ecosystem. Local funding could provide sufficient resources to begin the first three of these potential ideas.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Assign a Champion for entrepreneur development programming with responsibility for coordinating a collaboration group of five to six City and SIUC individuals.
- Refine and agree on Entrepreneur Development programming ideas.
- Identify funding sources and sponsors for the first two or three ideas.
- Create an Entrepreneur Education Meetup Program. Could begin immediately. \$10,000 Community funded for first four months. 50% / 50% between community and ABC grant thereafter.
- Initiate Biweekly Entrepreneur End of Day Entrepreneur Meetups. Could begin immediately. \$3000 (\$300/event). Community funded for first ten events. 50% / 50% between community and ABC grant thereafter.

Establish a program coordinator for entrepreneur development programming with responsibility for coordinating a collaboration group of five to six city and SIUC individuals.

Regular and frequent Entrepreneur Development programming will cause large scale participation by the community and market expansion.



Create Playbook or Ecosystem Funding Competition with \$10,000 in Feasibility Awards (\$5,000 First, \$3,000 Second, \$2,000 Third). See Carbondale Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for budget and funding sources.

Regular and frequent Entrepreneur Development programming will cause large scale participation by the community and market expansion.

- Create an On-Line Entrepreneur Resource Website and Weekly Newsletter. Could begin immediately. Seek an in kind gift from a community website company.
- Create Playbook or Ecosystem Funding Competition with \$10,000 in Feasibility Awards (\$5,000 First, \$3,000 Second, \$2,000 Third).
- Develop Downtown Entrepreneur Co-working Space Using Underutilized Real Estate.

Longer-Term Ecosystem Development Possibilities:

- Create Volunteer Entrepreneur Mentoring Program.
- Create Startup Competition.

Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Regular and frequent Entrepreneur Development programming will cause large scale participation by the community and market expansion. City, SIUC, entrepreneur ecosystem Champion, and investor relationships will cause additional collaborations, new initiatives, and market expansion.
- This will energize momentum that will increase each year and be measurable. Carbondale's entrepreneurial culture will become recognized and economic outcomes will follow.





# ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## PLAY: WORLD CLASS ECOSYSTEM MEASUREMENT SYSTEM

The World Class Ecosystem Measurement System will give us an important set of metrics that can measure Ecosystem Momentum and Economic Outcomes for our community.

Carbondale's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Inventory provides a framework for developing a set of shared metrics that inform stakeholders, enhance collaboration, and ensure the energy and economic outcomes increase each year. Measuring annual improvement will be the foundation for continuous growth and the basis for reporting and celebrating accomplishments.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Assign a Champion to develop the metrics framework.
- Form a committee to review options for the framework.
- Develop the metrics framework for Carbondale.
- Create a 2015 baseline from gathered information.
- Identify information gaps that need to be addressed in 2016.
- Measure outcomes annually.

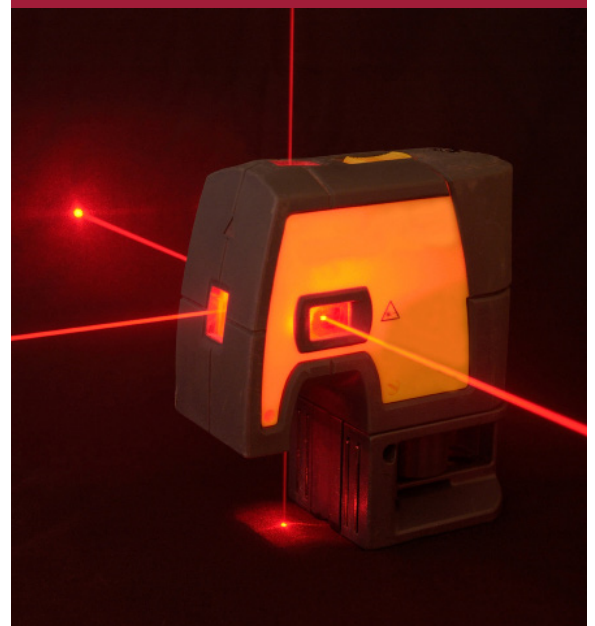
### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Establishing a World Class Ecosystem Metric System will increase collaboration and evolution across the region. It will also provide the community with information that can be used to enhance fund raising opportunities and reporting.
- Carbondale has the potential to be a community model that will be recognized and can be used by other regions, communities, universities, and organizations nationwide which are working on developing approaches and doing research in this area.

Carbondale has the potential to be a community model that will be recognized and used by others.

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Measuring our entrepreneurial metrics annually will be the basis for reporting and celebrating accomplishments.

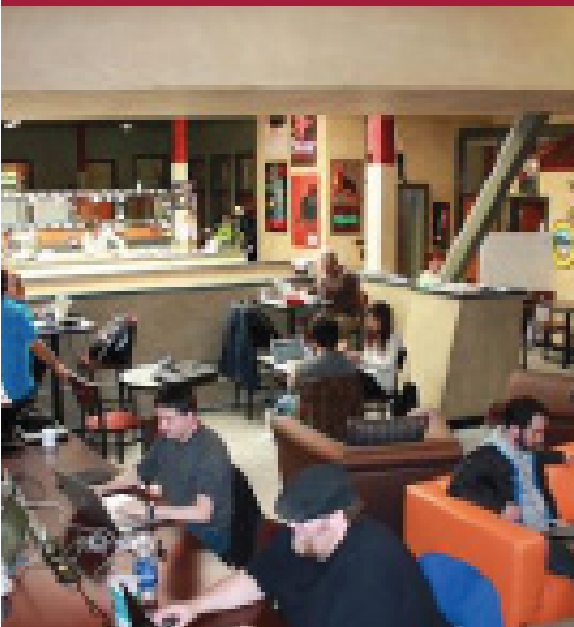




A co-working space is a place to come together, exchange ideas and inspiration.

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Identify a centrally located area for the co-working space. The co-working space should have easy access to all community members, organizations and students.



# OUR INNOVATION NEIGHBORHOOD

## PLAY: COMMUNITY CO-WORKING SITE

Community Co-working is a style of work that involves a shared working environment, yet independent activity. Unlike the typical office environment, a co-working space is generally shared by individuals from different organizations, professions and walks of life.

In earlier days, the area around the Carbondale train station was the focus of community life. In the new innovation economy, the area of focus will be around the exchange of ideas and inspirations that can create business and educational opportunity.

A co-working space, is a place for our residents to come together and exchange those ideas and inspirations.

A community can have one or more co-working locations, but we should begin by having the first co-working site at a central location that can be easily accessed by all residents.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Identify a central location for the co-working space. The co-working space should have easy access to all community members, organizations and students.
- Identify potential properties within that area for the co-working space.
- As the co-working space develops, make a plan to align the space with Carbondale's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Entrepreneurs, small businesses, students, and community organizations will have greater opportunity for collaboration and inspiration.
- New businesses will be formed as a result of this kind of interchange and exchange of ideas and inspirations.
- The location around the co-working space will attract further neighborhood development and desirable amenities.

# OUR INNOVATION NEIGHBORHOOD

## PLAY: DOWNTOWN TRANSFORMATIONS

The community should work together to transform downtown, to embrace a new sense of place and vitality, not just for the downtown area, but to also establish a new beginning and birth place for Carbondale's innovation community.

The community innovation process will be most efficient when there are more ways for persons to connect or interact with one another. When this happens, more ideas are exchanged and serendipitous moments can occur in which ideas and inspirations are turned into actions.

As the downtown area transforms into a more walkable space, with a variety of neighborhood amenities in which to work, relax, and entertain, then the community begins building for the future of our innovation community and the residential and student populations.

### Short Term Action Steps:

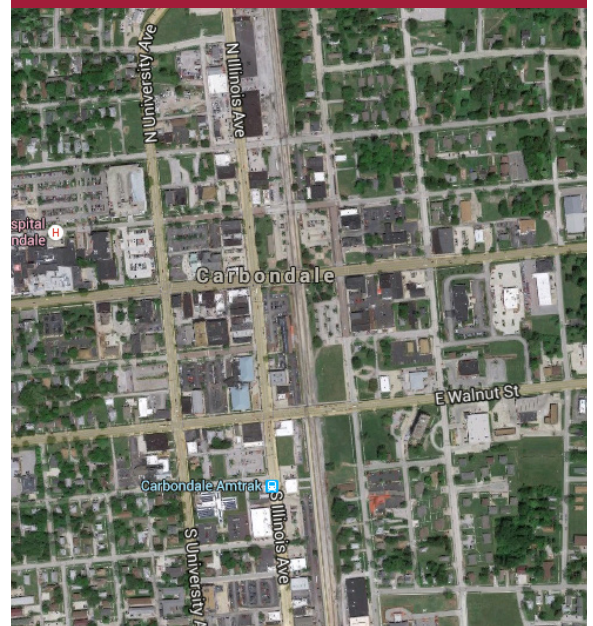
- Hold a student visioning session to let students reimagine downtown.
- Close certain streets to create a more walkable outdoor neighborhood.
- Make use of building rooftops to create green spaces.
- Create more places or avenues of intersection for residents and students to meet.
- Create a community co-working space.
- Create an attractive and walkable Arts District.
- Create a Transit Oriented District for all trains, buses, cars and bike sharing.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- A more walkable and interesting downtown with desirable amenities will attract students and residents alike.
- By working to develop cool mixed-use or residential living spaces, we will transform downtown.

When we begin to transform the downtown area as a more walkable space... then we are building for the future of our innovation community, our residential and student populations.

A more walkable and interesting neighborhood with cool amenities will attract students and residents alike.



Carbondale's strategic location near a large number of national and state parks, designated recreational areas, and outdoor sport enthusiasts makes it an ideal destination for innovative companies and entrepreneurs looking to explore new product ideas, connect with customers, and take advantage of an educated talent pool.

# OUR INNOVATION NEIGHBORHOOD

## PLAY: BASE CAMP CARBONDALE

Carbondale is perfectly positioned to create an economic cluster around outdoor sports, activities, equipment, and technologies. Already the hub of outdoor activity for the region, the community is ideally located near a multitude of lakes, major rivers, rock climbing destinations, and the beautiful and iconic Shawnee National Forest.

The cluster would take advantage of this natural setting to attract outdoor enthusiasts, world-class events, and innovative companies that would thrive within this environment. SIUC students would provide a built-in test audience for emerging products and services designed to capture this growth cluster.

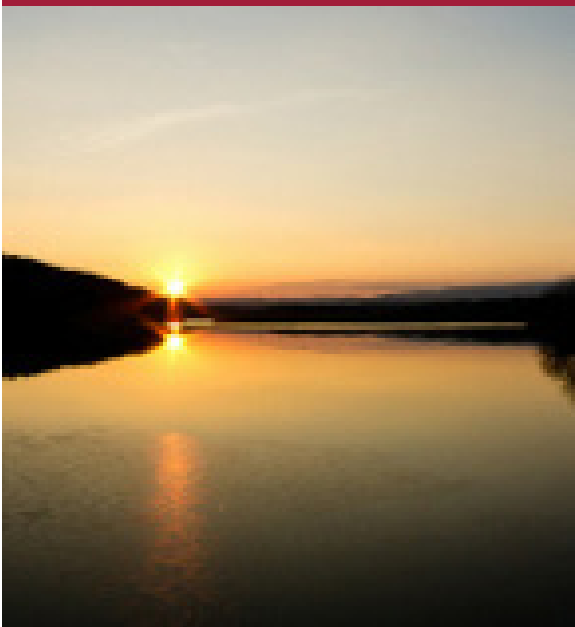
Carbondale's economic assets – physical infrastructure, high-speed connectivity, commercial/retail sectors, transportation systems, and educated talent – would attract and retain existing, as well as new players within the industry to what will be branded as the community's "Base Camp."

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Document outdoor related activities within the region and identify key leaders and participants within each activity.
- Research industry trends for equipment manufacturers, suppliers, and emerging technologies; develop a list of target companies to track and engage.
- Fund and conduct a series of business plan competitions with the goal of identifying and supporting new outdoor activity business concepts and technologies.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Increased tourism and retail activity.
- New businesses will be formed, business competitions, and technologies explored.
- A heightened awareness of the surrounding natural environment, its benefits and economic opportunities.



# OUR INNOVATION NEIGHBORHOOD

## PLAY: TRANSIT ORIENTED DISTRICT

Ever since the advent of railroads, the heart of many communities has centered on the train station. It served as the nexus of people, products, information, and community pride. Carbondale has the opportunity to reenergize these same important economic and social benefits through the development of a transit oriented district around the Amtrak station.

The district would take full advantage of its direct passenger rail connection to Chicago by adding a bus transfer station, car and bike sharing programs, and commuter parking along with connections to bike trails and pedestrian walkways. The district would create both indoor and outdoor “community space” to encourage the gathering of citizen groups, family-oriented activities, and artists.

### Short Term Action Steps:

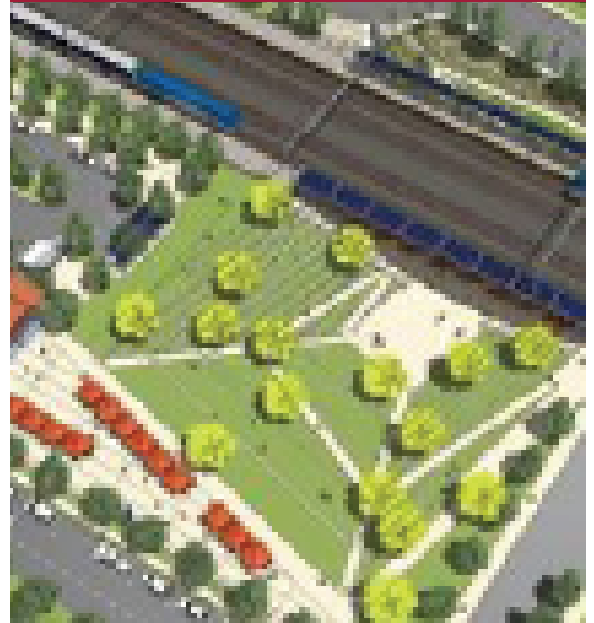
- Perform a community vision for the district, its amenities and benefits.
- Identify district boundaries, projects and funding sources.
- Build connections between the district and its “last mile” (e.g. employment centers, entertainment districts, government offices) to increase functionality.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Reduced strain on vehicle-oriented infrastructure.
- Increase demand for adjacent mixed-use development and residential spaces.
- Improved air quality and lower healthcare costs.
- Renewed sense of community pride and community engagement through use of public spaces.

A transit oriented district is a powerful and proven development tool that encourages community engagement, smart infrastructure investment and improved transportation systems.

The district would create both indoor and outdoor “community space” to encourage the gathering of citizen groups, family-oriented activities and artists.



Create a community engagement strategy to increase word of mouth communication between SIUC students and their friends around the world.

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The new American innovation economy is attractive to not only students across the US and Canada, but even more so to students all around the world.



# OUR INNOVATION NEIGHBORHOOD

## PLAY: ATTRACTING AND RETAINING STUDENTS

The Southern Illinois University student population is central to the Carbondale economy. The more community members work together to attract and retain students, the greater benefit will come to the entire economy. Therefore, the team shall create a community engagement strategy to increase word of mouth communication between SIUC students and their friends around the world.

The new American innovation economy is attractive to not only students across the US and Canada, but even more so to students all around the world. They see coming to an American University as not only an educational opportunity, but also as the best way to learn to become an entrepreneur. When students talk to their friends, the chance that a friend of an SIUC student will be attracted to Carbondale is increased.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Invite students to annual community visioning sessions.
- Encourage greater student participation in monitoring and improving the Playbooks progress.
- Create a special working session for foreign students.
- Make use of SIU collaboration tools to monitor interests and progress.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Increase SIUC's student population.
- Increase Carbondale's student retention rate.
- Build more economic and educational opportunity based upon a growing student population.

# OUR INNOVATION NEIGHBORHOOD

## PLAY: THE ARTS DOWNTOWN

The Arts Downtown Play is focused on creating a walkable part of the downtown dedicated to the arts and artists of all kinds. This will include sculptors, photographers, painters, interior and graphic designers, calligraphers, wood workers, jewelers, fiber artists, and other artistic disciplines.

Arts are the images of the human mind that create or lead to new ideas and inspirations. When the art community grows, more avenues of creative expression and innovation come to the community. As those new avenues of creative expression arrive, entrepreneurs and innovative persons take those ideas and turn them into actions. As those actions turn into reality, new opportunity will arrive for our students, residents, and community Champions.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Select to Champion to lead the Arts Downtown District committee.
- Collaborate with one another to envision the arts district.
- Develop a campaign and competition for outdoor arts for the district.

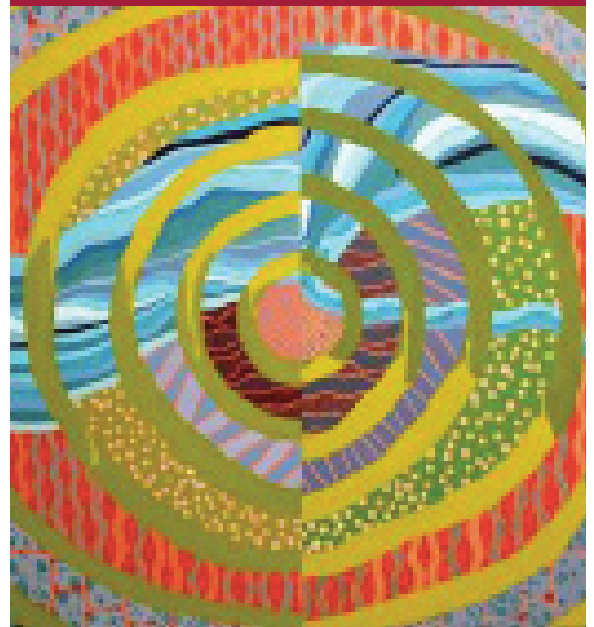
### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Creative arts will inspire new avenues of expression leading to new business and educational opportunities for our community.
- Outdoor arts will beautify the downtown area and create greater attraction and a creative sense of place.

A walkable part of downtown dedicated to the arts and artists of all kinds.

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When we grow our community with art, we bring more avenues of creative expression to our community.





When the hostel is located close to the co-working space, arts, cool neighborhood amenities and a transit oriented district, even more ideas become possible.

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We must create as many areas of interest and intersection by which students, visitors and travelers can meet.



# OUR INNOVATION NEIGHBORHOOD

## PLAY: DOWNTOWN HOSTEL

The Downtown Hostel will provide lodging for travelers and students from around the world. It will provide a convenient location at a low cost to encourage exploration of the region.

For our Downtown Hotel and innovation neighborhood to be successful, the team must create as many areas of interest and intersection by which students, visitors, and travelers can meet. When we build our innovation neighborhood in this manner, more conversations, ideas and inspirations will be shared. As those conversations take place, new opportunities will develop and turned into action.

When the hostel is located close to the co-working space, arts, desirable neighborhood amenities and a transit oriented district, even more ideas become possible.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Select a Champion to lead this development.
- Include students and persons from all walks of life, including international students.
- Investigate various international hostel organizations to partner with.
- Develop a unique brand and marketing strategy around Carbondale's new entrepreneurial philosophy.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Lifelong friendships and connections will be created.
- Students and travelers from around the world will bring economic and educational opportunity to Carbondale and tell its story to others around the world.



# ECONOMIC VITALITY

## PLAY: ONGOING COMMUNITY VISIONING

Over the course of two major initiatives in the last 18 months – the Downtown Master Planning process and the America’s Best Communities Grant Competition, large scale community collaboration events have helped us to re-imagine Carbondale’s future. As a result of both, the city’s nascent Gigabit Internet capability has been identified as a unique opportunity.

When the Carbondale ABC Grant Writing team brought together nearly eighty students from SIUC and a comparable number of Carbondale residents to collaborate about addressing these opportunities, the impact of this collaborative process was clear. The feedback in participants’ words included, “working with people from diverse backgrounds,” “talking to people [and] learning new things about the community,” “new and thought provoking ideas,” and how “great [it was] to see so many people get together to work on this [as] they started out strangers and became friends.”

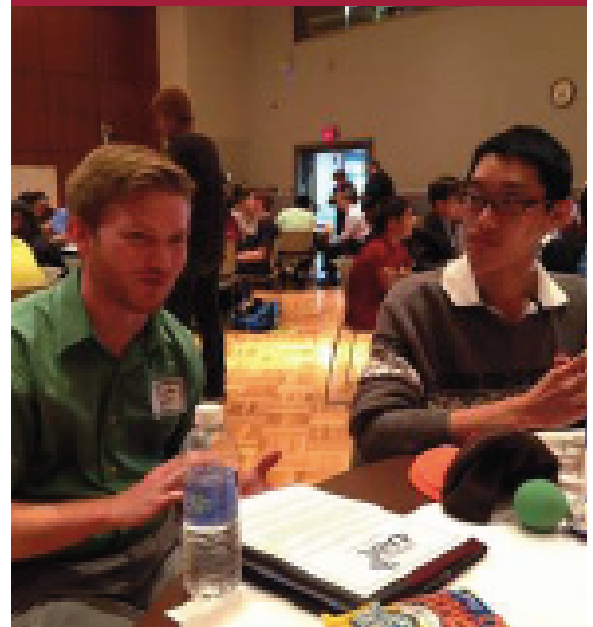
### Short Term Action Steps:

The impact of the initial collaborative visioning sessions was just a start. It is recommended that a regular, ongoing collaboration forum be held that brings Carbondale, SIUC, and other key community constituencies together to flesh out detailed planning on vital plays moving the community ahead:

- Schedule one or more collaboration sessions that bridge the City of Carbondale and the SIUC community to pave the way for stronger working relationships, especially relative to the transit play.
- Use design and preparation for the Carbondale-SIUC collaboration as an opportunity to train community leaders and SIUC students on the skills to successfully facilitate future community collaboration.
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If Carbondale is actively engaging all major constituencies to shape and roll out of its future vision, the momentum and impact fostered by the Carbondale4ABC initiative can continue to grow.

SIUC students and Carbondale community members collaborated powerfully to envision the future aspirations and opportunities in our Playbook.



As one participant described the experience, "The vast knowledge being brought together was beyond expectations."

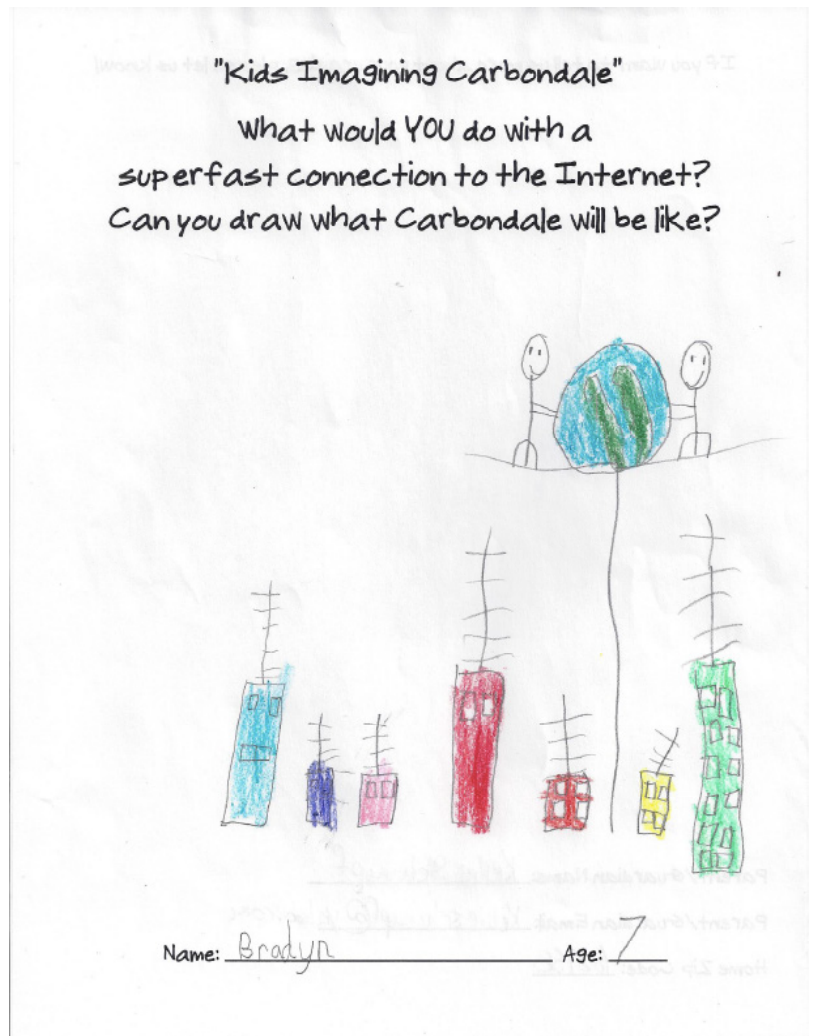
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Enables greater, longer-term connectivity among disconnected leaders in the community.

- Identify plays where collaboration across the community is a significant critical success factor and/or presents the greatest opportunity to upside impact.

#### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Enables greater, longer-term connectivity among disconnected leaders in the community.
- Recognizes and formalizes ongoing ties for the city and university to thrive in a collaboration environment.
- Introduces SIUC students more directly into taking an ownership stake in the future of Carbondale.



To include Carbondale's future leaders, the team asked grade school children to imagine the community with a "super fast connection to the internet." One student shared this picture of Carbondale connected and growing.

# ECONOMIC VITALITY

## PLAY: ONGOING SIUC & CARBONDALE COLLABORATION

SIUC & Carbondale Collaboration makes it possible for us to create additional pathways for the faculty and students of the university, and the leaders and residents of Carbondale, to build toward common community goals.

While the university and the city clearly have a symbiotic relationship, like most university towns, the lives of students and residents often proceed along parallel tracks. As the city of Carbondale looks to make the town more attractive and accessible to a recurring stream of new students and the university looks to provide its community with contemporary urban amenities, coordinated activities to strengthen the ongoing ties and the sense of opportunity between the university and town are likely to be mutually beneficial.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Launch a student retention initiative from the City economic development office.
- With 2,500 new students arriving in Carbondale every year, the pipeline of talent, youth and energy into Carbondale ought to be strategically leveraged to grow the city.
- Enhance tools to measure student retention, ideally the city and university working together to understand movement and placement of graduates.
- Measurement tools should expand beyond graduates to measure student relationships with the broader community as they proceed through time at the university. These tools may include surveys along with other metrics around participation, event activities, civics etc.
- Programs can be developed alongside the metrics that highlight the opportunities for students, address specific needs and opportunities, and target certain retention goals.

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The first step is to develop tools to measure student retention, ideally the city and university working together to understand movement and placement of graduates.



Students will gain further investment in the community as they see their work realized, and they will gain greater insight into what keeps residents there.

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Residents will benefit from student work and effort and gain greater appreciation for the tangible benefits the university can bring to the community.

- Establish a Volunteer Action Committee as a way to build social ties between city residents and students.
- Identify discrete public benefit projects that have appeal to both residents and students.
- Ideally, projects can include a mentorship aspect that aligns professional expertise of senior residents with the academic interests and course of study of students.
- Include both social and project-based activities within the scope of the collaboration.
- Determine where the organizational home for project identification and collaboration resides (e.g., a local non-profit, economic development agency, provost office, city office, etc).
- Ensure bus lines, bike and walking trails, signage and other features support physical connectivity between the campus and the town, especially as the city develops more resources around the information and innovation economy.

#### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Students will gain further investment in the community as they see their work realized, and they will gain greater insight into what keeps residents there.
- Residents will benefit from students' work and efforts and will gain greater appreciation for the tangible benefits the university can bring to the community.

# ECONOMIC VITALITY

## PLAY: DEVELOPING ADJACENT MARKETS

Carbondale is centrally located in Southern Illinois, close to other significant entrepreneurial markets in St. Louis, Nashville, and Memphis. In those markets, there are significant entrepreneurial and innovation initiatives. These adjacent markets hold potential business opportunity for Carbondale.

The team should reach out to their neighbors and share their plans to develop an entrepreneurial ecosystem for our city. They should share their entrepreneurial business opportunities with those markets, and should welcome the sharing of other opportunities with Carbondale. In this way, more intersections and conversations between Carbondale and other markets would produce more opportunity for Carbondale and its entrepreneurs.

### Short Term Actions Items:

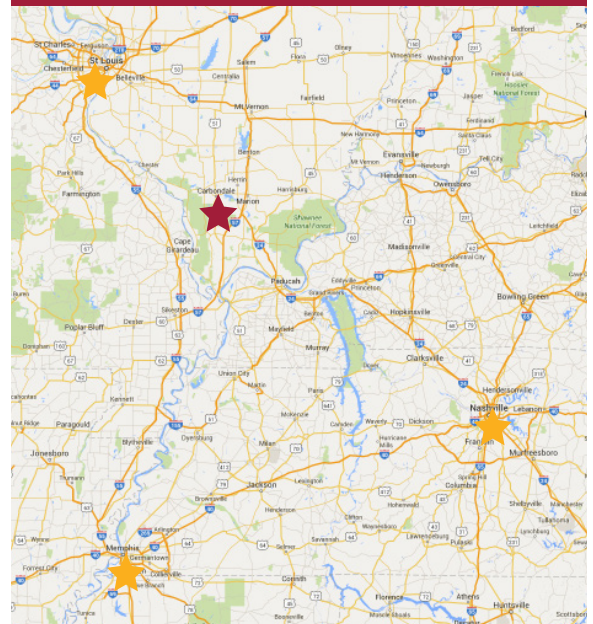
- Form a marketing outreach committee.
- Determine the organizations in those adjacent markets that would have a mutual interest in Carbondale's entrepreneurial and innovation community.
- Establish goals for those meetings and initiate conversations with those adjacent markets.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Bring opportunity to Carbondale entrepreneurs from other cities in theregion.
- Create awareness for Carbondale's innovative products and services to other markets.

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Determine the organizations in those adjacent markets that have mutual interested in Carbondale's entrepreneurial and innovation community.





For Carbondale to move forward as an innovation community, we must bring all of our talent to the table.

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Community education, combined with community engagement, creates more economic opportunity for all Carbondale residents.



# DIGITAL INCLUSION

## PLAY: CHAMPIONS AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Champions and Community Education allows Carbondale to utilize entrepreneurial community Champions as teachers to create educational programs that reach all of our community residents to educate, inspire, and share new developments in community innovation as the community begins to revitalize the city.

For Carbondale to move forward as an innovation community, all of the city's talent must be brought to the table. The Carbondale community has a strong distinction of having a wide variety of educated persons and students who come to the city from all over the world.

The ability to build a truly creative economy and begin the process of revitalizing Carbondale will require the best efforts of citizens coming forward and bringing all of the community's talent to the table, no matter what walk of life they may have come from.

### Short Term Actions Items:

- Determine which educational topics are needed and those topics that would be of most interest to residents and students.
- Match Champions with those topics to develop community education programs.
- Integrate the community education programs with a yearly schedule of innovation community events.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Community education combined with community engagement creates more economic opportunity for all Carbondale residents.
- By educating and working together, a stronger innovation community is built to accelerate the revitalization of Carbondale.

# DIGITAL INCLUSION

## PLAY: MAGNET FOR SIUC ALUMS IN RETIREMENT

Combining the allure of a convenient, affordable, active, college town with the ability of ultra high-speed Internet to maintain quality connections with family, friends, and resources world-wide, Carbondale can attract alumni who want something less harried than a major city, but more stimulating than a Sun Belt retirement village.

Carbondale and the Southern Illinois region have significant assets attractive to persons at or near retirement age, particularly if they are familiar with or have an affinity for SIUC. These include: low cost of living, healthcare availability, excellent weather, outdoor recreational opportunities, cultural and entertainment options, and small-town convenience combined with a significant retail footprint.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Identify a Champion to lead and organize the initiative.
- Identify alums at or nearing retirement, particularly those who have maintained a connection to the University, and promote the Carbondale as an attractive retirement option.
- Develop fiber wired senior-friendly housing assets that are close to campus and convenient to transportation and retail.
- Work with SIUC engineering and computer science departments to enable aging-in-place technology and applications.
- Collaborate with local healthcare providers to further develop telemedicine options, including access to specialists in nearby metropolitan areas.
- Develop post-career education and activity opportunities that take advantage of the entertainment and cultural assets of SIUC.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Retiring alums increase Carbondale's population and bring significant disposable income into the community without requiring new jobs to be available or putting significant pressure on the current infrastructure.

Putting the connecting qualities of ultra high-speed internet together with the natural assets of Carbondale, SIUC and Southern Illinois creates a strong attraction for alums looking for just the right place to retire.

Becoming a magnet for SIUC alums at or approaching retirement puts a new spin on the concept of retaining students and graduates in Carbondale.





For Carbondale to thrive as an innovation community, it is imperative that all of our residents have easy access to computers, laptops and mobile devices.

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When some of us do not have access to a computer, we are not putting our best foot forward as a community.



# DIGITAL INCLUSION

## PLAY: DISTRIBUTE COMPUTERS, LAPTOPS AND DEVICES

Create a community organization which collects available computers, laptops, and other devices and makes them available to any resident for use. For the city to thrive as an innovation community, it is imperative that all residents have easy access to computers, laptops and mobile devices.

When some residents do not have access to a computer, the Internet, and/or proper training how to use both, the community cannot realize the full benefits of its ultra-high speed internet infrastructure. It does not matter what walk of life or neighborhood the residents live in, everyone will have ideas and aspirations for their families, the innovation community and for the future of Carbondale.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Select a community Champion to assess the availability of computing devices and related community resources.
- Select a group of students who are interested to repair and refurbish those computing devices.
- Develop a distribution plan for the devices.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Creates new jobs and opportunities for participating residents and students.
- Investigate programs that would use students to train and mentor others on the use of the devices and the Internet.
- Seek out programs and grants that could help bring the Internet to households that could not previously afford it.
- Provides for greater computing and Internet access and educational opportunity for all of our residents.

# COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

## PLAY: COMMUNITY WIRELESS

High-speed community wireless capability, combined with high speed Internet fiber is a game changer for our community and for the student population.

As more and more wireless devices proliferate, it is crucial that the Carbondale community also has high-speed wireless capability at strategic locations across the community to support small business, students and entrepreneurs.

In the early stage, high-speed wireless capability should include all educational and community outreach organizations. It should also include seamless access from the university campus, to the downtown area, and also to the main shopping mall and entertainment areas.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Identify the essential stakeholders and the foot print for the community wireless network.
- Identify the essential infrastructure to support the wireless network.
- Develop a branding, marketing, and advertising strategy for the student and small business community.
- Request a proposal for the wireless network.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Students, entrepreneurs, and small businesses will benefit.
- Real-estate market will benefit from access to high-speed fiber and wireless.
- Innovative retail sales applications will benefit sales organizations.
- Provides an alternate access method for public safety and community communications.

It is crucial that we also have high-speed wireless capability at strategic locations across our community to support small business, students and entrepreneurs.

In the early stage, high-speed wireless capability should include all educational and community outreach organizations.



Establish a point person or small “fiber action committee” with responsibility for monitoring fiber assets in the community and identifying opportunities to expand those assets.

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A fiber action committee will be able to report progress and create accountability.

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Explore pairing high-demand and low-demand neighborhoods to avoid service gaps and a digital divide.



# COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

## PLAY: FIBER DEPLOYMENT

Fiber Deployment helps the community ensure that high-speed internet service is widely available throughout Carbondale by tracking existing assets and working with all stakeholders to steadily increase the fiber footprint.

Realizing the community impact that robust Internet connectivity can yield requires significant effort and commitment beyond simply laying fiber. As excitement grows around the potential for spin-off activity and for growing an ecosystem to support innovation, creativity, vibrant places and entrepreneurship, it is easy to forget the fiber itself that acts as a catalyst for this growth. Carbondale needs to ensure a tight focus remains on identifying, expanding, and activating commercial and residential assets within the city and ensuring that they are accessible and affordable to residents, businesses and anchor institutions.

### Short Term Action Steps:

- Select a Champion and small “fiber action committee” with responsibility for monitoring fiber assets in the community and identifying opportunities to expand those assets.
- Create an inventory of downtown buildings and building owners along with fiber availability and usage within each building. Concentrate inventory on priority areas as needed.
- Work with local Internet service providers, such as Frontier, to measure residential demand and understand where aggregated demand can support deployment.
- Explore pairing high-demand and low-demand neighborhoods to avoid service gaps and a digital divide. Prioritize affordable business class gigabit service to the Southern Illinois University Research Park and downtown.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Ready access to fiber infrastructure is the backbone that enables much of the Playbook activity. A fiber action committee will be able to report progress and create accountability.
- ISPs can commit to fiber installation when the city is a partner in the information gathering and business case.

# COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

## PLAY: INTERNET PEERING POINT

An Internet Exchange Point or IX allows service providers to interconnect directly, via the exchange, rather than through one or more third-party networks. The advantages of the direct interconnection are numerous, but the primary ones are cost savings, latency, and bandwidth.

Currently, Carbondale does not have an IXP which means that local Carbondale Internet communications may travel all the way to Chicago before they are able to come back to Carbondale. Just imagine each time you send a file to a friend across Carbondale, it has to go to Chicago first before it is delivered to your friend in Carbondale!

This inefficient routing causes a delay or latency problem. The latency in turn effects downloads speeds for files, Netflix, Cloud services or even YouTube across Carbondale.

### Short Term Actions Steps:

- Locate a site for the IXP that is common and well known to local service providers.
- Appoint a neutral third party to operate and maintain the IXP for the mutual benefit of all ISP's.

### Benefits and Long Term Outcomes:

- Faster downloads and better Internet efficiency.
- More efficient contention distribution.

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