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Southwestern Illinois: Office markets soar



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The existing office market continues to enjoy excellent occupancy levels and most developments in Fairview Heights, Swansea, O'Fallon and Edwardsville remain at a 90 percent or better occupancy level.

The retail, residential and office markets are growing at a rapid pace in

the O'Fallon/Shiloh areas since the completion of the interchange at I-64 and Green Mount Roads. This area has become the new home to Dierberg's, Target, World Market, Green Mount Lakes Apartments, Parkway Sixty-Four Corporate Center, Drury Inn & Suites, Holiday Inn Express, American Appliance, Commerce Bank, Applebee's, St. Louis Bread Company, Old National Bank and Gold's Gym. Many new office/retail centers are under construction or proposed in this area in 2005 and 2006.

Another development that continues to grow is

The Fountains at Fairview, which is a 150-acre master-planned community, anchored by a new 120-room Four Points Sheraton Hotel and 22,000 square foot Conference Center. Centrué Bank has completed construction of a 24,000-square-foot three-story office building and has plans to occupy the first floor.

Belleville continues to see major growth in the residential market with new subdivisions and additions to existing ones such as ReUnion, Plum Hill Estates, Orchards, Maple Hills and Sunset Ridge. Industrial develop-

ment has grown substantially along Route 15 between I-255 and Route 158. The Bank of Belleville plans to open a new 6,000 square foot retail banking facility in Richland Plaza III in October 2005. Other major projects planned for the Belleville area include: \$12 million to reconstruct and provide landscaping "A" Street to Route 159 and the new 30,000-square-foot YMCA that is under construction on Route 159.

Edwardsville has also seen its share of increased retail, residential and office growth in the past few years. Dierberg's

is planning to open its first store in Madison County along with many other retailers still to be announced on a 40-acre site on Route 159. Industrial development continues at the Gateway Commerce Center in Granite City, Commerce Place in Highland and Eastport in Collinsville.

The Metro East office market continues to grow at a very steady pace as we hit the middle of 2005. The outlook is positive as developers, tenants and lenders look forward to the exciting activity slated to take place in the Southwestern Illinois area.