



# MONROE COUNTY MANUFACTURING AND LOGISTICS INDUSTRY OVERVIEW



## COUNTY OVERVIEW

Monroe County, Illinois, sits in the southern portion of the St. Louis region -- a vital transportation hub and home to all four major modes of transportation including road, rail, water and air. The county lies just east of the Mississippi River and south of the St. Louis metropolitan area, among lush rolling hills dotted with numerous picturesque communities that are home to growing populations and thriving businesses. These communities include the towns of Columbia, Waterloo (county seat), Valmeyer and Hecker, as well as other smaller villages such as Maeystown and Fults. Featuring the safest municipalities in the state, it has been **one of the fastest growing counties in the bi-state area**, seeing its population increase nearly 20% between 2000 and 2010, before posting a more modest increase of another 4% (32,431 to 33,739) between 2010 and 2017 (U.S. Census). Monroe County also is **home to approximately 3,000 businesses** of many different types, from manufacturing and light industrial, to technology, professional services, warehouse and distribution, retail, and corporate headquarters.

Since 2016, economic development in the county has been guided by the Monroe County IL Economic Development Corporation ([MCILEDC](#)), which aligns the efforts of public and private leaders to move the economy forward in the county and other opportunity areas in adjacent Randolph and St. Clair Counties. Its governing Board is made up of 30 business and government leaders dedicated to continuing to grow a more diversified local economy, a broader tax base and an enhanced quality of life for the region.

## A Few Facts

- More than **750 acres of prime property are available** (divisible) for development on, or minutes away, from IL Route 3/I-255 with additional access to Interstates 64, 270, 44 and 55 and in close proximity to Union Pacific's Dupo Intermodal Yard, airports and river.
- Various **incentives are available** for key development sites, including TIF, Enterprise Zone benefits, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Direct Access program, along with assistance through a Fueling Growth initiative.
- Approximately 65% of the population in the MCILEDC service area has a high school education or higher, with nearly 18% of those possessing bachelor's degrees or higher.
- Drawing from the entire greater St. Louis MSA, the area attracts and retains a highly stable population of **skilled, professional workers** which contributes to high productivity employment services.
- **Excellent high bandwidth broadband** connection exists to more than 95% of the region. 20,000 strand miles of fiberoptic strands are available throughout Monroe and St. Clair counties, in addition to more than 60 miles of fiber-based facilities that are currently being leased.
- Parks and trails and other **quality of life** issues have been prioritized.
- Overall costs of doing business in the region much lower when compared to other parts of the country.

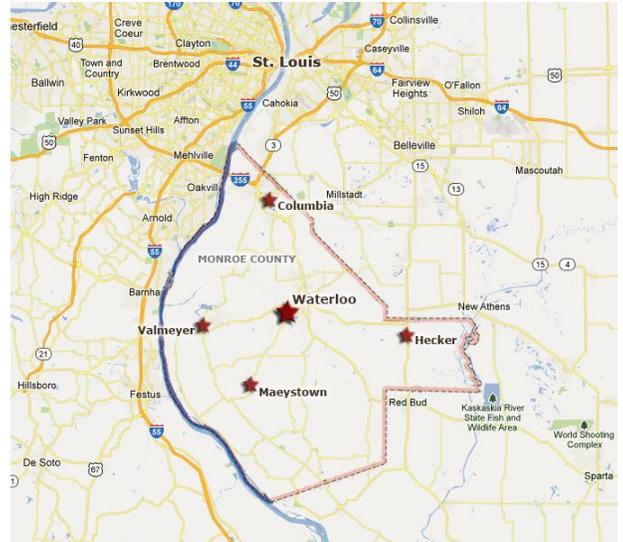


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## LOCATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS DRIVE GROWTH

The northern portion of the county is on the I-255 interstate system with **direct access to downtown St. Louis** just 11 miles to the north, and heavily developed and populated communities of south St. Louis County five miles to the west. It is bordered to the west by **38 miles of commercially navigable and un-impounded middle Mississippi River** flanked by an urban-protected levee north of I-255 and an agricultural levee south of I-255. The area is bordered by St. Clair County to the northeast and partially bordered on the east by the lower Kaskaskia River, which is channelized and impounded by a lock and dam for commercial navigation. The service area also features a roadway system with access to I-255 and I-64, along with Highways IL Route 3, IL 156, and IL 159. The **multi-modal capabilities provided by Union Pacific** add to the transportation assets of the region. Potential for future development has been secured due to construction of 100-year levee flood protection improvements resulting in full Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) accreditation. Additional 500-year improvements are currently underway.



## INVESTMENT ENHANCES THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK AND SUPPORTS DEVELOPMENT



Manufacturing accounts for approximately 12% of the employment in Monroe County, with another 10% of the jobs involving trade or transportation/warehousing. Mining/quarrying and oil/gas extraction also contribute significantly to the economic activity within Monroe County.

The presence of these industries underscores the need for reliable transportation infrastructure. Of the more than \$2.75 billion in critical projects identified as priorities by the St. Louis Regional Freightway 2022 [Priority Project List](#), several directly benefit Monroe County. Among those in the county or within close proximity to it are:

### ***I-255/Davis St. Ferry Rd Interchange – (Funded)***

\$42 million in funding is supporting the development of the new I-255/Davis Street Ferry Road interchange, which will replace the existing interchange at Exit 9 (Old Illinois Route 3 /Main Street) with improved roadway geometry. The project will be a diverging diamond interchange with a system of connecting roads to **serve the emerging 2,000-acre industrial area** along Davis Street Ferry Road. It would be a key benefit for the Union Pacific Intermodal Yard in Dupu, **one of the region's largest intermodal assets**, supporting expanded operations and helping it to remain competitive, as well as supporting development near the proposed interchange and in nearby Monroe County.



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## ***I-255/Fish Lake (Ramsey Rd) Interchange (Concept Development or Planning Stage)***

This \$27 million project would improve the current Fish Lake (Ramsey Road) overpass into a full highway interchange providing additional **access to, and enabling further expansion of, the Union Pacific Dupo Intermodal Yard**. The new highway interchange would also complement proposed improvements at the I-255 /Davis Street Ferry interchange. The project would increase the growth of manufacturing and distribution businesses, which would mutually benefit the Village of Dupo as well as economic development south of I-255 in the City of Columbia.

## ***Kaskaskia Regional Port District Improvements -- KRPD (Partially programmed for construction)***

Three separate projects with an estimated total cost of \$40 million will enhance various facilities within KRPD, which is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest inland port in the nation. The projects will meet existing customer needs and attract new industrial opportunities, enhancing economic development opportunities on the Kaskaskia River, the **fastest growing tributary in the inland waterway system**. Tonnage on the Kaskaskia River is expected to double by 2022. IL Route 3 in Monroe County is the primary distribution route from KRPD Terminal #2. This facility has the only 50-ton overhead crane in the St. Louis region at a port terminal and has container on barge capabilities that are also supported by the presence of the Union Pacific Intermodal Yard in Dupo to the north.



## ***Other Projects to Watch***

Other projects that contribute to the future economic development in Monroe County and beyond include:

***The Southwest Illinois Connector*** -- The proposed rural expressway would enhance the connection of Southwest Illinois to the St. Louis metropolitan area. The overall scope of work is to expand the existing roadway to a 4-lane partial access-controlled expressway on IL Route 3/Route 154/County Highway 18/County Highway 13/County Highway 127 through Monroe, Randolph, Perry and Jackson Counties in southwestern Illinois. Widening the highway to two lanes in each direction **will enhance capacity and reduce travel times, promote tourism, and boost infrastructure investment and economic activity** in the region. Legislation supporting the \$805 million project was passed in 2020 in Illinois Public 101-0638.

***Other Non-Interstate Corridors*** -- Emerging connectors are non-interstate segments of the St. Louis region's roadway network that provide **linkages to featured industrial real estate sites**. The St. Louis Regional Freightway's 2021 Non-Interstate Truck Corridor Study identified three corridors within Monroe County as Emerging Connectors. The Study is a planning tool that brings awareness of the freight-related role of roadway assets beyond the interstate system. Each project represents a route that **supports the manufacturing and logistics industries** and is considered to be a priority infrastructure project for funding. The three projects are:

- Bluff Road (County Highway 6) between IL Route 156 and Hanover Rd (connecting to IL Route 3)
- IL Route 3 between the Monroe/Randolph County Line and I-255 – includes portions of the Southwestern Illinois Connector
- IL Route 156 between Bluff Road and IL Route 3

For more information regarding the above projects, please view Monroe County's full [report](#) in the 2021 Non-Interstate Truck Corridor Study.



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## INDUSTRIAL SITES OF NOTE

Among the more than 750 acres of prime property available for development are several, with eligible projects, that are incentivized with TIF, Enterprise Zone benefits, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Direct Assistance Programs. The area also benefits from the USDA-funded “Fueling Growth” initiative.

### [Monroe County Electric Company \(MCEC\) Property](#) (*Enterprise Zone and CDBG-Direct Assistance*)

Located near the intersection of IL Route 3 and Kaskaskia Road/Quarry Road, this property includes more than 60 acres of available developable land that could be divisible. It is currently used for agricultural purposes, but can be rezoned quickly in order to accommodate industrial land uses. The site offers lots of synergies for a locating business with various **trucking, quarry, and manufacturing facilities nearby**. Electric, water, and fiber are available along Illinois Route 3 and easily extendable to the site. Plans are in the works for natural gas and sewer. The property is less than 10 minutes away from I-255 and the Union Pacific intermodal facility in Dupu.



### [Rock City Business Complex](#) (*Enterprise Zone, TIF, CDBG-Direct Assistance*)



This development, located north of IL Route 156 and west of the Village of Valmeyer, is a repurposed limestone quarry that is now home to the **nation’s largest underground storage, refrigeration, and business complex**. Approximately 137 acres/five million square feet of readily available space is ideal for various uses such as storage, warehousing, distribution, maximum security depository, light manufacturing, office space, and information technology. The site also provides other unique benefits to prospective tenants in that it can offer **natural climate control, minimal costs associated with building or site maintenance**, and natural protection from

earthquakes, tornadoes, ice storms, or acts of terrorism. Prospective tenants would be using an environmentally friendly, sustainable complex, while other incentives such as tax credits, grants, and sales tax exemptions could also be available. The Complex houses major organizations such as Little Caesars, Cargill, Branding Iron, and the National Archives and Records Administration. It sees daily service with logistics providers such as FedEx, UPS, DHL and USPS.

### [Dupu Real Estate and Development Sites](#) (*TIF, Enterprise Zone*)

Just north of the Monroe County/St. Clair County border, there are ample opportunities for commercial and industrial development on more than 200 acres in the Village of Dupu, which is at **one of the nation’s primary east-west rail corridors** serving America’s third largest rail hub. The **new \$42 million interchange** on Interstate 255 at Imbs Station Road and Davis Street Ferry Road is scheduled for completion in 2023. There is potential that significant land located around this intersection could be available for future industrial and freight-related development.

### [Other Industrial Sites Targeted for Development](#) (*Enterprise Zone, CDBG-Direct Assistance*)

- Highly visible frontage along west side of IL Route 3 north of Hanover Road – 124 acres
- Frontage along east side of IL Route 3 north of Hanover Road – 56.65 acres.
- Bixby Road at I-255, near Jefferson Barracks Bridge in the City of Columbia – 41 acres
- Frontage along the west side of IL Route 3 at Gall Road in the City of Waterloo – 122 acres across two sites
- West Gate Drive near IL Route 3 in the City of Columbia – 13 acres.

**For more information and/or site selection assistance, contact Edie Koch, Executive Director,  
Monroe County IL Economic Development Corporation at [ekoch@mciledc.com](mailto:ekoch@mciledc.com).**