



ANNUAL REPORT
Fiscal Year 2022





Mission Statement

As the official destination management organization, the mission of the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau is to market the communities within the Chicago Southland region as a meetings and leisure destination; soliciting conventions, exhibitions, sporting events and other related group business; engaging in visitor promotions including those which generate overnight stays for the region; promoting lodging, food and beverage, attractions, festivals and events; and other visitor related businesses; to promote and aid in tourism-related product development, thereby enhancing and developing the image, economic fabric and vitality of the Southland.

Our History

The Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau was founded over 35 years ago as a subsidiary of the Regional Economic Development Coordinating Corporation. In 1993, the CVB separated from its parent organization, servicemarked the name and became an independent 501(c)(6) organization. As a regional cooperative, the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau represents 62 south and southwest municipalities approximately 25 miles south of downtown Chicago.

Five-year Strategic Plan

The CSCVB continues to implement the five-year Strategic Plan making modifications as the market adjusts. This plan is the guiding document as the CVB and the local hospitality region take the next steps in destination marketing and development.

1. Enhance the Image of the Destination
2. Support Destination Enhancing Development
3. Expand Sales & Marketing Partnerships throughout the Region

To Our Partners

While we're not completely out of the woods yet with COVID, the Chicago Southland region started seeing substantial recovery in the 2022 Fiscal Year thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff, Board of Directors, 62 municipalities, regional partners and organizations.

In Fiscal Year 2022, the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau's sales team participated in 4 virtual and 14 in-person industry tradeshow. These tradeshow are vital to bringing new meetings, group tours and sporting events to the Chicago Southland region while also building and maintaining relationships with meetings and events planners. Throughout these tradeshow, the sales team was able to meet with 474 event planners and have 275 prospective customers as we continue to grow our customer base.

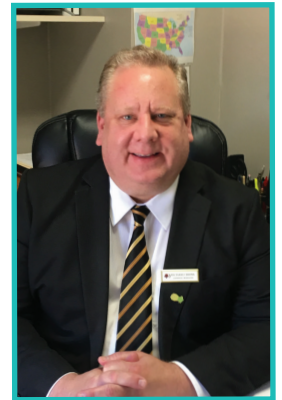
Throughout Fiscal Year 2022, Chicago Southland hotels consistently performed better than other Chicagoland hotels, maintaining the highest occupancy rates all year! On average, Chicago Southland hotels had a 66.7% occupancy for the fiscal year.

Our marketing and communications team created more than 75 million media impressions through public relations, direct advertising efforts and social media outreach. Our enhanced website, VisitChicagoSouthland.com, reached 288,850 unique visitors, coming from all 50 states and 199 countries. We also distributed over 41,000 brochures through direct inquiries and at our Visitor Information Center in the Chicago Southland Lincoln Oasis in South Holland.

Additionally, the CVB partnered with Threshold 360 to offer FREE 3D virtual tours to local partners. These tours allow planners to safely tour a property or revisit after an in-person site inspection. To date, 48 partners have signed up to participate in these FREE video tours resulting in 230,239 web views, 2,772,904 Google views and 363,317 engagements.

It's been said, growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together. Thanks to the unrelenting tenacity of East Hazel Crest Village President Thomas Brown and Homewood Village President Rich Hofeld, ground has been broken on the first Chicago Southland casino. Opening in late 2023/early 2024 is the 70,000-square-foot Wind Creek Chicago Southland casino, owned by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians. Once the casino is completed, they will begin construction on a 252-room luxury hotel on site as well. But the collaboration and growth doesn't stop there, we're delighted to share new attractions, restaurants and hotels will open in 2023 including the Hampton Inn in Orland Park and Holiday Inn Express in Oak Forest.

Finally, the Chicago Southland CVB is dedicated to maintaining relationships with existing clients and actively establishing connections with new partners. Our team will continue to enthusiastically promote and encourage reunions, meetings, group tours and sports planners to bring their events to the Chicago Southland. Our commitment to promoting the region is limitless and we thank you for the role you play in supporting the Chicago Southland and the CVB!



Richard Brink
Chairperson

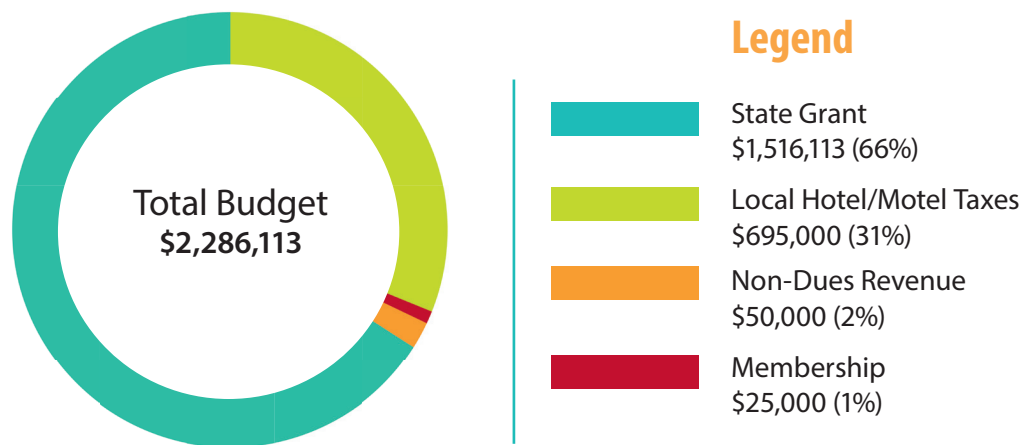
Jim Garrett, CDME
President, CEO

Financial Highlights

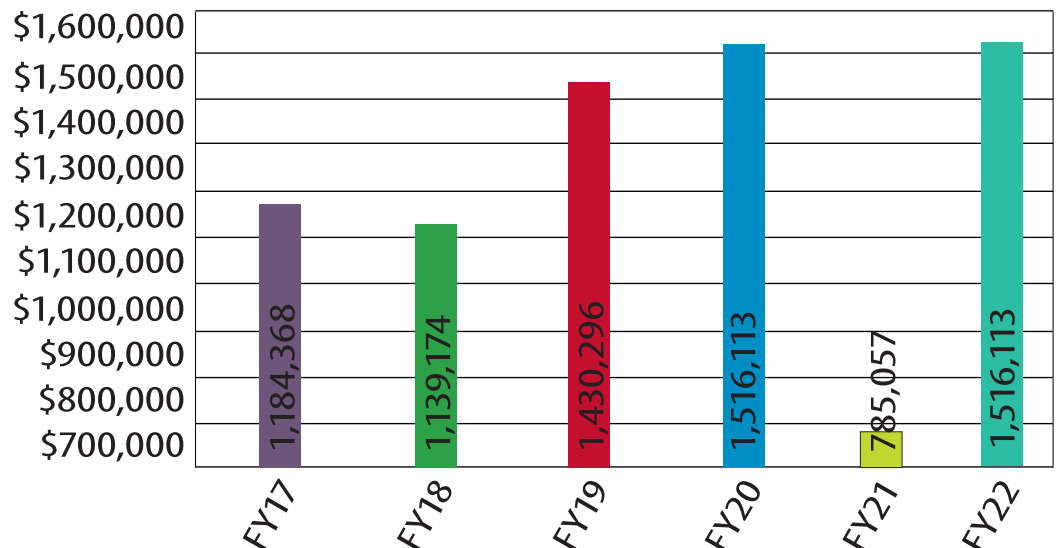
How the CVB is Funded

The Chicago Southland CVB is a regionally funded destination marketing and management organization. The FY22 annual budget was composed of several funding sources including a \$1,516,113 state grant. The Local Tourism Convention Bureau Grant program requires the recipient to match the grant funds. The match funds are comprised of three main sources. First, the CVB has funding agreements with 16 municipalities to receive a portion of their transient/motel room tax for marketing purposes. Second, the CVB has a growing membership that makes an annual investment in its programs. Third, the CVB develops resources including non-dues revenue, to enhance and expand its programming responsibilities.

The LTCB Grant is awarded to Illinois certified Convention & Visitors Bureaus to enable them to conduct national and regional sales efforts and promotional activities designed to increase the number of travelers visiting their areas.



Local Tourism Convention Bureau (LTCB) Grant Growth



Tourism Impact

2021 Illinois Tourism Impact

More than 97.1 MILLION VISITORS enjoyed Illinois

Visitors spent \$32.2 BILLION in Illinois

Illinois state and local tax revenue reached \$5 BILLION

Illinois generated \$177 MILLION in Hotel/Motel tax

Travel expenditures directly supported 388,800 JOBS

(Source: Economic Impact of Visitors in Illinois 2021)

Illinois tourism SAVES the average Illinois household \$1,034 in taxes each year

Fiscal Year 2022 Hotel Performance

Chicago Southland hotels reached an average hotel occupancy rate of 66.7% for Fiscal Year 2022.

Average daily rate reached an average of \$97.96 for the region.

Hotel revenues reached \$181,017,571 this year.

Chicago Southland hotels sold 1.8 Million room nights.

(Source: Smith Travel Research report)

Hotel Occupancy

FY18:	65.8%
FY19:	66.9%
FY20:	59.5%
FY21:	65.5%
FY22:	66.7%

Average Daily Rate

FY18:	\$87.22
FY19:	\$86.07
FY20:	\$76.72
FY21:	\$76.10
FY22:	\$97.96

Front Line Training

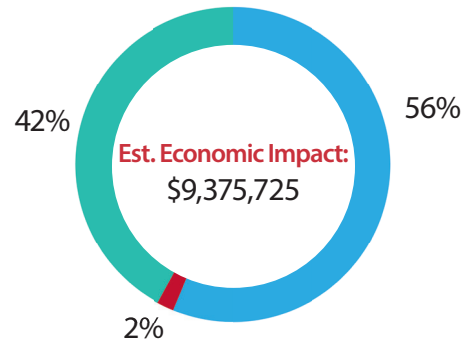
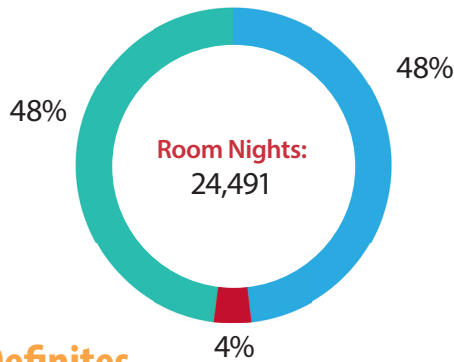
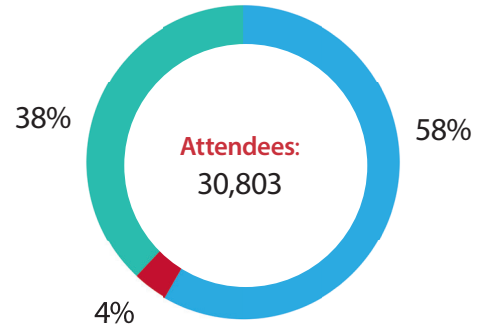
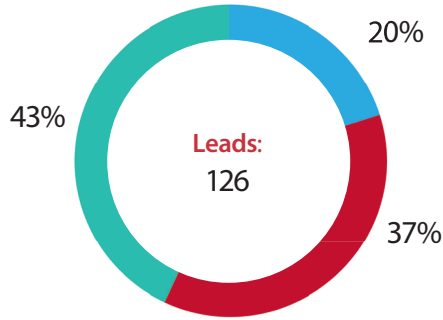


In FY15 the CVB developed a front line training program and since has successfully certified 204 area front line staff as official Chicago Southland Front Line Ambassadors.

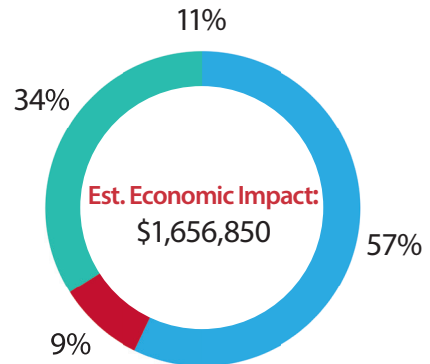
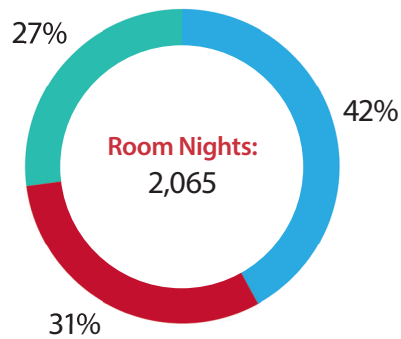
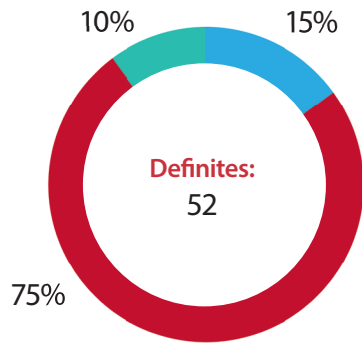


Sales Impact

Leads



Definites



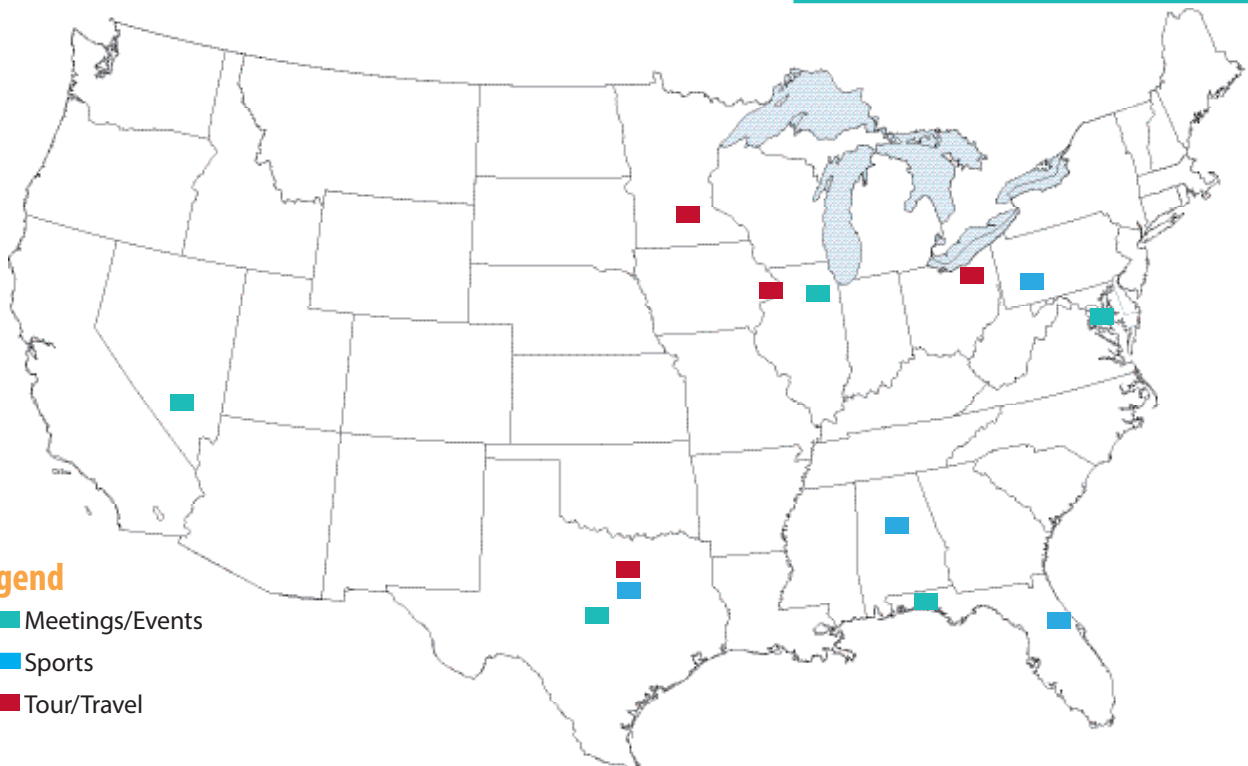
Legend

- Meetings/Events
- Sports
- Tour/Travel

Attended 18 Tradeshows in FY22

Attending national tradeshows is vital to bringing new meetings, group tours and sporting events to the Chicago Southland region. It is the responsibility of the CSCVB to represent the Chicago Southland and its hotels, venues and communities on a national level at these tradeshows. Bringing new events to a region is very competitive, therefore it is imperative that the Chicago Southland is represented at these tradeshows by the official destination management organization, the Chicago Southland CVB. The sales department attended 18 industry tradeshows in FY22, including:

- American Bus Association (Grapevine, TX)
- Christian Meetings & Conferences Association (Fort Walton Beach, FL)
- Circle Wisconsin (Bloomington, MN)
- Connect Marketplace – Faith (Round Rock, TX)
- Connect Marketplace (Chicago, IL)
- Connect Marketplace (Washington DC)
- eSports Travel Summit (Pittsburgh, PA)
- eSports Travel Summit (Daytona Beach, FL)
- Heartland Travel Showcase (Cleveland, OH)
- HelmsBriscoe (Las Vegas, NV)
- Heritage Club International (Quad Cities)
- National Tour Association (Virtual)
- Ontario Motor Coach Association (Virtual)
- Smart Meetings Mid-Atlantic (Washington DC)
- Smart Meetings National (Virtual)
- Sports Events & Tourism Association (Birmingham, AL)
- Sports Events & Tourism Association (Fort Worth, TX)
- Student Youth Travel Association (Virtual)



Marketing Impact

Google Awards

Ad words Pay-Per-Click program generated **51,136** clicks with **1,227,830** impressions.

Print Publications

Publications	Annual Circulation
Visitors Guide	120,000
Festivals & Events Guide (Fall/Winter)	10,000
Festivals & Events Guide (Spring/Summer)	12,000
Coupon Book	7,500

Website

www.VisitChicagoSouthland.com

The CVB's website VisitChicagoSouthland.com inspires travel to the Chicago Southland and provides pertinent information for all market segments. The site's responsive design lets visitors access Chicago Southland info on desktop or tablet, and find last-minute information on their phone when they arrive. **288,850** unique visitors came from **199** countries and all **50** states. **96%** of web visitors are from beyond the Chicago Southland.



Social Media

Facebook

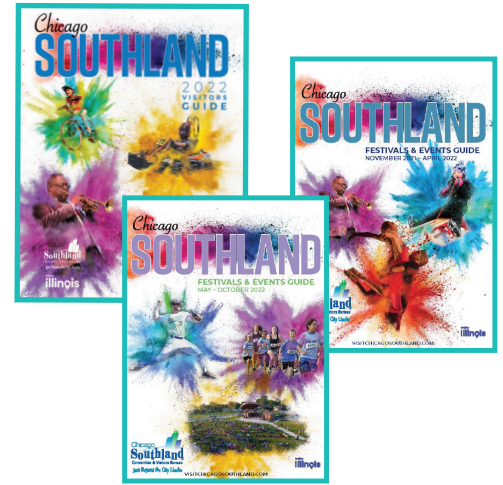
Followers	8,097
Posts	1,506
Interactions	98,820
Interactions/Post	65.6

Instagram

Followers	1,428
Posts	529
Interactions	2,221
Interactions/Post	4.2

Twitter

Followers	3,840
Tweets	665
Interactions	1,151
Interactions/Post	1.7



Chicago Southland App

The Visit Chicago Southland App was launched in FY18, providing visitors an interactive experience featuring attractions, restaurants, hotels and events. The app also allows visitors to find amenities nearby while in the Chicago Southland. In FY22, the app/widget had **1,950** sessions and **9,608** page views. Additionally, the new Chicago Southland trails app had **3,037** users in Fiscal Year 2022.



LinkedIn

Followers	807
Posts	605
Interactions	3,296
Interactions/Post	5.4

YouTube

Views	2,489
Minutes Watched	2,514

Overall social media impressions
3.8+ Million*

Destination Video

The CVB continued to promote the interactive destination video, which resulted in **929** video clicks for the fiscal year.

*Includes paid social media impressions

Advertising Highlights

Publications/Digital Insertions

Annual Circulation/
Impressions

56 Meetings/Conventions/SMERF	2,687,649
107 Tour/Travel	1,675,304
23 Leisure	27,861,909
68 Sports	715,920
254 Total Placements	32,940,782



Digital Campaigns

The Chicago Southland CVB continued to promote the "To-A-T" campaign through a variety of digital advertising campaigns. These campaigns resulted in **25.3 million** impressions and over **173,240** clicks to the campaign's landing page.

Targeting/Retargeting Campaign

The Chicago Southland implemented a group markets targeting/retargeting campaign using Google display network, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. The campaign resulted in over **6 million** impressions and **44,572** clicks to website.

Brochure Distribution

455 visitors were assisted at the Visitor Information Center at the Chicago Southland Lincoln Oasis in South Holland. Digital billboards at the VIC allowed the CVB to promote available guides when not staffed.

41,548 CVB and partner brochures were distributed at the Visitor Information Center and **882** more through inquiries to the CVB. The digital visitors guide garnered over **1,600** views.

Communications

The Chicago Southland CVB continues to craft compelling pitches for local, national and trade media that resulted in **5** broadcast/radio placements and **84** articles that earned over **45.9 Million** media impressions.



Membership & Grants

Membership

The CVB's members are the core of the hospitality industry in the Chicago Southland. From the little local pizza joints to the major shopping malls, the CVB continues to attract and keep members through the CVB orientation and front line ambassador programs and events like National Tourism Day Reception and Annual Meeting & Awards Luncheon.

Local Grant Program

The CVB's Local Grant Program was reinstated during FY22. A \$3,960.00 grant was awarded to the Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation for the promotion of the Reimagining Electric Vehicle (EV) Industry in IL on Earth Day. The CVB hosted **four** local grant writing workshops and individual consultations resulting in **43** attendees.

Illinois Made

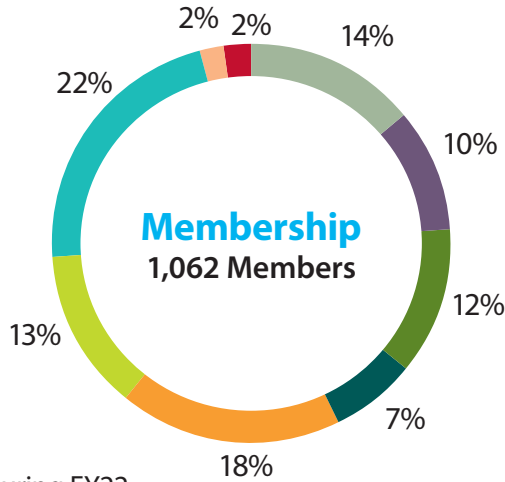
In Fiscal Year 2022, Gayety's Chocolates in Lansing, Thornton Distilling Company in Thornton and Vintrendi Wine Company in Park Forest joined Homewood Bat Company in Homewood, Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery in Flossmoor, Lotton Art Glass Gallery & Studios in Crete and Wild Blossom Meadery & Winery in Chicago in having the honor of being recognized as an Illinois Made maker. This distinction is given to makers, creators and artisans in Illinois that make our state thrive. These makers help craft Illinois by hand and inspire visitors along with fellow Illinoisans to discover more about the state by experiencing firsthand the passion that makes it thrive. The Illinois Made program selects new members each year and the CVB is looking forward to many more of our local partners being recognized for their hard work and many achievements.

Threshold 360

In Fiscal Year 2021, the CVB partnered with **Threshold 360** to create virtual tours of local hotel properties, sports events facilities, unique venues and more. To date, over **48** of our partners have taken advantage of this free program resulting in **230,229** web views, **2,772,904** Google views and **363,317** engagements for FY22. These virtual tours allow event planners to safely visit or tour a facility, or revisit the space after an in-person site inspection. These videos are embedded into each member listing, and they are displayed in Google searches as well. The partnership with Threshold 360 is an exciting way to promote our partners and their one-of-a-kind facilities that help make the Chicago Southland a unique and exciting place to visit.

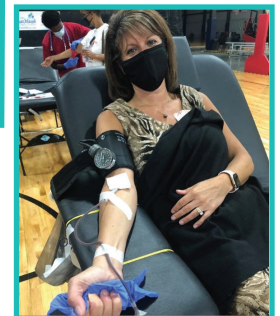
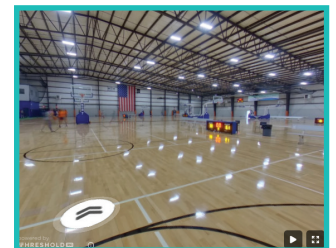
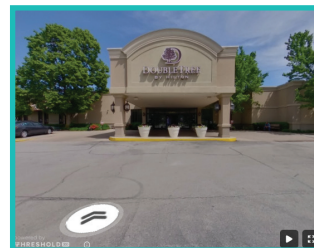
Social Responsibility

The Chicago Southland proudly partnered with the American Red Cross to host a regional blood drive in September 2021 at the Southland Center in Lynwood. This blood drive was held to raise awareness for sickle cell disease. A total of **34** donors participated saving approximately **102** lives.



Legend

- Arts & Culture
- Attractions
- Dining
- Golf
- Hotels
- Professional Services
- Regional Services
- Shopping
- Transportation



Fiscal Year 2022

Board of Directors

<i>Alsip</i>	John Ryan, Mayor Richard Brink, DoubleTree by Hilton
<i>Bridgeview</i>	Paul Cantrelle, Hampton Inn & Suites - Bridgeview
<i>Burbank</i>	Roy Patel, Best Western Inn & Suites
<i>Calumet City</i>	Deanne Jaffrey, Chief of Staff/City Administrator
<i>Chicago Heights</i>	David Gonzalez, Mayor
<i>Crestwood</i>	Rocco Mossuto, Director of Parks and Recreation
<i>East Hazel Crest</i>	Maureen Forte, Trustee
<i>Homewood</i>	Jodi Kennedy, La Banque Hotel
<i>Lansing</i>	Mike Fish, Trustee Aemish Patel, Holiday Inn Express & Suites
<i>Markham</i>	Derrick Champion, City Administrator
<i>Matteson</i>	LaVern Murphy, Director of Economic Development CJ Whitten, Holiday Inn
<i>Mokena</i>	Frank Fleischer, President
<i>Monee</i>	Edward Gross
<i>Oak Forest</i>	Paul Ruane, Community Planner
<i>Orland Hills</i>	Conrad Kiebles
<i>Orland Park</i>	Nabeha Zegar, Public Information Officer
<i>South Holland</i>	John Watson, Director of Economic Development
 <i>South Suburban Mayors & Managers Association (SSMMA)</i>Rick Reinbold, Richton Park	
<i>Southwest Conference of Mayors</i>Vicky Smith, Executive Director	
<i>Will County Governmental League</i>,Hugh O'Hara, Executive Director	
<i>College/University Appointment</i>,Lana Rogachevskaya, Governors State University	
<i>Exhibition Appointment</i>,Annie Byrne, Southland Center	
<i>General Membership Appointment</i>,Nick Halikias, The Odyssey	

Executive Committee

Chairperson: Richard Brink
Vice Chairperson: Mike Fish
Treasurer: Paul Cantrelle
Secretary: Vicky Smith
Past Chairperson: Aemish Patel
President/CEO: Jim Garrett, CDME

Past Board Chairpersons

Daniel Fitzgerald
 Aemish Patel
 Vicky Smith
 Roy Patel
 John Thompson
 John A. Daly
 Satish "T.C." Shethi
 Patricia Chase Magon
 Mary Schmidt
 Joan Geary
 Bert J. Docter
 Tom Mahar



After 31 years of lobbying, educating and passionately advocating on behalf of the region and the Chicago Southland Convention & Visitors Bureau, Executive Vice-President Sally Schlesinger, CPA, CDME retired at the end of Fiscal Year 2022.

Professional Staff

Combined Tourism Industry Experience of over **220** years



President/CEO: Jim Garrett, CDME
Executive Vice President: Sally Schlesinger, CPA, CDME
Director of Finance & Administration: Mike Hoffman, CPA
Administrative Assistant: Bernice Scheive
Vice President of Marketing: Kim Kislowksi
Public Relations Manager: Andy Ritter
Communications Manager: Liam Doyle
Vice President of Sales: Mary Patchin, CDME
Sports Market Manager: Kristy Campbell
SMERF/Tour & Travel Market Manager: Tobie Fitzpatrick



Chicago
SouthlandSM
Convention & Visitors Bureau
Just Beyond the City Limits

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