



## **Position Profile**

# **President & Chief Executive Officer**

## **Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance**

### **Springfield, Illinois**

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#### **The Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance / Opportunity**

The Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance (“the Growth Alliance”) in Springfield, Illinois was created in 2018 as a 501c (3) public and private sector partnership dedicated to advancing economic development efforts in Springfield and Sangamon County in the State of Illinois. Led by a volunteer, diverse industry-driven Board of Directors, the Growth Alliance’s mission is to pursue economic prosperity and growth for Sangamon County and the City of Springfield. Originally chartered as the Land of Lincoln Economic Development Corporation, the organization has re-branded to emphasize the geographic impact of its mission. The Growth Alliance is helping create and market a financially sound community, one that is able to attract new businesses and skilled talent, while retaining the profitable companies and local workforce who already make Springfield and Sangamon County their home.

The Growth Alliance seeks a dynamic leader to become its next President & Chief Executive Officer. The new CEO will work with an engaged Board and committed staff to drive the organization’s laser-focused mission of primary job creation, retention and economic growth for the region. This will be accomplished through leveraging Sangamon County and the City of Springfield’s historical significance, strong education system and choices, state-of-the-art medical facilities, geographic location, rail access and low cost-of-living. The new CEO will bring a sense of business urgency to the role and elevate the visibility and functioning of this well-funded organization. Although formed over a year ago, the Growth Alliance has the exciting feel of a “start-up” and offers a unique opportunity to shape and influence the organization into a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity for the region. The Growth Alliance’s \$1.2+MM annual budget is generated from financial commitments of Sangamon County, the City of Springfield and a large number of private sector partners.

The new CEO candidate will serve as the chief strategist, innovative thinker, and collaborative team leader and lead overall program development, fund raising, and messaging. The CEO will have the opportunity and responsibility to bring his/her vision to the Growth Alliance and then implement necessary structural and organizational changes and reshape/fine-tune the mission of the organization, as appropriate. As part of an on-going strategic planning process, the CEO will put into motion economic development initiatives to enhance business creation, expansion, retention and attraction and deliver the message that the Springfield and Sangamon County area is an exceptionally attractive place for businesses to grow and prosper.

The organization is governed by a 20-member Board of Directors that includes a 7-member Executive Committee. The Board is comprised of representatives from the public, private, education and nonprofit sectors including the Mayor of Springfield and the Sangamon County Board Chair.

For more information, visit the Growth Alliance’s website: [www.ThriveInSPI.org](http://www.ThriveInSPI.org)



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#### **Springfield and Sangamon County, Illinois**

Springfield is the state capital of Illinois, with a population of approximately 117,400; Sangamon County's population is over 197,000. Springfield is strategically located at the intersection of Interstate Highways 55 and 72, approximately 200 miles from Chicago and 100 miles from St. Louis. As Illinois' capital city, Springfield is home to large contingents of state, federal and local government as well as large service and healthcare sectors. Springfield is known world-wide as the home of Abraham Lincoln and the Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

The State of Illinois is the area's largest employer with over 17,000 employees. In addition, the regional economy benefits from a significant healthcare presence with Memorial Health System, HSHS St. John's Hospital and the Springfield Clinic among the largest private employers in the region. Springfield's Mid-Illinois Medical District acts as the developer of facilities and undertakes projects intended to advance Springfield's position as a Medical Center of Excellence, with over \$600MM in capital investment in the past 5 years. The vibrant education sector includes the University of Illinois-Springfield (4,960 students), Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, St. John's College of Nursing, Lincoln Land Community College (14,600 students) and a number of other private and technical colleges and universities. Other key industry segments include tourism, hospitality, logistics/transportation, insurance, call center/back office operations, manufacturing and agriculture. Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport is currently serviced by American Airlines (flights to Dallas/Fort Worth), United Airlines (flights to Chicago) and Allegiant Air (seasonal flights to Florida).

Residents of Springfield and Sangamon County enjoy four distinct seasons and an outstanding quality of life. The community is among the most educated populations in Illinois with roughly 4 in 10 having earned a college degree and one in ten with a post graduate degree. Greater Springfield residents have access to a wide variety of social, educational, artistic, historic and recreational activities. There are a variety of housing options, strong public and independent K-12 school choices, music, theatre, museum and recreational and college and nearby professional sports teams. For more information about Springfield and Sangamon County please visit:

- City of Springfield: [www.springfield.il.us](http://www.springfield.il.us)
- Sangamon County: [www.co.sangamon.il.us](http://www.co.sangamon.il.us)
- Visit Springfield Illinois: [www.visitspringfieldillinois.com](http://www.visitspringfieldillinois.com)
- Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce: [www.gsc.org](http://www.gsc.org)

#### **The Position**

##### **Location**

The President & Chief Executive Officer position is located in the Growth Alliance's new offices at 531 E. Washington Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62701; telephone: (217) 679-3500.

##### **Reporting Relationships**

The President & Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") of the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance reports to the 20-member Board of Directors (includes 7-member Executive Committee) which meets monthly. The CEO will lead the Alliance staff, which currently includes Director-Economic Development and Director-Marketing & Communications. As the organization continues to grow and expand its influence, the CEO will have the latitude to recruit and develop additional staff members.

Other important interactions include: executives and employees of the Growth Alliance funding partners, investors and customers; elected/appointed officials and their staffs at the township and city, county, state and Federal level; owners/executives of businesses with operations in Springfield, Sangamon County and the broader region; representatives of target and prospect businesses domestically and internationally; representatives and leaders of other business and academic organizations in the region; business incubator and others involved in start-up activities in the community; economic development consultants; members of the media; and the public at large.



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#### ***Position Charter***

The President & CEO of the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance will be responsible for the recruitment of new industries and businesses to the region and plays an important role in the organization's achieving its overall goals and objectives. This executive is responsible for implementing economic development initiatives in collaboration with local business leaders, state and local government officials, site selection consultants, and staff. The CEO's specific economic development responsibilities include those associated with entrepreneurship development, workforce development, business retention and expansion, business recruitment and marketing. The CEO position has a strong external focus, serving as a key spokesperson and advocate for the business community. This executive serves as a leader and ambassador for the region by working closely with the Board of Directors, the leadership of other public and private sector organizations, and key government, legislative and business leaders. Duties and responsibilities:

- Embrace the vision established in the 2030 "County of the Future" plan and gain buy-in and support for how to sequence and prioritize that vision.
- Work with the Executive Committee, Board, and staff to develop and annually update the Growth Alliance's operational and strategic plans.
- Grow businesses, both organically and through new business relocations, to enhance the tax base (corporate, individual income, real estate, etc.). Consider economic incentives, development funds, financing options.
- Act as a primary point of contact and ombudsman for all non-retail business attraction, retention and expansion projects.
- Work with regional economic development partners in the recruitment of companies.
- Responsible for the employment, supervision, evaluation, training and leadership of all staff and assure they are prepared to successfully implement programs, and pro-actively provide information to Growth Alliance's constituencies.
- Foster a daily working environment that values ethics and teamwork and ensures the highest levels of customer service.
- Develop and oversee the Growth Alliance \$1.2MM budget and relate the budget to program goals and maintain responsibility for all expenditures within the budget framework. In conjunction with the Treasurer, regularly present financial statements to the Executive Committee and Board.
- Bring government, business and other leaders together as supporters, resources and funders of the Growth Alliance.
- Lead overall efforts for regional responses to Requests for Information, partnering with key county and government entities.
- Coordinate all incentive packages utilizing state, local and federal resources, as well as applicable private sector resources to ensure successful completion of business development projects.
- Develop annual marketing plan for the recruitment of companies in specified industry sectors.
- Prospect lead generation in target industry sectors.
- Maintain data for prospect activity tracking.
- Cultivate relationships with national brokers, site selectors and others for lead generation.
- Host prospects and organize tours/meetings providing a first-class customer service experience.
- Organize marketing recruitment trips to various out of market cities and coordinate participants including business volunteers and regional economic development partners.
- Act as the chief spokesperson for the Growth Alliance and clearly communicate the organization's position and vision on economic development issues and opportunities in the region.
- Serve in a highly visible role as a speaker to various regional organizations to continuously keep the Growth Alliance and its mission relevant. Give presentations to all size groups (including use of PowerPoint and various presentation platforms).



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- Conduct Business Retention surveys annually in targeted industry sector.
- Coordinate with Communications/Marketing for press items related to new relocations.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with companies recruited and act as a local resource as they grow.
- Play a partnered role with fundraising strategies in conjunction with the Board of Directors and funding partners.
- Perform other tasks and duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board.

#### ***Compensation***

The President & Chief Executive Officer is expected to earn an attractive compensation package; appropriate benefits and some relocation assistance will be provided.

#### ***The Candidate***

##### ***Education***

A Bachelor's degree in business administration, economic development, public policy, or related field is required; an advanced degree is preferred. Demonstrated commitment to continued professional development through the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute, Certified Economic Developer designation or other certification is strongly preferred.

##### ***Professional Qualifications***

The ideal candidate will have at least 10 to 15 years of experience in a broad leadership role focused on economic development in a complex market. He/she could come from a variety of business leadership roles: the top executive of an economic development focused organization such as a complex municipal, countywide or regional economic development organization or a large chamber of commerce; a “#2” or other senior-level executive within an organization as noted above; a leader from a private sector business; a public sector organization such as a growing municipality or county. A successful track record of progressively responsible career growth and specific experience working with both the public and private sectors is important.

##### ***Preferred Knowledge and Skills***

- **Economic development** (has coordinated with public sector delivery systems and private sector resources to effectively promote the economic development of a community, county or region).
- **Public/private relationships** (demonstrated track record of developing effective partnerships between the public and private sector).
- **Board relationships** (experience with governance issues and Board of Director interactions).
- **Leadership experience** (strong human resource and staff development skills; can effectively coach, mentor and empower a staff and create a team focus).
- **Entrepreneurial/small business** (programmatic success of serving start up enterprises and small business and working with entrepreneurs).
- **Redevelopment experience** (demonstrated success in leading urban core redevelopment; transitioning real estate product; possess ability to identify and pursue federal, state and private funding).
- **Industry knowledge** (current in economic development trends including financing tools, governmental planning, zoning, economic development and redevelopment).
- **Established contacts** (has developed and maintained regional connections with business, government and other public-sector organizations; has fostered relationships with real estate development professionals).
- **Strategic planning** (adept in refining the mission and focus of an organization and then developing and implementing tactical and strategic plans to fulfill that mission).
- **Varied industries** (experience within a business environment with diverse industries including healthcare, financial services, technology, higher education, government, services, manufacturing, agriculture, tourism).

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- **Financial acumen/management** (experience with various financial tools including lines of credit, TIF and other economic development incentives; able to manage Growth Alliance financial affairs; good investor relations).
- **Educational institutions** (demonstrated collaboration with leaders of public and private secondary and technical schools and colleges and universities).
- **Workforce development** (experience in community and regional interconnected solutions to meet employment needs through training, education, career paths and workforce learning).
- **Technology** (knowledgeable and proactive in understanding current technology and social media).
- **Regional familiarity** (experience in Illinois and/or other parts of the Midwest helpful but not required).
- **Deal orientation** (experience in marketing and selling a community, county or region; effective negotiator).
- **Fundraising** (experience with successful resource development activities and campaigns).
- **Media/public relations** (ability to effectively articulate goals, objectives and accomplishments of the Growth Alliance to the media and the community).

***Desired Personal Traits:***

- **Leadership** (take charge individual; can manage, motivate, challenge and delegate to others).
- **Executive presence** (polished; self-confident; sets limits and boundaries).
- **Strategic** (can see beyond daily operations toward broader strategic goals; able to envision “the big picture” and energize others to share a vision of the future opportunities and outcomes).
- **Ethical** (person of exceptional character and integrity; adheres to the highest ethical and moral standards).
- **Energetic** (pro-active; a self-starter; genuinely enthusiastic; strong personal work ethic).
- **Communication skills** (excellent listener; outstanding written and oral communication abilities; strong presentation skills).
- **Professionalism/credibility** (can earn and command the respect of Board, staff, business, government and community leaders).
- **Action orientation** (proactive vs. reactive; a builder and not just an administrator).
- **Fair and analytical** (can collect, analyze and apply data to various economic development and redevelopment projects and appropriately structure deals for the mutual benefit of all parties).
- **Confidence** (possesses the savvy, perception and know-how to maneuver through complex situations effectively and with finesse).
- **Collaborative** (demonstrates a willingness and ability to work with and through others; diplomatic).
- **Teamwork** (recognizes that many parties are necessary to accomplish big things; speaks of “we” first, not “I”; relishes in sharing credit with others).
- **Externally focused** (able to structure staff so core focus is set on strategy and community interaction).
- **Human relations skills** (relates well to people; builds constructive and effective relationships; tactful).
- **Organizational skills** (results oriented; sets clear priorities and meets established goals and objectives).
- **Entrepreneurial** (takes initiative; a proactive person who demonstrates leading edge thinking).
- **Creative** (able to envision nontraditional solutions; can adjust quickly to fluid and complex situations).
- **Multitask/focus** (can manage and carry out multiple and complex assignments).
- **Persuasive** (synthesizes various viewpoints and mobilizes support to accomplish key projects and objectives; can effectively broker deals).
- **Sense of humor** (able to enjoy life and see the humor in sometimes difficult situations).



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**Challenges and Opportunity**

Key accomplishments and challenges for the new President & Chief Executive Officer in the first year and beyond include:

- Establish his/her presence as the Growth Alliance's CEO by immersing him/herself into the details of the day-to-day operations of the organization and becoming knowledgeable about the work of its staff, finances, current initiatives, Board members.
- Initiate formal and informal introductions and connections with the Growth Alliance's partners and investors along with key industry leaders through varied communications and in-person meetings.
- Embrace and articulate the Growth Alliance's ongoing vision. Work collaboratively with the Board, staff and partners to evaluate the strategic direction and efficiency of the Growth Alliance and offer his/her vision for possible short and long-term changes along with metrics associated with its success.
- Communicate the region's assets in an exciting and compelling fashion that is both authentic and inspiring. This will include a marketing and brand platform that will build a sense of community/regional pride among existing residents and businesses.
- By listening and observing, form effective working relationships with key municipal, county, state and national government leaders, entrepreneurial business owners and corporate executives, economic, community and tourism partner organizations, college and other educational officers and leaders of cultural arts entities.
- Expand the forward progress of business development efforts with particular emphasis on pro-active retention and expansion efforts of not only locally based companies but also those with out-of-town headquarters.
- Work to proactively seek new business recruitment opportunities and develop a strong and ongoing prospect pipeline.

The President & CEO position of the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance is an outstanding opportunity for an economic development, chamber, municipal leader or private sector executive to lead a well-respected organization committed to the success of the business sector and overall economy and quality of life in the Springfield and Sangamon County region. The Growth Alliance's regional impact will position the organization as an essential first point-of-contact for businesses interested in locating or expanding in the region. The next Growth Alliance CEO needs to be assertive in working with and partnering with area business executives, education leaders, and government officials in a number of decisions critical to the continuing growth and prosperity of the area. The new executive will work with an engaged and committed Board of Directors and professional colleagues on the staff, who are eager to move the Growth Alliance's objectives forward.

**Contacts**

If you are aware of an outstanding executive who meets these requirements and would be interested in evaluating this dynamic opportunity, please email [SSGA@Waverly-Partners.com](mailto:SSGA@Waverly-Partners.com) or contact either consultant at WAVERLY PARTNERS, the executive search firm retained by the Springfield Sangamon Growth Alliance Board on this search.

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