

South End Capital Acquired by Stearns Bank National Association

Established \$2.2 billion national bank acquires technology-based commercial lender and loan platform

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Stearns Bank

N.A., a financial institution in Minnesota, has acquired [South End Capital](#) Corporation and its digital lending platform to expand [financing options](#) and banking services for businesses. Noah Grayson, founder and president, South End Capital, and his team will join Stearns Bank as a specialized Stearns Bank division, accelerating each company's digital innovation and their



SOUTH END CAPITAL

A DIVISION OF STEARNS BANK N.A.

South End Capital a division of Stearns Bank, N.A.



South End Capital as a division of Stearns Bank will deliver the most accessible, real-time marketplace digital platform serving the commercial sector"

Kelly Skalicky, President & CEO of Stearns Bank N.A.

shared vision to deliver real estate investors and business owners the premier marketplace for banking services and customized, affordable financing through an advanced online banking platform.

The acquisition of South End Capital advances Stearns Bank's commitment to expand financing options and banking services for small business owners through digital innovation and increased collaboration among banks and alternative financing sources. Stearns Bank's merger and acquisition (M&A) strategy for 2021 focuses on expanding

its technology partnerships and pursuing potential acquisitions of banks having assets between \$250 million and \$1.5 billion, specialty financing companies and performing or non-performing loan portfolios. Earlier this year, Stearns Bank partnered with Productfy, a banking as a service platform that accelerates financial product innovation with expedited go-to-market launch services for fintechs.

"We are thrilled about this new venture with South End Capital and excited about how much more we can do together to expand access to financing and banking services for businesses through an all-access online marketplace, and expanded collaboration among financing sources to better serve the diverse small business community we have throughout the country," said Kelly Skalicky, President & CEO of Stearns Bank N.A. "Stearns Bank's sense of urgency and digital innovation, along with our high-touch customized financing and pledge to answer customer calls

on the first ring, pair perfectly with the “urgency, listen, learn” values of South End Capital and their innovative [commercial lending](#) platform.”

Customers can expect a wider array of direct lending products, including equipment finance, expanded options for banking services, and access to upgraded technology to streamline and simplify the loan process for even faster decisions and funding. Strategic participation and referral partners will benefit from more program options, increased volume, more tailored loan and referral terms, and enhanced resources and support, including a new loan participation marketplace and options for loan buys without servicing.

“I couldn't be more excited that South End Capital is now part of the Stearns Bank family,” said Grayson. “The natural synergies present between our two organizations are unmatched. South End Capital's cutting-edge technology combined with Stearns Bank's first-in-class customer service and customized loan programs, creates a new standard for the industry.”

Grayson, South End's visionary founder, successfully launched his digital platform delivering Commercial Lending in the Cloud with an easy-access lending platform for businesses seeking customized financing. Grayson was named to the Forbes Real Estate Council in 2019, with South End Capital recognized by Business.com, US Business News, Fit Small Business, and Top Ten Reviews as one of the premier commercial lenders in the country. It proudly maintains a 4.5/5 star “Excellent” Trustpilot rating.

Through this partnership, Skalicky sees an unequalled opportunity to deliver expanded financial services to more small businesses, especially those who are unbanked or underbanked. “South End Capital as a division of Stearns Bank will deliver the most accessible, real-time marketplace digital platform serving the commercial sector, helping a more diverse, larger number of businesses access customized financing and banking solutions while assisting strategic partners to build their portfolios. We share this mission and are driven to deliver for even more small businesses.”

For more information on loan options through South End Capital, visit <https://southendcapital.com/programs>.

About Stearns Bank

Minnesota-based Stearns Bank National Association is a \$2.2 billion, independently-owned financial institution with locations in Minnesota, Florida and Arizona, and over 35,000 small business customers nationwide, in every state across the U.S. Recognized as having a bullet-proof balance sheet with 20% capital and earning top rankings as one of the nation's highest-performing banks by American Banker, and most recently ranked ninth in the U.S. among banks having more than \$1 billion in assets by Independent Banker's May 2021 Best of the Best ranking of banks with the highest 3-year average Return on Assets, Stearns Bank specializes in nationwide commercial construction lending, USDA and SBA lending, and small business and

equipment financing. Driven by a passion to help others achieve their greatest ambitions, Stearns Bank mission is to Get the Job Done! For more information, visit StearnsBank.com.

About South End Capital

Founded in 2009, South End Capital provides a nationwide, non-conforming lending platform as a financial intermediary, offering business loans and mortgages secured by commercial and investment residential real estate. Using a technology-enabled platform to deliver a streamlined loan process, South End delivered on its commitment to excellent service and innovative affordable financing.

Noah Grayson

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