

Southland Development Authority Celebrates a Year of Growth and Impact, Looks Ahead to Continued Momentum in 2026

The SDA marks another year of municipal growth and regional success while preparing for expanded initiatives in the year ahead

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- The Southland

Development Authority (SDA) is closing

out another strong year of growth and impact, reinforcing its role as a catalyst for inclusive economic development across Chicago's South Suburbs and laying the groundwork for continued expansion in 2026.



“

As we reflect on another year of meaningful progress, we remain focused on expanding opportunity, building wealth, and strengthening our communities.”

Bo Kemp

Since its founding in 2019, the SDA has provided the necessary resources and capacity to achieve transformative and inclusive economic success in the region. By overseeing mutually beneficial investments in key industries, workforces, real estate, and communities, the SDA continues to implement transformational economic development initiatives, driving business, community growth, and prosperity in the region.

Throughout 2025, the SDA led and expanded several high-impact initiatives that strengthened the regional economy.

Among them was its Business Growth Services program, which offers tailored consulting and support to help local businesses scale through access to employee training, staffing solutions, and professional networks. The SDA also continued leveraging the South Suburban Land Bank, a collaborative and innovative approach to coordinating land use and redevelopment in ways that support economic vitality and community-driven growth.

“The Southland is experiencing a period of meaningful growth, and the SDA is proud to help lead that progress,” said Felicia Hardy, President of Southland Development Authority. “As we look

toward 2026, we remain focused on delivering inclusive, sustainable development that benefits our municipalities, businesses, and residents alike.”

The SDA also marked a major milestone with the debut of the 2025 ACHIEVE Summit, a first-of-its-kind, three-day event focused on building wealth and shaping the future of the Southland. The inaugural summit brought together leading voices in business, real estate, philanthropy, and community development for transformational workshops, compelling keynote sessions, and dynamic networking opportunities. The event highlighted local innovation, fostered meaningful partnerships, and helped spark new business and investment opportunities throughout the region.

In September, the Southland Development Authority (SDA) successfully launched its new podcast, [The First Million is Always the Hardest](#), to foster community and discussion following the ACHIEVE Summit. Featuring entrepreneurs, real estate professionals, and thought leaders, the show delivers practical strategies for building wealth, investing in real estate, and navigating entrepreneurial success. Through a new partnership with WGN Studios, the podcast is positioned to continue bringing hands-on, practical lessons of entrepreneurship and wealth building to listeners as the second season concludes.

Building on the success of the inaugural event, planning is already underway for the 2026 ACHIEVE Summit, scheduled for June 4-6, 2026. The upcoming summit aims to attract even more entrepreneurs, investors, and business leaders to the Southland, further solidifying the region as a destination for opportunity and growth. [Pre-registration](#) is now available through the SDA's website.

The Horizon South Real Estate Initiative is a recent undertaking by the SDA to promote industrial, commercial, and residential development. This marks another milestone for the SDA as it continues to reinvigorate the tax base of Southland municipalities by incentivizing private investment and economic stimulus, while simultaneously removing blighted homes and creating desirable residences for new and existing residents.

Looking ahead, the SDA will officially launch the Monarch Fund in early 2026 as part of the broader Horizon South Real Estate initiative. The Monarch Fund is strategically designed to secure private capital to promote the growth of undervalued land and real estate assets in the Southland region. This initiative is dedicated to attracting private capital to the area to spur growth and development, leading to pathways for community-centered investment and generational wealth building.

“As we reflect on another year of meaningful progress, we remain focused on expanding opportunity, building wealth, and strengthening our communities,” said [Bo Kemp](#), CEO of Southland Development Authority. “The momentum we’ve built in 2025 positions us for even greater impact in 2026.”

With a strong foundation in place and ambitious initiatives on the horizon, the Southland Development Authority enters the new year poised to continue driving inclusive economic growth and long-term prosperity throughout the Chicago South Suburbs.

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About the Southland Development Authority

The Southland Development Authority, a not-for-profit economic development organization, is committed to driving equitable and sustainable economic growth in the South Suburbs of Chicago. Through innovative programs, strategic partnerships, and impactful direct investments, the SDA is building a vibrant, inclusive economy that drives wealth growth for individuals, businesses, and municipalities. Combined with the benefits of the South Suburban Land Bank and the Monarch Fund, the SDA serves as a model for regional development.

For more information, visit southlanddevelopment.org

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