



COLES TOGETHER **PRESIDENT & CEO**

COLES TOGETHER PRESIDENT & CEO



Coles Together is a not-for-profit economic development corporation created in 1988 to coordinate all economic development activities throughout Coles County, Illinois. The organization serves as the first point of contact for site selectors, business investors, developers, etc. Coles Together is a 501(c)(6) organization that is funded by annual contributions from a variety of public and private partners, state and federal grants, and from revenue generated by the organization itself.

The Coles Together Board of Directors is seeking applications from professional, experienced, and motivated economic development professionals who are interested in becoming the new President & CEO of the organization. The current President & CEO will be retiring this spring after serving in the position for 19 years.

COLES COUNTY INFORMATION

Coles County is located in east central Illinois and lies among some of the most productive farmland in the entire world. Consequently, one would expect that the region's economy is anchored by agriculture. There is no question that a significant element of the Coles County economy revolves around the ag sector. However, the economy in Coles County is extraordinarily diverse and has a strong employment base in the education, manufacturing, communication, and healthcare sectors along with agriculture.

Coles County has a population of 46,863. Its two primary cities, which are located within minutes of each other, are Charleston (17,350) and Mattoon (16,800). Charleston is the County seat and it also is consistently ranked as one of the safest cities in Illinois and one of the safest college towns in Illinois. The County consists of 508 square miles and is approximately 50 miles south of Champaign-Urbana. Interstate Highway 57 runs north-south through the center of Coles County.

The residents of Coles County enjoy an outstanding quality of life that few communities can rival. The area exudes small town friendliness and charm, safe neighborhoods, excellent schools, and a breathtaking array of community amenities such as public parks, sports facilities, an airport, an outstanding full-service community hospital, and a vibrant and growing business community.

The County takes a backseat to no one in terms of its higher education offerings. Charleston is home to Eastern Illinois University, while Mattoon is home to Lake Land College. EIU is a comprehensive public university offering over 50 undergrad degree programs, that include more than 150 majors and minors, and 36 graduate degree programs. EIU is also an NCAA Division 1 school. Lake Land College is a full-service community college specializing in college transfer education, technical & career training, work force development, and community & continuing education.

Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospital, located in Mattoon, is a 145-bed regional hospital that provides a comprehensive array of health care services and has been nationally recognized for the outstanding quality of care provided by the institution.



COLES COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

Coles County Population **46,863**
Land Area (sq. miles) **508.3**

Age breakdown:

Under 5 **4.9%**
Under 18 **18.1%**
18-65 **58.3%**
Over 65 **18.7%**

Racial breakdown:

White **92.2%**
Black/African Am. **4.1%**
Hispanic/Latino **2.2%**
Asian **1.0%**
All other **.5%**

Largest municipalities:

Charleston **17,350**
Mattoon **16,800**
Oakland **1,332**
Ashmore **637**

Higher education enrollment:

Eastern Illinois University **8,804**
Lake Land College **4,000**

Median household income **\$53,732**
Persons with college degree **27%**
Number of households **20,385**
Total number of businesses **1,110**
Total number of employees **18,951**



LARGEST COLES COUNTY EMPLOYERS

(no. of employees)

- Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center **(3,204)**
- Eastern Illinois University **(1,191)**
- Charleston & Mattoon Public School Districts **(732)**
- Rural King – corporate HQ **(705)**
- Lakeland College **(400)**
- Grupo Bimbo Bakeries USA **(350)**
- Mars Petcare **(285)**
- First Mid Bank & Trust **(270)**
- Consolidated Communications **(243)**
- Blue Cross Blue Shield **(225)**
- Justrite Manufacturing **(215)**





COLES TOGETHER

It is the mission of Coles Together to promote the competitive advantages of Coles County so as to grow a diverse and innovative economy. The organization is responsible for the planning, oversight, and execution of the economic development efforts in Coles County. Its primary focus is on the manufacturing/industrial sector while simultaneously collaborating and providing strategic support for the growth of entrepreneurial, retail, and commercial enterprises throughout the region.

Coles Together is guided by a twenty-four (24) member Board of Directors consisting of community and business leaders. The efforts of Coles Together are supported by the County government and by the units of local government within the County who offer consistent and innovative support to the economic development efforts. The municipalities are led by skilled, forward-thinking professionals who collaborate and partner with the staff of Coles Together on a myriad of economic development initiatives.

The organization consists of three employees, including the President & CEO, and has an annual operating budget of \$375,000. The organization is funded by annual contributions from a wide array of public and private investors. Coles Together also receives public grant funding to support economic development initiatives. Also, the organization generates operating revenue via enterprise zone fees, farm property income, and marketing fees generated by management of the Coles Business Park. In the most recent fiscal year, Coles Together generated over \$700,000 in total income.

THE PRESIDENT & CEO POSITION

The President of Coles Together is responsible for the overall management of the organization. As a first point of contact, the President is focused on creating synergy between the manufacturing, industrial, commercial, and retail sectors in the County with consideration of infrastructure support and workforce requirements needed to create success. The President & CEO is also responsible for the Business Retention and Expansion program of the organization, and will provide leadership, build partnerships, and execute initiatives that align with the strategic goals of the community.

The President & CEO position requires an individual who possesses visionary thinking, business acumen, real estate expertise, and a thorough understanding of economic development principles, programs, and practices. It also requires a person who has the demonstrated ability to establish and maintain productive working relationships with all stakeholders, and one who has the ability to assemble complex partnerships resulting in new business investment and employment opportunities for Coles County.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE:

The Coles Together Board is hoping to attract applications from high-performing leaders who are innovative, collaborative, forward-thinking, strategic, and entrepreneurial. The Board has identified the following skills and attributes which they consider to be highly desirable for the new President & CEO to possess:



- A demonstrated ability to establish and maintain strong and productive relationships with economic development partners in the region and with the State of Illinois.
- A personable and approachable leader who can develop and maintain the trust and respect among all Coles Together stakeholders.
- An effective and persuasive communicator in both small groups and in front of large audiences.
- Ability to collaborate with business owners, property owners, local governments, financing partners, and others to create and execute economic development opportunities to benefit all parties including the greater community of Coles County.
- Awareness of the workforce needs of both existing and future businesses and the ability to create strategies to address those needs.
- A strategic leader who is adept at building strong partnerships, developing a clear and optimistic vision for the future of the County, and executing the strategic plans that are adopted by the Board.
- A polished professional with an executive presence who can effectively interact with CEO's of major companies interested in investing in Coles County.
- A strong manager who inspires, empowers, coaches, and mentors team members.
- An individual who desires to play an active role in Coles County beyond what is required as the President & CEO of Coles Together.
- The ability to relate to everyone in the community irrespective of gender, race, economic status, social background, or educational achievement. Treats everyone with dignity, respect, and empathy.
- Is skilled at helping parties resolve conflict by developing creative solutions based upon shared values and desired outcomes.
- Embraces the use of technology and is skilled and experienced with those technologies that are commonly used by economic development agencies such as geographic information systems and on-line site location analysis tools.
- Understands the importance of consistently responding in a timely manner to requests from board members, elected officials, investors, and community members.
- Is committed to the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct in carrying out the responsibilities of the position.
- Is diligent and careful to ensure that Coles Together is compliant with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, rules, regulations, and policies.
- Has considerable knowledge in the following areas: real estate development, zoning and land use regulations, tax increment financing, enterprise zones, opportunity zones, grant procurement, marketing, project management, and social media.



REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

At a minimum, applicants should possess a bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, economic development, or some other related field of study. A master's degree is desirable but not required. A CEcd certification is also desirable but not required. Applicants should also possess a minimum of five (5) years of direct experience in economic development.

COMPENSATION

The starting annual salary for the President & CEO position is \$125,000 to \$150,000 DOQ/E. The President is also provided with a vehicle for business purposes. The organization also covers the cost of professional development activities, and the Board encourages the President to pursue such opportunities. Other usual and customary fringe benefits are provided such as vacation leave, sick leave, health insurance stipend, etc.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this position, please submit a cover letter, resume, and five work-related references to Mark Peterson, Vice President, GovHR USA, **no later than 5:00 pm on January 29, 2024**. All application materials must be submitted electronically at www.GovHRjobs.com. Please direct all questions to Mr. Peterson at (309) 825-5091.

Coles Together is an equal opportunity employer.



GovHR USA
GovTEMPS USA

EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT