COMMUNITY APPLICATION

Strong Communities Initiative (SCI)

ELIGIBILITY: Incorporated Illinois municipalities under 20,000 population within Compeer Financials' Illinois territory. (See territory map on page 5.)

TIMELINE: Applications open Nov. 2, 2026 • **Deadline: Jan. 29, 2027 at 5 PM**
Announcement: Second week of February 2027.
Program conclusion: Last week of May/First Week of June 2027.
Invite to Hometown Consulting Annual Meeting: Summer 2027

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete all sections and **submit application as pdfs to info@hometownconsultants.com with subject "SCI Application – [Community Name]"**

SECTION 1 - COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Municipality Name: _____

County: _____ **Population:** _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Website: _____

SECTION 2 - CONTACTS

Primary Contact Name: _____

Title: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

(Optional)
Secondary Contact Name: _____

Title: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

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SECTION 3 - LEADERSHIP & ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Form of Government (Mayor-Council / Village Board / Commission / Other):

_____

Number of Administrative Staff: _____ **Dedicated Economic Development Staff:** ☐ *YES* ☐ *NO*

Departments/Partners involved in SCI:

(List municipal departments and any external partners such as engineers, planners, consultants, or local organizations who will support SCI participation.)

_____

_____

_____

SECTION 4 - CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

(A separate document may be attached to the email submission if needed to answer questions. Please reference section numbers in the document.)

Identify your top 2–3 challenges facing the community:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe any recent momentum or wins that demonstrate community progress:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SECTION 5 – PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS

Select up to three of the following Priority Focus Areas:

- ☐ *Governance & Organizational Structure*
- ☐ *Economic Development Readiness*
- ☐ *Public Engagement & Communications*
- ☐ *Business Retention & Expansion*
- ☐ *Grant Readiness*

SECTION 6 – ENGAGEMENT & COMMITMENT

SCI requires commitment and engagement by the selected communities.

Does your community acknowledge that the final report's quality and usefulness depend on the information provided and active participation in periodic meetings with HTC, and commit to both? ☐ *YES* ☐ *NO*

Is your community interested in attending our Annual Client Meeting where your community will be recognized for your participation (Summer 2027)? ☐ *YES* ☐ *NO*

(Attendance is optional but highly encouraged.)

SECTION 7 – NARRATIVE RESPONSES

(A separate document may be attached to the email submission if needed to answer questions. Please reference section numbers in the document.)

A.) Program Relevance

Explain how participation in SCI will address your community's most significant challenges or opportunities.

B.) Vision & Priorities

Describe your community's vision and top priorities for the next five years, including municipal operations, governance, organizational capacity, community improvements, and economic development. Are these part of an ongoing effort or a new initiative?

C.) Readiness and Momentum

Describe the readiness and momentum your community currently has to support successful participation (e.g., leadership alignment, ongoing projects, or recent wins).

CERTIFICATION

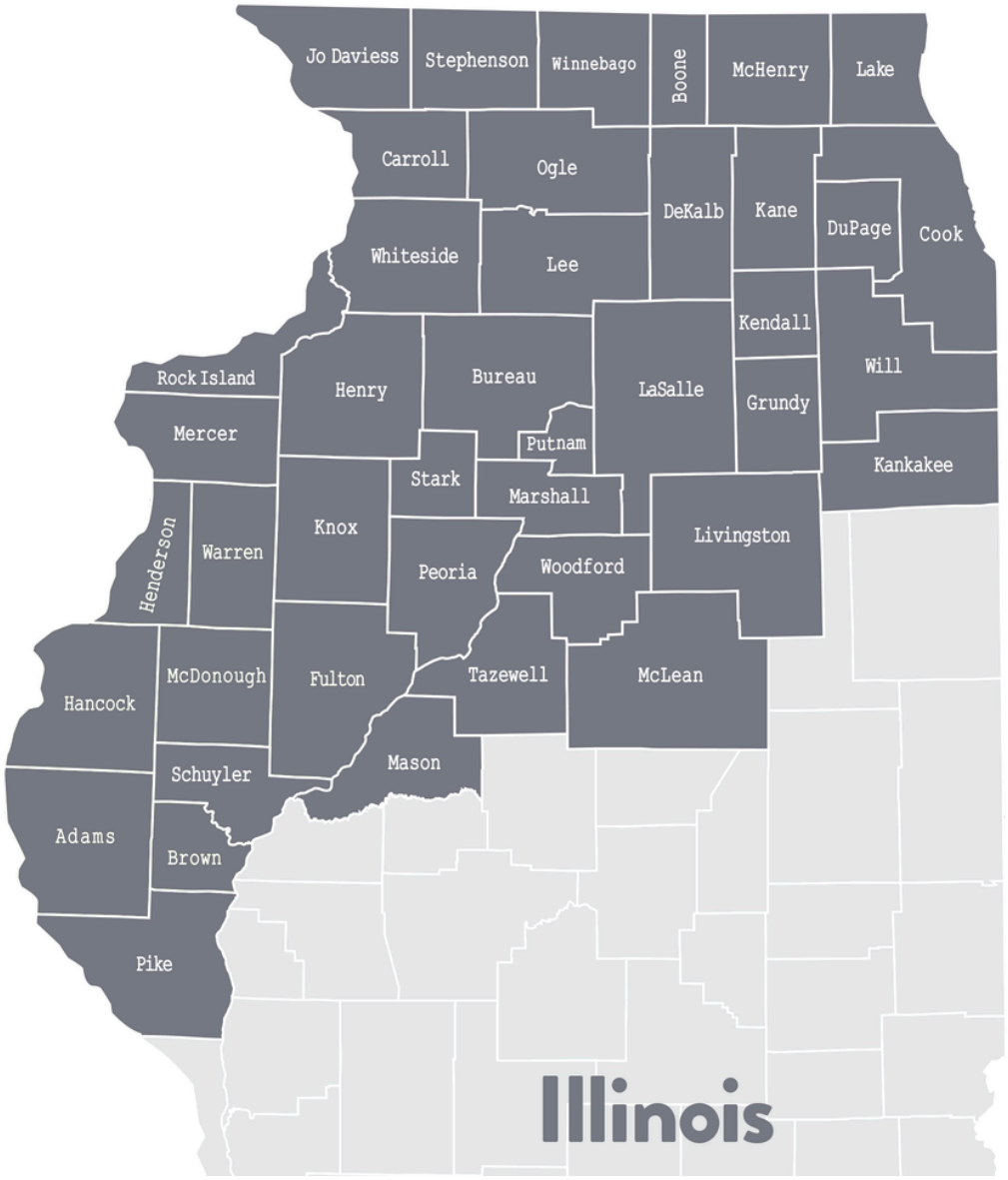
I certify that I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the governing body and that the information provided is accurate.

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

COMPEER FINANCIAL TERRITORY – ILLINOIS ELIGIBILITY MAP



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