

618 HOMES

The Guide to Living in the **METRO EAST**



Downtown Edwardsville, Illinois

Prepared for buyers relocating to Illinois' St. Louis suburbs

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Understanding the Metro East

The Metro East is the Illinois side of the Greater St. Louis region, not a disconnected collection of small Illinois towns. Madison and St. Clair counties contain most of the communities in this guide, with Monroe County covering Columbia and Waterloo.



Metro East counties: Madison, St. Clair, and Monroe, Illinois

Getting Around

Transportation is one of the strongest relocation stories here. I-55, I-64, I-70, I-255, and I-270 connect the Illinois suburbs to St. Louis and to each other. Troy markets itself as roughly 20 minutes from Downtown St. Louis with direct access to I-55, I-70, and I-270.

The Illinois MetroLink corridor runs through East St. Louis, Fairview Heights, Belleville, Swansea, and on to Shiloh-Scott, giving the central St. Clair County corridor direct rail access into St. Louis, something most Madison County suburbs don't have.

Madison County has its own strong network. Madison County Transit connects Alton, Bethalto, Granite City, Collinsville, Edwardsville, Glen Carbon, Troy, and Highland, and the MCT trail system is one of the defining quality-of-life features of central Madison County.

Scott Air Force Base and Regional Anchors

Scott Air Force Base influences housing demand throughout O'Fallon, Shiloh, Mascoutah, Lebanon, and the broader St. Clair County market. Some of Shiloh's residential areas sit less than a mile from the main gate. MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, next to Scott near Mascoutah, currently offers Allegiant service to a number of leisure destinations.

SIUE is another regional anchor. Spring 2026 enrollment reached 11,932, and the university shapes employment, culture, rentals, and housing demand throughout Edwardsville and Glen Carbon.

HOW TO CHOOSE *You can live in Illinois while staying fully tied into the St. Louis economy, sports, entertainment, and job market, but each Metro East corridor offers a meaningfully different lifestyle. The pages that follow break down what makes each one different.*

Edwardsville + Glen Carbon + Maryville

This is the premium central Madison County cluster. Suburban housing, established amenities, trails, healthcare, and easy access to SIUE come together here, with Edwardsville supplying the strongest traditional downtown of the three.

Edwardsville

The most complete standalone community of the three: historic neighborhoods, newer subdivisions, a walkable downtown full of restaurants, SIUE, youth sports, and a large parks system that includes the Watershed Nature Center and miles of connected paths.

Glen Carbon

Less downtown-oriented and more defined by subdivisions, shopping corridors, trails, and newer development. The 69 acre Schon Park anchors a village that sits centrally within the Madison County trail network.

Maryville

The quieter third option. Buyers get quick access to Edwardsville and Glen Carbon amenities and I-55/I-70 while living in a more residential setting. Anderson Hospital, currently expanding its emergency facilities, is a defining healthcare and employment anchor.



Downtown Edwardsville streetscape

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Edwardsville	\$345,000	+7.0%
Glen Carbon	\$359,500	+12.3%
Maryville	\$345,000	+3.8%

Edwardsville has the broadest spectrum, from historic homes and small downtown properties to established subdivisions and luxury new construction. Glen Carbon skews more suburban with ranches, 1990s to present subdivisions, villas, and a growing wave of new construction, including Meridian Grove, now under construction with 17 individual homes and 16 attached villa buildings. Maryville offers established neighborhoods, ranches, and conventional subdivisions with somewhat more space in certain outer areas.

Schools

Edwardsville and Glen Carbon fall under Edwardsville CUSD 7, which operates Glen Carbon Elementary along with numerous Edwardsville schools. Maryville is different: Maryville Elementary belongs to Collinsville CUSD 10 and was recognized as a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School. Exact school assignment should always be verified by property address.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

Cleveland-Heath and Mio Osteria anchor downtown Edwardsville's dining scene. The MCT trail network, Watershed Nature Center, Schon Park, and the Gardens at SIUE round out the area's outdoor and lifestyle draws.

HOW TO CHOOSE *Edwardsville for downtown and lifestyle, Glen Carbon for suburban convenience and newer development, Maryville for a quieter residential feel while staying close to both.*

Troy + St. Jacob + Highland

The I-55/I-70 and small-town eastern Madison County page. Three very different personalities sit within a short drive of each other here.

Troy

The most suburban and commute-oriented of the three, sitting at a strong highway location with access to I-55, I-70, and I-270. The city markets itself as roughly 20 minutes from Downtown St. Louis.

St. Jacob

Smaller, more rural, and more agricultural in setting. Buyers stay in Triad schools while getting a significantly more small-town environment than Troy offers.

Highland

Almost its own ecosystem. Rather than functioning purely as a St. Louis bedroom suburb, Highland has its own historic downtown, businesses, parks, and civic identity, all within commuting distance of St. Louis.



Downtown Highland town square fountain

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Troy	\$370,000	+8.5%
St. Jacob	\$362,400	+3.5%
Highland	\$270,000	+8.0%

Troy and St. Jacob currently command materially higher medians, while Highland offers considerably more approachable entry pricing for buyers who want a larger, self-contained small city.

Schools

Triad CUSD 2 includes Troy, St. Jacob, and Marine, and spans 121.5 square miles near the I-55/I-70/I-270 crossroads. Highland operates its own system, Highland CUSD 5.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

Tri-Township Park District anchors recreation in Troy, while Silver Lake Park does the same in Highland. For food, look to The Lucky Rooster Pub and Eatery in St. Jacob and Fire-N-Smoke Wood Fired Kitchen in Troy.

HOW TO CHOOSE *Troy for suburban living with strong highway access, St. Jacob for small-town and rural atmosphere without going far east, Highland for a larger, self-contained small city with its own identity.*

Collinsville + Fairview Heights

A chapter built around location and value. Buyers do not need \$350,000 or more to land in a genuinely convenient Metro East location.

Collinsville

One of the most central locations in the entire Metro East. I-55/70 and I-255 provide fast movement toward Downtown St. Louis, Edwardsville and Glen Carbon, and St. Clair County. Housing stock is generally older than Edwardsville or O'Fallon, which helps explain the lower median.

Fairview Heights

The major retail and commercial counterpart. St. Clair Square remains a significant shopping and dining destination just off I-64, and residents have direct access to MetroLink via the Fairview Heights station.



Monks Mound staircase, Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Collinsville	\$200,000	+5.3%
Fairview Heights	\$220,000	+1.1%

This is one of the clearest value stories in the guide: two genuinely central Metro East locations, both well under the regional median.

Schools

Collinsville CUSD 10 is the primary system for Collinsville. Fairview Heights is more complicated, since municipal lines and school district boundaries do not perfectly match. School assignment should always be confirmed by address rather than assumed.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

Cahokia Mounds, a 2,200 acre UNESCO World Heritage Site just west of Collinsville, preserves the center of the ancient Cahokia settlement. Uptown Collinsville is home to the famous Catsup Bottle and established restaurants like Mungo's.

HOW TO CHOOSE *Collinsville for character, history, and central interstate access. Fairview Heights for retail convenience, MetroLink access, and a more conventional suburban commercial environment.*

O'Fallon + Shiloh

The strongest Scott Air Force Base relocation page in the guide, and one of the most amenity-rich suburban corridors in the Metro East.

O'Fallon

One of the Metro East's most amenity-rich suburban communities, with a revitalized Downtown District, Family Sports Park, and proximity to Scott AFB. The city operates 12 parks and green spaces and has invested heavily in sports and recreation.

Shiloh

More residential and directly tied to Scott. Some of the closest off-base residential areas sit less than a mile from the main gate, and the village has direct I-64 and MetroLink access.



Downtown O'Fallon, Illinois

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
O'Fallon	\$357,000	+5.0%
Shiloh	\$390,000	+4.0%

Expect newer subdivisions, move-up homes, attached and detached villas, ranches, and a meaningful share of 2000s to present construction, more than most of the older inner Metro East communities.

Schools

O'Fallon spans multiple elementary and middle school districts, with O'Fallon Township High School District 203 serving much of the community across seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and two OTHS campuses. Shiloh has its own elementary district. Do not assume schools based on mailing address alone.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital sits in O'Fallon, with Memorial Hospital Shiloh close by. For lifestyle, think downtown O'Fallon, Vine Street Market, Family Sports Park, Rock Springs Park, Peel Wood Fired Pizza, and Le Ono.

HOW TO CHOOSE *O'Fallon for restaurants, events, and commercial activity. Shiloh for a quieter residential setting with exceptional access to Scott, I-64, and regional healthcare.*

Belleville + Swansea

The established-city and central St. Clair County chapter, anchored by one of the Metro East's true historic cities.

Belleville

A traditional downtown, older neighborhoods, historic housing, parks, civic events, and significantly more housing variety than many newer suburbs.

Swansea

More residential and suburban, sitting immediately north of Belleville with quick access to shopping, healthcare, and several MetroLink stations.



Downtown Belleville roundabout

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Belleville	\$179,000	-0.1%
Swansea	\$290,000	+9.4%

The gap here is worth explaining rather than hiding. Belleville's huge range of neighborhoods and older inventory pulls the citywide median down, while Swansea's housing profile is materially different and newer.

Schools

Belleville Township High School District 201 serves the broader Belleville area, with Belleville District 118 as one of the elementary districts. Swansea includes areas served by Wolf Branch District 113 among others, so confirm school assignment by address.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

The Richland Creek Greenway connects to the MetroLink Bikeway, and MetroLink stations serve both Belleville and Swansea. Eckert's Country Restaurant is a recognizable regional destination, and Swansea's Schranz Memorial Park rounds out the local parks scene.

HOW TO CHOOSE *Belleville for historic character, affordability, and urban-style amenities. Swansea for a quieter suburban environment while staying immediately connected to Belleville's infrastructure.*

Mascoutah + Lebanon

The Scott AFB east and small-town St. Clair County page, pairing a modern military-adjacent suburb with a historic college town.

Mascoutah

Combines small-town character with perhaps the most direct relationship to Scott AFB and MidAmerica Airport outside of Shiloh. The city sits just off I-64 and markets itself around small-town living with modern amenities.

Lebanon

Smaller, older, and considerably more historic, roughly 23 miles east of St. Louis and built around its brick-lined historic core and McKendree University.



McKendree University fountain, Lebanon, Illinois

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Mascoutah	\$290,000	-0.9%
Lebanon	\$218,565	-5.0%

Mascoutah has a particularly obvious relocation story for military-connected buyers because of Scott and MidAmerica. Lebanon is the alternative for buyers who want a historic small-town atmosphere rather than a newer suburban feel.

Schools

Mascoutah CUSD 19 operates Mascoutah High, Mascoutah Middle, Mascoutah Elementary, Scott Elementary, and Wingate Elementary. Lebanon operates CUSD 9, and Lebanon Elementary received National Blue Ribbon recognition in 2023.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

Silver Creek Preserve sits near Mascoutah, and Horner Park anchors outdoor life in Lebanon.

HOW TO CHOOSE *Mascoutah for a modern small-town suburb closely tied to Scott. Lebanon for a historic college town with a lower price point and a quieter traditional community.*

Columbia + Waterloo + Millstadt

The southern Metro East and country-suburban chapter, where lots get larger and the pace slows down the farther buyers move from I-64.

Columbia

The most St. Louis-oriented of the group. Its location near I-255 makes south St. Louis County and Downtown St. Louis relatively accessible while retaining a distinct Illinois community identity.

Waterloo

Farther south and more self-contained, maintaining small-town character alongside a historic downtown of shopping, restaurants, parks, golf, and community events.

Millstadt

Sits between the more urbanized St. Clair County communities and Monroe County, offering a smaller-town and more rural feel.



Downtown Waterloo at sunset

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Columbia	\$343,000	+5.5%
Waterloo	\$335,000	-1.6%
Millstadt	\$305,000	+2.2%

Larger lots and more rural properties begin appearing as buyers move south. Waterloo in particular mixes established homes and subdivisions with surrounding acreage and country properties.

Schools

Columbia CUSD 4 operates Columbia High, Columbia Middle, and its elementary schools. Waterloo operates CUSD 5. Millstadt operates CCSD 160 through eighth grade; high school assignment should be verified by address rather than assumed.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

Waterloo's parks offer fishing, disc golf, playgrounds, walking trails, a skate park, and a dog park. Illinois Caverns gives Monroe County one of the more unusual natural attractions in the entire Metro East.

HOW TO CHOOSE *Columbia for St. Louis access, Waterloo for a more complete small-town lifestyle, Millstadt for buyers wanting a smaller and more rural-feeling community.*

Alton + Godfrey + Bethalto — The Riverbend

This page feels different from the suburban chapters by design. The Mississippi River, bluffs, historic architecture, and the Great River Road define the Riverbend.

Alton

More than 1,400 acres of park space, including the 700 plus acre Gordon Moore Park, plus an active historic downtown of restaurants, shops, galleries, markets, and events.

Godfrey

The more spacious residential counterpart to Alton, with multiple parks including Glazebrook, LaVista, and Clifton Terrace, and a more suburban and rural-residential feel.

Bethalto

The smaller, more affordable eastern Riverbend alternative.



Mississippi River bluffs near Alton, Illinois

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Alton	\$144,750	+3.4%
Godfrey	\$221,750	+5.6%
Bethalto	\$210,000	+5.1%

This cluster shows just how dramatically housing prices can change across the Metro East, all within a few miles of the riverfront.

Schools

Alton CUSD 11 serves both Alton and Godfrey. Bethalto operates CUSD 8.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

OSF Saint Anthony's anchors healthcare in Alton. For lifestyle, the Great River Road, riverfront, the 4,000 seat Alton Amphitheater, Gordon Moore Park, downtown dining, and The Brown Bag Bistro round out the area.

HOW TO CHOOSE Alton for history, architecture, riverfront character, and affordability. Godfrey for more space and suburban to rural housing. Bethalto for a smaller community and approachable pricing.

Granite City + Wood River + East Alton

The affordable inner Madison County and industrial heritage chapter, where housing condition and neighborhood character can vary block by block.

Granite City

Extremely close to St. Louis geographically, with some of the lowest home prices in the core Metro East. A strong industrial identity sits alongside 13 parks across more than 175 acres, including the 74 acre Wilson Park.

Wood River

Farther northeast in the Riverbend, about 15 miles from Downtown St. Louis, with recent investment in recreation including a new recreation center.

East Alton

An established, affordable community immediately adjacent to Alton and Wood River, about 20 miles from St. Louis.



Historic Granite City mural and Illinois Route 66 sign

Housing Snapshot

CITY	MEDIAN PRICE	YoY CHANGE
Granite City	\$139,900	+9.5%
Wood River	\$146,200	+12%
East Alton	\$145,250	+14%

A major future-development story sits inside this chapter: Hollywood River Studios in Wood River, a 105 acre project that has advanced through its land sale and early site work, with plans for sound and production stages and related entertainment uses.

Schools

Granite City is served by CUSD 9. Wood River and East Alton school boundaries are more fragmented, spanning East Alton Elementary District 13, Wood River-Hartford District 15, East Alton-Wood River High School District 14, and portions of Roxana CUSD 1. Always confirm school assignment by address in this area.

Lifestyle & Local Favorites

Belk Park anchors Wood River, and Wilson Park anchors Granite City, which has also added a Route 66 themed Neon Sign Park.

HOW TO CHOOSE *These areas reward buyers prioritizing affordability, convenient regional access, and established housing, while being candid that condition and character can vary considerably block by block.*

Start Here: Find Your Fit

Every buyer weighs the Metro East a little differently. Use this as a starting point, then let's talk through what matters most for your move.

Want walkability and local restaurants?

Start with Edwardsville, Belleville, Alton, O'Fallon, or Waterloo.

Want newer suburban housing?

Look at Glen Carbon, O'Fallon, Shiloh, or Troy.

Scott AFB access is the priority?

Focus on Shiloh, O'Fallon, Mascoutah, or Lebanon.

Looking for a more affordable entry point?

Consider Granite City, Alton, Belleville, Collinsville, or the Wood River / East Alton area.

Want a country or small-town feeling?

Look at St. Jacob, Highland, Waterloo, Millstadt, or Lebanon.

Trails and outdoor recreation matter most?

Start with Edwardsville / Glen Carbon, Alton / Godfrey, or Waterloo / Monroe County.

Commuting into St. Louis daily?

Collinsville, Fairview Heights, Belleville / Swansea, Columbia, and Troy all offer strong access.

LET'S FIND YOUR PLACE IN THE METRO EAST

Every one of these communities is different, and the right fit depends on your priorities, budget, and timeline. Reach out and let's talk through your move.

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