

## Talking about St. Louis?

Here's the short story: St. Louis is a great place to start up, stand out, and stay.

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### St. Louis Narrative Background

- The St. Louis region is competing with many other cities around the world that have crafted compelling stories to promote themselves to prospective residents and investors. To date, we have lacked a cohesive narrative to communicate about St. Louis to attract economic development and talent to our area.
- The St. Louis narrative, which was informed by extensive research with people inside and outside of St. Louis, is the story of what is happening here today and the spirit that's energizing our region. It showcases St. Louis as a place where people can start up, stand out and stay.
- As a result of the narrative initiative, we are embracing our region through the STLMade movement, which aims to shine a light on the people, ideas, organizations, and businesses that are moving our region forward.
- The narrative initiative was guided by an Advisory Council of brand and communications professionals, from a variety of local organizations, and brought to life by local collaborators, including Broughton Brand Company, Cannonball, and Weber Shandwick.

### Why is St. Louis a great place to start a business or a career?

- Whether you want to start a business or a career, St. Louis offers the resources, support, and opportunities to help bring your dream to life.
- We've earned national attention for aggressively supporting multiple startup communities (T-Rex, Cortex Innovation Community, 39 North, OPO Startups, Downtown North Innovation District, and many others) and building towards a more diverse and equitable startup ecosystem.
- Our corporations and research institutions are collaborating in bold ways, creating new career opportunities, and earning recognition as leaders in industries, including life sciences, agtech, geospatial intelligence, logistics, and finance.
- Anchored by the NGA's investment in a new \$1.75 billion west headquarters in North St. Louis, our region is now one of the hottest markets for companies, entrepreneurs and talent looking to map their future in the fast-growing geospatial intelligence industry, which powers everything from the maps on our phones to sophisticated guidance systems for missiles.

### What makes it possible for people to stand out in St. Louis?

- St. Louis is big enough to provide all the resources and support you need, yet small enough that tenacious and enterprising people can make their mark and be recognized for their contributions.
- From engineers to educators, scientists to artists, and chefs to community leaders, we're loyal to the people and ideas that insist on moving our region forward and making it more open to all.
- We're proud to have one of the fastest growing immigrant populations, and welcome all who want to come to St. Louis to be part of our thriving community and collaborate in ways that keep it growing stronger.

## What makes St. Louis a place that people want to stay and put down roots?

- Along with being among the most affordable cities in the U.S., we have all the amenities that contribute to a high quality of life — historical neighborhoods, world-class universities and health care facilities, vibrant visual and performing arts, sports of all kinds, a city park that's even larger than Central Park, connected greenspaces, and a spectacular river country.
- Our food, beer, arts, and music scenes are legendary and continue to push the edges of invention.
- St. Louis is an affordable place to live and own a home, with a standard of living that's higher than 94 percent of the MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) in the nation. We were also recently named a top 10 city for new college grads thanks to affordability and housing costs.
- Yes, we have challenges – all large metropolitan areas do. But we've had our moment to look in the mirror, and we're coming together and working together to create a community that's safer, more vibrant, and more inclusive to all.

## But don't take our word for it.

Here are some proof points and recent accolades St. Louis has received that support our story.

Ranked #1  
for Female  
Entrepreneurs

[Seekcapital.com](http://Seekcapital.com)

#2 Rising City  
for Startups

[Forbes.com](http://Forbes.com)

Named #1 City  
for Millennials  
and Affordability

[ThePennyHoarder.com](http://ThePennyHoarder.com)  
[Redfin.com](http://Redfin.com)

Top 10 Most Affordable  
Big Cities in the US

[TheSimpleDollar.com](http://TheSimpleDollar.com)

Over \$9 Billion in  
Urban Core Development

[BizJournals.com](http://BizJournals.com)

13 New Hotels  
Under Development

[BizJournals.com](http://BizJournals.com)

Major League Soccer  
Coming in 2023

[MLS4TheLou.com](http://MLS4TheLou.com)

## Tech & Innovation – a short list of sectors that are earning national recognition

- St. Louis was recently named a "Rising Star" in tech by the Brookings Institute. And the **Kauffman Index** said that in 2017, St. Louis saw the largest upward shift of startup activity in the country. With multiple distinct innovation districts (39 North/Danforth, Cortex, T-Rex, and OPO Startups), St. Louis provides the support our innovators, thinkers, makers, and doers need to make an impact.
- Home to more than 700 life sciences and agtech firms, the **St. Louis agtech sector** has been hailed by the Brookings Institution as a model for the nation.
- The development of the new \$1.75 billion National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) West headquarters in North St. Louis has established a foundation for academic and business partnerships that will help position our region for leadership in geospatial research, training, and innovation.

## Talent Development – a few examples of initiatives that are working to develop and attract talent

- St. Louis leads the nation in female entrepreneurs. Seek Capital named St. Louis as the city with **more women-owned startups** than any other metro area in the U.S.
- Greater St. Louis is one of the largest educational markets in the U.S. with 45 two- and four-year colleges and universities.
- **LaunchCode**, a non-profit started by St. Louis native and Square founder, Jim McKelvey, is creating new pathways to economic opportunity for people of all backgrounds aspiring to work in technology.
- St. Louis has one of the "Fastest Growing Immigrant Populations" according to the **American Community Survey**. A network of multiple organizations like the St. Louis Mosaic Project, the International Institute, and the New American Alliance, are in place to attract, educate, and support immigrants.

## Affordability & Livability – some of the factors that contribute to our higher than average standard of living

- **US News & World Report** recently named St. Louis among the top 25 most affordable cities in the United States.
- **St. Louis Federal Reserve** reports that the standard of living in St. Louis is higher than 94 percent of the MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) in the nation.
- Howmuch.net reports that St. Louis has the **second highest rate** of Millennial home ownership.
- According to **PayScale.com**, the St. Louis cost of living is 6% lower than the national average.
- Known as a **"20-minute city,"** St. Louis consistently ranks **below the national average commute** time to work by the U.S. Census Bureau.
- St. Louis is the #1 most attractive metro area for millennials when it comes to spending power, giving young people more bang for their buck than 49 of the largest metro areas surveyed, including Austin (**Multi-Housing News**).

## Accessible Culture – highlights of the amenities that make St. Louis an exciting place to call home

- St. Louis is home to many free attractions including the Gateway Arch National Park, “America’s Best Zoo” ([USA Today](#)), St. Louis Science Center, Citygarden, Pulitzer Arts Foundation, Laumeier Sculpture Park, Forest Park, The Muny, Cahokia Mounds State Historic Park, and Katy Trail State Park. (And countless more.)
- Our diverse and effervescent arts scene includes more than **56 must-see** visual and performing arts destinations.
- [Zagat](#) (and [others](#)) called St. Louis “one the country’s most exciting food cities”, with James Beard award-winning and nominated chefs and restaurants across a variety of genres at a variety of price points. Being called the “essential Bosnian food capital of the U.S.” by [Food & Wine](#) is a nice compliment, too.
- We’re building one of the **largest networks of hiking/biking trails** (125 miles and counting!) in the U.S. that will connect our renowned neighborhoods, communities, rivers, parks, and institutions.

## Urban Core Renewal – some of the exciting projects contributing to our transformation

- Approximately **\$9 billion of development** is currently underway or has been recently completed in and around St. Louis’ urban core including: Gateway Arch National Park, NGA West headquarters, Cortex Innovation Community, City Foundry STL, Centene Stadium (MLS) BJC Campus Renewal, Delmar Divine, SSM/SLU Expansion, The Armory District, Ballpark Village Expansion, Soldiers Memorial, Adams Grove Apts, and several community development projects.
- There are **13 hotels currently in development** along St. Louis’ central corridor.

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