

A Solid Record,
A Clear Vision...

COLE

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **FOR MAYOR**

The Right Choice for Carbondale

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Taxes and Spending

Perhaps the most controversial and sensitive issues dealt with at any level of government are taxes and spending. And, essentially, the most important function of the city council is to prepare, approve and administer a sound budget and fiscal policy. From the budget come priorities for the city administration and the means with which to carry forth all municipal affairs; therein lies the importance of strong leadership from a mayor devoted to good government.

Dollars and Sense

During the current Fiscal Year 2003 (May 2002 - April 2003), total budgeted revenues and other financing sources for the City of Carbondale will reach \$32,626,156. These funds are generated by sales and service taxes, license fees, intergovernmental allocations, service charges, court fines, bond proceeds and numerous other sources.

Within that same time period, total budgeted expenditures are targeted to approach \$36,581,690. These costs are contained in general personnel, police and fire protection, child care, capital improvements, debt service and other expenses.

While the two sets of numbers do not mathematically balance, there is a natural difference that arises in most municipal budgets between revenues and expenditures, due to the allocation patterns of funds for capital projects. For our situation, the difference in expenditures over revenues is afforded through the use of reserve and special use funds set aside specifically for large projects that cannot be funded in a single year's budget. An issue like this is just one complicating component of public budgeting that creates misunderstanding. Brad Cole has proven himself to be an informed and dedicated steward during the city's budget processes and he has done so by closely reviewing the entire 400+ page budget document, line by line both in private and public settings.

Cole's intricate knowledge of the city's budget and financial policies has helped him bring a refreshing approach to managing our community finances. His common sense questions and comments have helped shed light on some aspects of the budget that others were unaware of or insensitive to. Questions bring answers and answers bring discussion and dialogue, which are needed when spending millions of taxpayer dollars every year.

Keeping a Watchful Eye

Brad Cole knows the importance of balancing needs with available resources, and he firmly believes that governments must act more like families and businesses when faced with the challenges of everyday expenses and limited income. During his time on the city council, Cole has continually acted with respectful regard to citizen demands for services while keeping a watchful eye on the city's check book and the expenditure of tax dollars.

City government must be positioned to meet the legitimate wants and desires of its constituents, but it is obligated to do so with great care. Our next mayor will inherit a tenuous economic situation that is confronting our entire state and nation. **Carbondale needs strong leadership in this time of an uncertain economy and we need someone who will be accountable to the public for every dollar that flows through city hall.** There is no such thing as "the government's money." Brad Cole is one elected official who understands and believes that all "government money" has been *paid by* and *belongs to* the taxpayers, not the bureaucrats and politicians.

Carbondale city government has over time improved its efficiency and reduced its waste in order to remain solvent within the constraints imposed by limited resources. Without the adherence to responsible administration, city hall would have appeared out of control with growth and expenses. Keeping a highly trained, well-compensated staff within city government is a priority that will be meshed with a renewed commitment to moderated internal growth. Technological advances have already shown the ability for city hall to create change and increase efficiency while reducing personnel expenditures through retirement and attrition. While other area communities have seen layoffs, Carbondale has rightly protected its staff through the institution of appropriate personnel policies and foresight.

Real Property Tax Relief

It took more than two years to accomplish what many people thought was impossible, but the hard work and long wait were worth it - Carbondale will soon have zero property tax levied for city government services. **Following through on his commitment four years ago, Brad Cole never lost sight of the goal to lower the tax burden on property owners in Carbondale.** It was due to his original proposal and his persistence that meaningful property tax relief was eventually made possible in Carbondale.

While the recent city council action will only affect the city's portion of individual property tax bills (not the schools, public library, county or other tax levies), it should result in an overall tax reduction of about 6.5% for property within the city limits.

This property tax relief can be justified by offsetting the loss in revenue with previously planned departmental cost savings, through modifications to the telecommunications tax, and by absorbing some expenses into our General Fund. The current balance in our General Fund (basically the city's savings account) is approximately \$7.3 million. **As such, Carbondale will lower its property tax rate and still maintain the same level of quality public services provided to the citizenry.** This is a true win-win situation for everyone.

Standing Up for Carbondale

Due to a number of circumstances following the recent US Census Bureau count of Carbondale residents, one glaring fact immediately presented itself from the reported population count - Carbondale stood to lose a significant amount of money. **Without question, no local elected official took more time or made more of an impact to resolve the city's pending problem than did Brad Cole.** And his efforts paid off.

Disputing erroneous population numbers is not new or unique to Carbondale city hall. However, with the major undercount reported during this census, the city faced the loss of funds distributed by per capita formulas. Potential losses were estimated as high as \$800,000 per year for a period of ten years. **It was Brad Cole who suggested the ambitious legal maneuver that led to Carbondale's funds being set aside in escrow for future collection.** Had this important step not been supported by the courts, Carbondale would have forfeited any opportunity to recoup federal and state funding losses.

After months of legal wrangling and financial calculating, a settlement was finally reached between all parties, and Carbondale saw the benefits of its drawn-out efforts. **Again based upon a visionary suggestion from Brad Cole, a new interpretation of state law emerged from this process that not only served Carbondale's immediate concern, but will also help other communities across the state in similar situations.** Work is now ongoing to introduce legislation before the Illinois General Assembly in a manner that will protect cities and villages from undue hardship that may be caused by erroneous Census counts in the future.

Economic Development

For Carbondale to grow in an ever changing marketplace, economic development must be a central component to the city government's activities. It is the role of business - through private sector investment, public accountability and the entrepreneurial spirit - to create jobs and improve employment conditions. Government can, however, create an atmosphere and infrastructure system that encourage new economic development and that sustain and support the business and industry already in place.

A New Attitude Toward Development

It has been said often throughout the years, but it could not be truer than today in Carbondale's business environment - **“business goes where it is wanted, and stays where it is appreciated.”** This simple phrase will become the spoken and unspoken motto of Carbondale city government under the leadership of Brad Cole; it will be both our walk and our talk.

As an ardent supporter of the business community, **Brad Cole has argued on behalf of small businesses and in favor of a more practical application of city policies and regulations.** Having sifted through more than a thousand pages of city codes, Brad Cole stands best-prepared to actively promote a comprehensive rebirth of development that hasn't been seen in Carbondale in more than 30 years.

Brad Cole understands that we must build on the opportunities offered by a global economy and we must act locally and aggressively in order to do so. As a community, we must be productive. We must be competitive. We must nurture a vibrant entrepreneurial environment to stimulate small business growth. We must keep pace with technological advances. And, we must have a skilled and educated workforce.

As a local government dedicated to serving a defined constituency, we must plan strategically. We must measure achievements realistically. And, we must allocate resources wisely by continuing to live within our means, reduce government regulations and demand accountability.

As mayor, **Brad Cole will recruit new investment and build a revitalized economy that diversifies its interests to include more than just a few centerpiece industries.** Cole will actively recruit light industrial, knowledge-based, and service jobs through small and medium sized companies. In doing so, he will create a culture wherein people will come to Carbondale for good paying jobs - jobs that will pay a decent wage and that will allow young families to take root in our community. With new jobs and a

stabilized economy shielded from the uncertainty of higher education enrollment, housing markets will blossom, new business partnerships will emerge and retail merchants will prosper again.

To emphasize the importance of new business development, **the first person to welcome prospective new investors in Carbondale will be the mayor... and that mayor will be Brad Cole.** He will be a mayor who commits to assisting developers and investors in any and all legal and ethical ways to guarantee that new investments come to Carbondale. We must face the fact that Carbondale has been beaten in the ongoing rivalry with neighboring communities, so we must improve our level of competition in the game.

As a new tool to assist developments, **Brad Cole will push for fast-track planning authority to cut out unnecessary time and expense from the normal, often frustrating processes.** Enacted only in warranted circumstances, this special provision will allow Carbondale to better compete with communities unencumbered by volumes of regulations and restrictions.

When legitimate developers seek to invest in Carbondale, the answer to questions will be “yes we can” instead of “no you can’t.”

A Renewed Commitment to Existing Business

City government cannot forget those among us who have already made investments in Carbondale, whatever those investments may be.

Under energetic leadership at city hall, Carbondale will be known as a community that sustains a healthy business climate through support and assistance. **No longer will snide comparisons be made to neighboring communities about how things are done elsewhere; instead, Carbondale will set the benchmark for others to meet.** Business retention and expansion will be just as much an issue as new business recruitment, if not more so. The playing field will be permanently leveled for fairness and equity on all sides.

The Chamber of Commerce will be invited to take a front-row seat in dealings with the city government. Far too often, decisions have been made lacking consultation with the Chamber. **Through the creation of an advisory seat at City Council meetings, the Chamber of Commerce will become part of the process at every step and turn, building a true partnership with local businesses.**

Retooling Our Efforts

Each year, the City of Carbondale spends hundreds of thousands of dollars on business development activities. Our associations with the Carbondale Business Development Corporation (CBDC), Jackson County Business Development Corporation and Carbondale Main Street are necessary but have often served to complicate accountability.

Through a fresh perspective, the City can continue to support needed enterprises offered by CBDC and Main Street, but they can be better coordinated and held more accountable for their costs. In conjunction with the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce, these entities are now housed under one roof in the Old Railroad Passenger Depot downtown. This closeness in operation alone will help draw the groups together and toward a centralized theme of developing, assisting and promoting business ventures. **For those entities funded primarily with city resources, clear objectives must be set in order for annual goals to be measured by specific outcomes.**

An informal “Development Roundtable” of industry leaders and representatives of area development groups will be called to meet quarterly with the mayor, so there will be a regular flow of information and dialogue at the highest levels. This will allow for an ongoing review of Carbondale’s business climate and create an opportunity for the city to respond promptly to business needs and concerns. Other existing avenues for dialogue will also be reshaped into bodies of action and accomplishment, rather than idleness and indifference.

No More Downtown vs. Around-Town

Carbondale is fortunate to have seen marked growth recently along the outer edges of its east-west corridor. The regeneration of University Mall serves as a catalyst for other projects in that area and is positioned as a wonderful attraction for visitors from throughout southern Illinois. However, **there must be a new emphasis on cleaning-up and rebuilding much of the city’s inner business district.** A drive through the heart of the city on any given day will bring concern of blight due to abandoned properties and vacant buildings. This depressing trend of neglect must be reversed and replaced with new hope.

It was Brad Cole who proposed the creation of a demolition program for abandoned commercial properties, and as mayor he will continue the expansion of that program from its current scope. Unsafe, empty structures that line our primary business routes will be removed and cleared for new developments. Coupled with beautification plans, tree plantings and basic streetscape repairs, arteries of north-south

and east-west traffic will soon begin to flow again with vibrancy, where today they are clogged with unsightly decay.

The new railroad underpass at US Route 51 and Mill Street is a major step forward and the culmination of years of planning. At this time, it has only the most basic surroundings, yet it is by far the most visible and costly public works project in the city. A city-university task force developed a plan to make this a significant downtown asset with tasteful artwork and landscaping; however, because nothing has yet been done, it could quickly and easily degenerate into an urban eyesore. **Brad Cole will re-energize that joint city-university effort and lead it to a successful conclusion.** The benefit of an improved downtown area at that intersection can not be underestimated.

Public Safety and Infrastructure

Brad Cole believes that the foremost mission of any unit of government is to provide for the general safety and well-being of its citizens. That is certainly true for the City of Carbondale and it will be a top priority for the new city leadership.

Promoting Safe Neighborhoods

While balancing the desire for a feeling of small town safety with the reality of big city diversity and crime, Carbondale has been witness to many public safety situations that set it apart from the rest of southern Illinois. Whether due to a heavily transient population or simply because of the ever-changing times we now live in, Carbondale is often perceived by others as unsafe. **The recognition of this perception may not be pleasant, but it must be consciously made in order to address safety concerns and resolve long standing negative sentiments.**

Nearly one-third of the city's employees are dedicated to the police and fire departments. **The level of education, training and abilities of our civilian staff and sworn officers is unmatched for a community of our size and in our region.** This is a credit to our community and we must commit ourselves to continuing the high standard we set for qualification and employment of police and fire personnel. Fair compensation of those employees is also critical, to ensure that our police officers and fire fighters are appreciated and have a desire to live and stay in Carbondale for the duration of their careers, rather than just as a starting point prior to some better assignment elsewhere.

With the implementation of "community policing" programs and procedures over the past several years, Carbondale has taken positive steps to build public confidence. But more can and will be done.

Brad Cole will work to increase the number and frequency of neighborhood bicycle and foot patrols by police officers. Through increased awareness and more interpersonal contact between officers and the general public, **a police presence in an area will signal security, safety and comfort instead of unrest, trouble and anxiety.** Adults and children, alike, must feel a sense of trust when dealing with police officers... to the point where dialogue and interaction are commonplace.

The Carbondale Gang Task Force must be reconstituted with new membership and a focus to direct a renewed commitment toward reducing the incidence of violence and drugs on our streets and in our schools. Turning a blind eye to this systemic national crisis will only be cause for more problems and the potential for

serious conflicts in the future. **The interwoven patterns of drug abuse, violent crime and habitual delinquency should not be allowed in our community and city government should take a more proactive and public stand against them.** This must include additional awareness programs to deter violence against women and children in unstable homes, services to assist all victims of battery, and protection of those who suffer from neglect and abuse no matter where it takes place.

Rebuilding Our Basic Infrastructure

In order to support both residential and business needs, **Carbondale must continue to expand and upgrade its water and sewer systems,** to support new growth and to comply with environmental standards. Our extraordinary basic water supply at Cedar Lake is an asset unmatched by any other area community. It can become a greater selling point for the city as water becomes an even more crucial commodity.

The city is currently in the process of making significant improvements to its water and sewer facilities, but a focus must also be directed toward continual upgrades of the piping and distribution lines that run throughout town. Expansion of water and sewer lines primarily in those neighborhoods that have seen growth in population density must be coordinated with other improvements to handle higher demand volumes.

We must also place expressed importance on coordinating a transportation plan that places Carbondale at the forefront of local and regional needs. This includes identifying additional intra-city routes that need to circumvent railroad traffic, beautifying heavily traveled routes and their rights-of-way, and placing greater emphasis on the crossroads of US Route 51 and Illinois Route 13 through the center of Carbondale.

While the completion of the Mill Street underpass made good on an age-old promise to Carbondale motorists, we must be ready with the next major project or series of projects that will continue to focus on business transportation, delivery services and leisure travel needs for the future. Once elected, **Brad Cole will name a select group of area transportation experts to recommend needed improvements and suggest a comprehensive transportation policy for the entire community.**

One component of that policy will be a determination to resurface all city streets with bituminous pavement, bidding farewell once and forever to the oil and chip street resurfacing program. Another issue that will take center stage is a plan to repair all railroad grade crossings along the tracks that bisect our city streets. Operating in conjunction with the state agencies that oversee grant programs for these repairs, **Cole will work to improve all railroad crossings for better comfort and heightened safety.**

Due to the predominance of special needs and pedestrian traffic throughout Carbondale, a key component to the city's annual capital improvements program is the sidewalk repair and renovation plan. **Brad Cole successfully argued for the expansion of the sidewalk repair program in previous budgets and he will seek a re-doubling of the city's financial commitment to this program once elected.** Sidewalks play an important role in providing for pedestrian safety and flow throughout the community. There must be a more decisive attempt to repair crumbling walkways, replace inferior curb cuts and install new surfaces in areas of need throughout all neighborhoods and business districts.

Strengthening Community

The practical definition of “community” in Carbondale is much more personal than the textbook definition of the word, and it is characteristic of the diversity of our surroundings and the people we call friends and neighbors. It is that “community” that has been the driving force behind Brad Cole during his service on the Carbondale City Council. And it is that same “community” that he will devote himself to advancing as our next mayor.

Brad Cole believes in representing all people in the Carbondale community and responding to each and every concern that is brought to his attention. The people of this community deserve the right to have their thoughts and concerns about city government heard and, when appropriate, to have their city government take the necessary action to remedy situations or implement new direction for their benefit. Fair and responsible treatment of everyone and every situation is paramount in dealings between city hall and the community.

Protecting Community Interests

A vital element to Carbondale’s community is the availability of affordable and educational child care services. **Brad Cole has never faltered in his support of first-class child care services...** and he won’t as mayor. Within his authority, he will work to guarantee that these much needed services are provided by both private and public childcare organizations so young families can be assured that their children are being cared for and that there is adequate support for today’s working parents. Dedication to the city’s youth through child care is an easy rallying point; the difficult part is securing a stable budget and funding sources that reduce an over-reliance on city subsidies. A positive balance can and will be struck to maintain an equilibrium necessary to provide these services.

Wholesale reforms of the city’s current funding procedure for community organizations and not-for-profits must be undertaken. Brad Cole proposed a sensible and responsible plan for reviewing funding applications that has still not received the attention it deserves from the city council. In his proposal, Cole suggested changing the current program of inadequate annual increases for only a select group of organizations and opening up the process for all legitimate entities serving the community. With new review criteria that would base funding on actual services provided and an organization’s true needs, most entities would see increases in their annual grant appropriations. The level of funding would also more directly represent the city’s commitment to the services being funded.

Another of Brad Cole's vocal concerns has centered on the recent change in cable television providers. **As the only current councilman to vote against the cable franchise transfer, Brad Cole foresaw higher rates and reduced service being provided to Carbondale cable customers.** Unfortunately for everyone, his predictions came true and there has been a growing discontent throughout the community ever since. **Without Cole's regular rebuke of the company's poor programming policies and service discrepancies there would be no voice for cable customers who are dissatisfied and fed-up with the provider.** Brad Cole has fought to protect cable customers from higher rates and fewer channel choices, and he will continue to do so with new authority as our mayor.

Preserving Community Pride

As his first project after election to the city council, Brad Cole took on what became a two year effort to honor the history and preserve the integrity of Carbondale's most precious historic treasure - Woodlawn Cemetery. As the one true link to Carbondale's founding, Woodlawn Cemetery now serves as a lasting tribute to our first days as a community and to our ancestors. Disturbed by the lack of attention and respect it was being given, **Brad Cole made it a personal mission to repair, renovate and promote Woodlawn Cemetery as a designated local, state and national historic landmark.** As a result of Cole's efforts, Woodlawn Cemetery has received widespread recognition and now proudly welcomes visitors and historians with dignity.

There can be little disagreement that Carbondale has serious housing issues, some of which it has been facing for several years, if not decades. Those issues include the lack of new residential housing starts, dilapidated rental housing units and the out-flight of high-end single family housing to just beyond the city limits. In recognizing these problems, **Brad Cole proposed an elimination of the city's portion of property taxes to spur growth in new housing construction and to encourage reinvestment by property owners into rental unit repairs.** Following his lead, the city council took such action recently that will provide a positive incentive for speculative building to begin and for many open lots to soon be footings for new homes and improved surroundings.

But housing issues are far from resolved. In fact, the work has barely begun to see improvements in all corners of the community needing attention. Appropriate and consistent pressure must be placed on landlords to keep their properties in clean, safe and appealing order.

Specific care must be given to constructing new homes that will be affordable to young families and people wanting to get a positive start as home owners. In conjunction with the construction of new homes, **the city must work diligently to ensure that**

financial opportunities are available for those who need support with a first time home purchase or for those who are establishing first time credit.

Promoting Cooperation

Brad Cole has dedicated himself to working with the university and other units of government in the community, and as mayor he will continue that practice. **Having served on numerous boards and commissions prior to being elected to the city council, Cole has a direct knowledge of the issues facing other elected officials.** He will work aggressively to create positive communication links and relationships with the university, the school districts, park district, county officers and adjacent governmental entities.

To signify the unmatched level of educational opportunities available in Carbondale, our new mayor will work closely with the elementary and high school districts to promote strength and unity in serving our children. With new facilities and a new spirit of commitment to common goals, the transition for children from one school district to another, and then into higher education, will be smooth and seamless.

In addition to working within the community, Brad Cole will call on his personal relationships with state legislators, mayors from nearby cities and regional leaders in the tri-state area to build consensus for cooperative activities and initiatives. **Under Cole's leadership, Carbondale will position itself as a convener for resolving regional concerns and issues, and more fully fulfill its role as the unofficial capitol of southern Illinois.**

Town/Gown

No one can argue that “**how Southern Illinois University goes, so goes Carbondale.**” From our humble beginnings as a railroad town to our position now as home to a major, comprehensive university, Carbondale’s identity has changed dramatically since incorporation 150 years ago. What hasn’t changed, though, is a commitment to community and a sense of earnest pride among us. Each fall that pride is stoked and rekindled with the arrival of a new class of college students, from all ages and walks of life, who then join ranks and become part of this vibrant university community.

Students Are Important

Having served as SIUC Student Body President and as a staff member with the SIU Alumni Association, Brad Cole is keenly aware of the needs and concerns of undergraduate, graduate and professional students. His insight to the processes of campus student governance and his affinity to student involvement distinguish Brad Cole from others at city hall.

With the leadership of a new mayor, student concerns will weigh just as much as concerns from any other segment of the community. **Student input will be sought during formal and informal meetings, and it will become a must on all campus-related issues.** It will also become regular practice for the mayor to attend student government meetings... instead of just asking students to attend city meetings. **Respect must be given if it is to be received.**

When funding was in question due to rising costs, **it was Brad Cole who initiated the city’s financial support of SIUC’s summer Sunset Concert series.** This collaborative program between the university, park district and city government has proven itself to be an annual favorite of students and community members the same. For almost 25 years this tradition has grown and today marks what is best about Carbondale - bringing campus and community together in a fun-filled, positive venue.

Working Toward a Common Goal

Just as students should serve in a critical advisory capacity, so, too, should university administrators and other campus faculty and staff leaders. **Brad Cole has a history of strong bonds and trust with campus officials, based on professional and personal relationships that have been built over the past decade.** Bringing this fresh

connection with campus to the mayor's office will serve to install a direct link between the region's economic and cultural engine and the community its calls home.

A working dialogue with university leaders will be ongoing and part of the regular course of business from the city's perspective. Existing opportunities for discussion about pending issues will be broadened, specifically referring to the monthly City-Chamber-University (CCU) breakfasts. A synchronized approach to tackling current community issues will be the cornerstone of this group, rather than simply serving as a coffee club.

When Brad Cole originally proposed an aggressive community marketing plan, his intent was to support the university's efforts to attract and retain students. That goal should still be a central part of any marketing plan's purpose and function. For our plan to be successful the city must include the university in its promotions and we must accentuate the many positives that are sometimes taken for granted locally.

With city and university leaders in lock-step with each other, working toward a common goal, the entire region will benefit and prosper. The rich traditions of both Carbondale and Southern Illinois University deserve nothing less than the best from all of us.

Leadership and Experience

In only a short time, Brad Cole has proven himself as a dedicated and conscientious member of the Carbondale City Council. Concerned about balancing the social and economic needs of the citizenry with a responsible financial plan, **Brad Cole has brought a new approach to Carbondale city government... plain talk and common sense.**

A Recognized Leader

With his trademark “fair and consistent” litmus test, Cole has shown leadership in difficult times and when presented with complicated situations. His detailed understanding of city and state government programs and services has served our community in more ways than may be known to the general public. As a city councilman, Brad Cole has met with mayors, state legislators, congressmen and governors from throughout the United States - all the while promoting Carbondale and our way of life.

In March 2002, Brad Cole was recognized for his solid brand of leadership when selected by the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) to take part in a U.S. State Department sponsored delegation to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Chosen from among thousands of highly qualified elected officials throughout the nation, Cole fit well within ACYPL’s bipartisan mission to promote and develop international relationships between government leaders. His skillful handling of numerous, and often sensitive, situations during the two week journey abroad led his American colleagues to recommend him for future assignments with the organization.

A Tradition of Service

Cole’s natural inclination toward public service didn’t start with the city council. During his college years at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Brad Cole served in critical positions within Undergraduate Student Government and on many campus and community boards. As a fixture in university planning efforts, Cole spearheaded campus safety initiatives that saw the installation of emergency response telephones across campus, he rekindled school pride by dedicating the first “Class Gift” given by a graduating class in many years, and he fought for students’ rights while joining together with faculty and staff to enhance appreciation for the entire campus family.

In 1993, Cole was appointed by Governor Jim Edgar to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), where he represented all students at Illinois colleges and universities. Cole's term of appointment on the nine-member ISAC board is best remembered through his innovative suggestion of creating a statewide prepaid college tuition program for Illinois families. After subsequent years of research and planning, ISAC implemented the *College Illinois!* program that today mirrors Brad Cole's plan from almost ten years ago.

Following college, Brad Cole decided to stay in Carbondale... making this community his permanent home and planting his roots in southern Illinois.

Cole's involvement with community activities led to his appointment as a Trustee for the Carbondale Public Library and his election as a Commissioner for the Carbondale Park District. He held those positions for two years, respectively, prior to his election to the Carbondale City Council in April 1999. **At 27 years old, Brad Cole became the youngest-ever elected member of the Carbondale City Council... bringing with him enthusiasm, matched by a depth of knowledge and understanding beyond his years.**

Unmatched Professional Experience

In his professional career, Brad Cole began in 1995 as an administrator at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. His tenure as Assistant Director of the SIU Alumni Association is recognized for developing stronger relationships with alumni and donors throughout the nation. Cole's efforts resulted in the establishment of new and expanded alumni chapters and helped increase the university's level of direct contact with alumni and corporate friends.

Changing direction away from campus employment, Brad Cole was hand-picked to help establish a first-of-its-kind Southern Illinois Office of the Governor in 1999. Serving as a policy advisor and liaison between state and local officials, Cole monitored regional economic development initiatives, revenue and taxation policies, and other important aspects of Illinois government.

In January 2002, Brad Cole was named Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor George H. Ryan. **This appointment brought Cole into the senior staff management team of Illinois' chief executive office.** His previous duties were expanded with the additional authority to monitor all government services in the southern 40 counties of the state.

Through his office, Brad Cole was designated to represent the people of southern Illinois as a member of the eight-state Delta Regional Authority (DRA) board of directors. Since Congress' creation of this new federal-state partnership, Brad has been

an integral member of the DRA team. His work with the DRA will have a lasting impact on the impoverished and less fortunate residents of an area in this nation that has long been overlooked by growth and development opportunities.

Brad Cole was also recently appointed to serve as a member of the Illinois Arts Council, a statewide panel of select citizens empowered to promote Illinois artisans and expand artistic programs and appreciation. While appointment to the Arts Council is not based on geography, **Cole serves as the sole downstate member, being the only one residing south of Interstate 70.**

Exposure in all of these circumstances has given Brad Cole a unique statewide perspective on public service and leadership. The guidance and support he has provided on a regular basis to other communities in our region also serve to bring the residents of Carbondale a higher level of service within their own city government. Brad has been recognized in numerous ways for his steadfast commitment to the people of our region and to their betterment, in what has become his hallmark.

In times like now, a proven leader is needed in our next mayor - Brad Cole is that leader.

Brad Cole is the right choice for Carbondale.