



2022



**GREATER PEORIA**  
Economic Development Council

# ANNUAL REPORT

[www.greaterpeoriaedc.org](http://www.greaterpeoriaedc.org)



# OPENING LETTER FROM CEO

*It is my pleasure to share with you some highlights from the great work that the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council did in 2022. This past year felt like we were back in stride. After two years of dealing with the economic impacts of COVID, 2022 allowed us to refocus on our core work while still helping businesses and communities recover. I am so proud of the work accomplished by this organization over the past twelve months. Every program area had success. The word “leverage” gets thrown out a lot, but I really believe that GPEDC leverages the investment of our public and private partners to expand opportunities for business development. Using the framework of our five year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, GPEDC partnered with a wide range of organizations and other stakeholders to carry out targeted initiatives and programs designed to drive our regional economy forward.*

*We are lucky to live in a region with such incredible assets. From our natural resources to our affordability to our skilled workforce, there is much to celebrate and share. While we have seen strong job numbers over the past year, we know we can never rest and must continue to work towards equitable, sustainable and resilient growth. I am confident that with this team in place, and the financial and programmatic support of our investors and partners, that 2023 will be an even better year.*



*Best Regards*

**Christopher Setti**

## ABOUT US

The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council (GPEDC) is a regional economic development and planning organization serving five counties in Central Illinois: Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, Mason and Logan. GPEDC helps grow the regional economy through its six core programs which include Business Attraction, Business Assistance, Workforce Solutions, Innovation and Startups, Rural Development, and the Greater Peoria Manufacturing Network. Guided by our nationally recognized comprehensive economic development strategy, GPEDC is committed to advancing the region’s economy by supporting business and talent development and attraction.

## OUR MISSION

The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council serves as a catalyst for economic development and opportunity by attracting, developing, assisting, and retaining a diversified mix of businesses and investing in community needs that foster balanced economic growth.



# LEADERSHIP

## Meet Our Team



**Lenora Fisher**

Director of Business Attraction



**Melissa Oliveri**

Office Manager



**Sally Hanley**

Director of Business Assistance  
| Foreign Trade Zone #114



**Kathie Brown**

Director of Rural Outreach and  
Development



**Kari Rauh**

Director of Workforce Solutions



**Andrew Ngui**

Director, Office of Innovation  
and Startups



**Dick Peplow**

Director, Greater Peoria  
Manufacturing Network



**David A. Jackson**

Communications Manager

# BOARD MEMBERS

## Officers

**Don Forrest - Chair**

*Farnsworth Group, Inc.*

**Songo Dede - Vice Chair**

*FDSM-H Consulting*

**Sheila Quirk-Bailey - Treasurer**

*Illinois Central College*

**Henry Vicary - Secretary**

*Caterpillar Inc.*

## 2023 Board of Directors

Aaron Kilgore - **State Farm Insurance**  
Amelia Boyd - **UnityPoint Health**  
Andrew Honegger - **Morton Community Bank**  
Beth Crider - **Peoria County ROE**  
Beth Kavelman - **Logan County**  
Bill Blessman - **Mason County**  
Brian Olson - **i3 Broadband**  
Brian Ray - **PNC Bank**  
Christell Frausto-Dossa - **Greater Peoria Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**  
Chuck Nagel - **Woodford County**  
Clint Drury - **West Central IL Building Construction Trades Council**  
Clint Heinold - **CORE Construction**  
Danette Swank - **Philippi-Hagenbuch, Inc.**  
David Zimmerman - **Tazewell County**  
Don Johnson - **Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois Inc.**  
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Gary Manier - **City of Washington**  
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Jimmy Dillon - **Peoria County**  
Kyle Smith - **Illinois American Water**  
Leanne Skuse - **River City Construction**  
Matt Mamer - **CEFCU**  
Mike Phelan - **Village of Peoria Heights**  
Reuben Cummings - **Nerevu Group**  
Rick Swan - **East Peoria Chamber of Commerce**  
Rita Ali - **City of Peoria**  
Ryan Spain - **OSF Healthcare**





## 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

**\$5M+**

BACK TO BUSINESS  
GRANTS AWARDED IN  
GREATER PEORIA

**50+**

BUSINESS VISITS

**32**

RFI'S RESPONSES  
SUBMITTED

**250+**

BUSINESSES SUPPORTED  
TO ACCESS GRANTS  
THROUGH THE  
COMMUNITY NAVIGATOR  
PROGRAM

**10K**

INDIVIDUALS REACHED  
BY COVID-19 BUSINESS  
BULLETINS

**\$20.5M+**

TOTAL EDA INVESTMENT IN  
LAST THREE YEARS

**9K+**

CAREERSPARK  
STUDENTS

**500+**

BIG TABLE ATTENDEES

**400+**

INNOVATOR &  
COMMUNITY  
INTERACTIONS

**2K+**

FOLLOWERS GAINED  
ORGANICALLY ACROSS  
SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

### TOGETHER, WE MAXIMIZE OUR CHANCES OF SUCCESS.

Greater Peoria EDC and its partners work collectively to develop and implement economic development strategies that would be difficult to do individually. GPEDC works successfully across multiple political boundaries, between rural and urban communities, among our numerous industry sectors, and in collaboration with partner organizations at the local, state, federal and international levels. GPEDC pools and leverages limited resources to ensure the broader region is appropriately served. Together, we are more effective at sharing our story, taking advantage of opportunities and voicing issues of a collective concern. Together, we maximize our chances of success.





# PROGRAMS

Greater Peoria EDC 2022 Annual Report

## BUSINESS ATTRACTION

We strategically position and market Greater Peoria to the rest of the world as a great place for business investment.

45

PROPERTIES SUBMITTED  
FOR 32 RFIS

5

BUSINESS SITE VISITS

## Highlights

### Introduced Greater Peoria's Industries to Site Selectors

We organized two “familiarization tours” to showcase the assets of Greater Peoria to six corporate expansion and relocation specialists (“site selectors”). Each group of three site selectors spend two and half days in the region visiting businesses, learning about our workforce and quality of life, and exploring potential industrial sites and buildings. In June we worked with Intersect Illinois to host a tour centered on opportunities in the autonomous and electric vehicle industry in Central Illinois. In October Ameren helped sponsor a second group focused on the pharmaceutical and biomanufacturing industry. Both tours gave us great insight into how we can better position our assets, and just as importantly gave staff from six large corporate site selection firms a firsthand look at Greater Peoria.



### Welcomed Regal Industries to Greater Peoria

Regal Industrial is an industrial coatings company with over 47 years of experience, headquartered in Donora, Pennsylvania (just outside of Pittsburgh). Regal Industrial specializes in metalizing, sandblasting, fireproofing, waterproofing and industrial coatings of all types and opened its third US location just outside of Pekin in 2022 with the support of the office of Business Attraction and other regional partners.



## QUICK HITS

- Convened a networking event for 30+ supply chain and procurement professionals to discuss common issues and potential local solutions.
- Joined “Team Illinois” at Select USA.
- Implemented a new public database to catalog our available sites and buildings.
- Developed a webpage to highlight a key industrial property in Peoria, including a MatterPort tour.

# BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Greater Peoria EDC 2022 Annual Report

We help our existing industries and businesses flourish and grow through consistent outreach, targeted programming and resource referrals.

## Highlights

**50+**  
BUSINESS VISITS

**#42**  
GLOBAL TRADE  
MAGAZINE'S TOP 50  
POWER PORT LIST

### Enhancing the Defense Manufacturing Industry

As a co-founder and member of the Illinois Defense Manufacturing Consortium, GPEDC and its Consortium partners have worked for the past six years to help improve the considerable defense manufacturing industry in Illinois. In 2022, the Consortium was awarded a five year, \$5 million Department of Defense grant to continue and enhance this work. This new grant will focus the work of the Consortium on driving innovation and productivity among our local manufacturers; build a skilled workforce, especially within underrepresented populations, to meet the needs of employers; and conduct research and facilitate outreach and networking.



### Improving the Region's Natural Resources and Logistics Infrastructure

The Illinois River is a natural regional asset that can be better leveraged for economic success. With our partners at Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and board members, we worked to reinvigorate the Heart of Illinois Regional Port District to help guide development that takes advantage of this resource. For the first time ever, the Illinois Waterway was recognized as a Port Statistical Area, qualifying it for further federal funding. Senator Koehler helped secure a \$500,000 grant to support the District's operations, leading to hiring its first paid staff in nearly a decade. And we helped Tri-County Regional Planning Commission secure another \$500,000 state grant to conduct a port master plan in 2023.

## COVID Assistance

Since the onset of COVID, GPEDC has been the go-to source of support for the business community. In 2020 and 2021, GPEDC worked our county governments to obtain over \$1.4 million in Downstate Small Business Stabilization grants for 71 businesses. In 2022, through an Illinois Community Navigator grant, GPEDC was able to assemble a network of ten local partners to help businesses apply for the state's Back to Business grant. A total of 136 businesses split just over \$5 million in funding.

## QUICK HITS

- Conducted over 50 business outreach visits to identify issues and solutions.
- Our Community Navigator network helped 118 City of Peoria businesses access \$1.4 million in local RISE grants.
- Via GPEDC's in-house grant consultant, secured \$1.7 million in Rebuild Illinois funds so that the Village of Creve Coeur can reconstruct Wesley Road.
- Completed an EDA funded study of the Mapleton industrial corridor with Peoria County.
- Coordinated 7 different municipalities to expand the Peoria Urban Enterprise Zone.



We connect employers to the workforce development system to ensure the development of a more resilient, robust, and equitable talent pipeline.

## Highlights

### CareerSpark: Back and Better Than Ever

Discovering your career should not wait until after graduation – it should start in middle school. After two years of being forced online, we joined our partners at Junior Achievement and over 400 volunteers to return the CareerSpark career expo to an in-person event at the Peoria Civic Center. Over 4000 students from 65 schools attended the two-day event and supplementary digital experience that introduces students to dozens of career pathways available in the region and beyond. More than 50% of the students present said they were considering careers they hadn't prior to CareerSpark. This past year we also launched CareerSpark: You're Hired for our high schools. This digital experience exposes high school students to near term opportunities: jobs, internships and apprenticeships. A total of 5,613 high school students from 27 schools registered for You're Hired, which featured 30 employers.



### Good Jobs Challenge Grant Award

Greater Peoria was one of only 32 applicants (out of 509 submitted) to be selected for an EDA Good Job Challenge. The result is a three-year, \$14.6 million grant that will allow Illinois Central College and its educational and service partners to build an IT workforce accelerator. In addition to training in high demand career areas, the accelerator will provide wrap-around services and use the “earn and learn” model to ensure that low income individuals can gain these skills. The program will train a thousand individuals in high-demand IT careers in the next three years. We were happy to be part of the application team and will be serving as a bridge between the accelerator and employers.



## QUICK HITS

- Launched a regional job board that publicizes nearly 2,000 job openings at 100 local companies.
- Completed our first Talent Pipeline Management project focusing on employment and training needs of local manufacturers.
- Helped secure a \$34,000 grant from the Illinois Manufacturers Association to improve manufacturing curricula in high school and college.
- Awarded \$150,000 from the state of Illinois to conduct a labor shed analysis in 2023.

# INNOVATION & STARTUPS

Greater Peoria EDC 2022 Annual Report

We recognize that economic diversity and resilience is homegrown and work with new business owners, professionals exploring opportunities, and students to develop, scale, and grow their new business ventures.

## Highlights

### Brazilian Startup Finds Home in Peoria

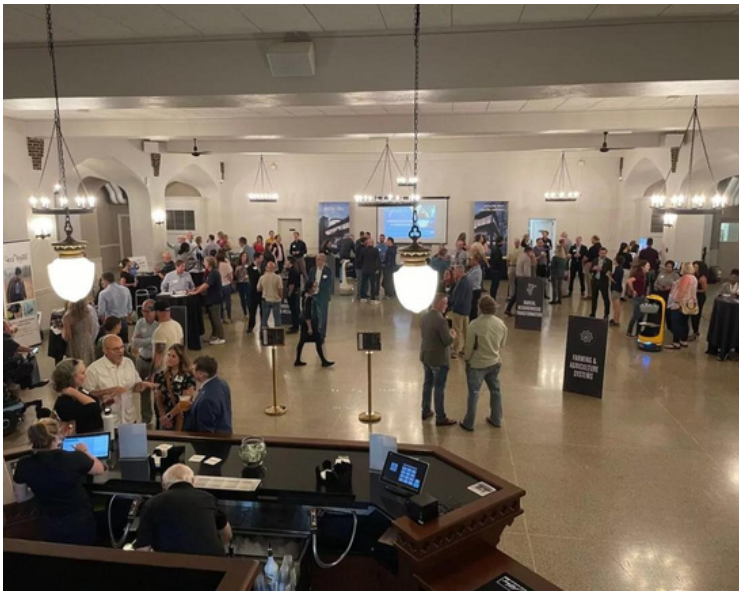
Manusis4, a startup Brazilian software company with a proven and successful asset management and supply chain solution for complex businesses chose Peoria as one of its three North American office locations as it expands its operations into the United States. Manusis CEO Rodrigo Rotondo first visited Peoria in late November 2021 and opened their office in March 2022. Six weeks later they signed a strategic partnership with a local technology company to whitelist their platform and services within the company's systems. Our local team was also instrumental in connecting Manusis with a great opportunity to participate in gener8tor's onRamp Manufacturing Conference in Indianapolis in Oct 2022.

**38**

INNOVATION  
NETWORKING/LEARNING  
LABS EVENTS HOSTED

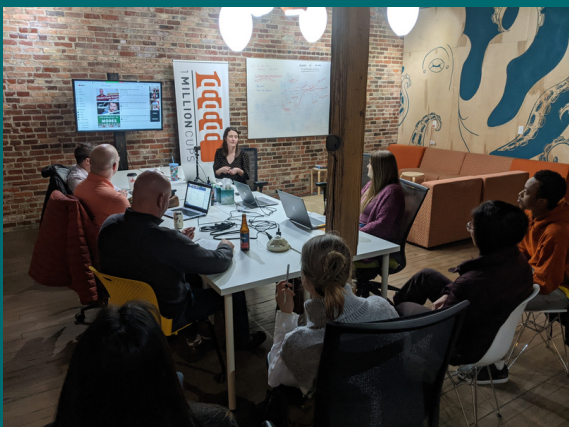
**800+**

REACHED VIA  
DISTILLERY LABS  
NETWORKING EVENTS



### Distillery Labs

We are at the center of one of the region's most exciting economic development initiatives. Distillery Labs will be an engine of economic growth by inspiring and supporting the region's entrepreneurs. The physical space at 201 SW Adams in Peoria will include a maker space, textiles lab, commercial kitchen, recording studio and co-working space. More importantly, the facility will include robust programming to meet entrepreneurs where they are and help them on their journey. That programming is happening now through a partnership with GPEDC. Over the past year we have hosted a number of educational and social events to help support the startup community.



## QUICK HITS

- Hosted Dr. Alexandros Charalambides of the Cyprus University of Technology on his tour of American startup ecosystems and helped build a partnership with Bradley.
- Collaborated with Peoria County to launch their Smart Start platform and micro-grant program for startups.
- Expanded the Nest coworking space to better serve our members and the community.
- Presented to fifteen startup companies at StartOut Brazil in Chicago and hosted five companies for a site visit to Greater Peoria.



We ensure that our region's rural communities are full participants in the region's economy and have access to the resources they need to keep themselves vibrant and vital.

## Highlights

### Regional Broadband Planning

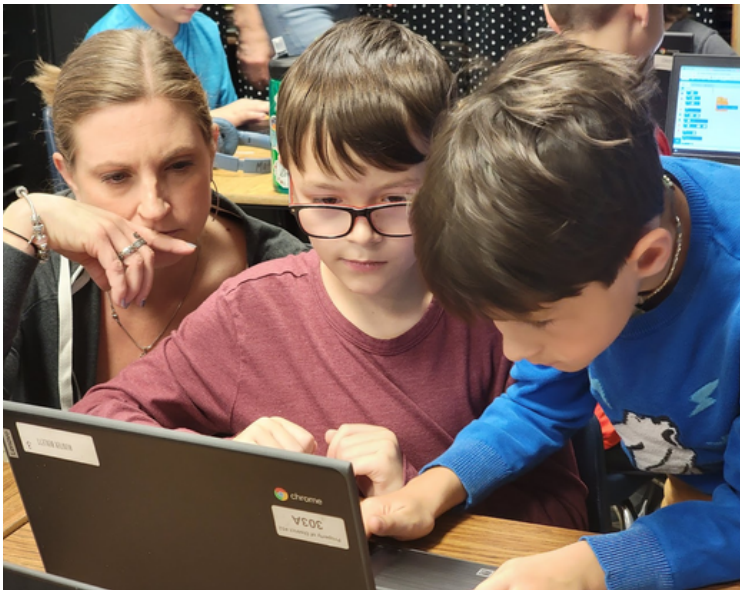
Accessible and affordable broadband is a key sustainability and vitality issue facing our rural communities. This past year we facilitated participation of Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties in the Accelerate Illinois Broadband Infrastructure Planning Program. The program helps plan and build capacity and is designed to help Illinois communities leverage historic broadband infrastructure funding. Through a 14-week planning process, we successfully designed and implemented countywide residential surveys in all three counties that yielded the input over more than 2,000 residents. These surveys will help inform the feasibility of market-based and subsidized investments in broadband expansion.

**2K+**

BROADBAND  
SURVEY  
RESPONSES

**400+**

COMPUTERS  
DISTRIBUTED WITH  
PC'S FOR PEOPLE



### Helping Coal Impacted Communities

Our region is home to two recently closed coal fired power plants (Havana and Edwards) and one that will be closing by 2028 (Powerton). Both the state of Illinois and federal government are rolling out significant financial resources to help these communities deal with the economic impact of the closures and the transition to cleaner energy sources. We have been coordinating local responses to these opportunities and keeping our partners informed and engaged.



## QUICK HITS

- Partnered with PCs for People to distribute over 400 computers to low income families in Greater Peoria.
- We secured a \$150,000 grant from the Just Transitions Fund to provide critical local capacity to help communities build on the momentum of Accelerate Broadband Planning and secure federal funding to connect under-served households.
- Collaborated with the Morton EDC and Distillery Labs to launch the AgTech Connect networking sessions.
- Helped the City of Delavan obtain a \$35,000 grant from the USDA to create a revolving loan fund for small business development.

# GREATER PEORIA MANUFACTURING NETWORK

We connect the region's manufacturing community to one another and market their individual and collective capabilities to the world.

**22**  
NETWORK  
MEMBERS

**1.1K+**  
PROFILE VIEWS  
ON THOMASNET  
MARKETING  
PLATFORM

## Highlights

### Fostering Networking and Engagement Among Network Members

We organized four GPMN membership networking events and meetings this year. In addition to normal Network business, participants heard presentations about cybersecurity, the Illinois Defense Manufacturing Consortium, electricity and natural gas incentives, and workforce resources. Dr. David Boulay of the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center also presented findings from their "Future of Manufacturing in Illinois" study and members also learned about behavioral health services offered by UnityPlace.



### Marketing and Outreach

We revamped our marketing strategy and created a profile for the Network on Thomas.net, the #1 source of information for manufacturing procurement and purchasing specialists. Inquiries submitted through the system are connected to the proper Network member. We also updated the Network website to better communicate the collective and individual capabilities of members. We are in the process of creating a new video for use on Thomas.net to showcase the Network.



## QUICK HITS

- 1060 Machine joined the Network. They provide prototype, sample, and low-volume machined parts not currently available at other member companies.
- Manusis4 also joined. They help manufacturers and other complex businesses monitor and manage their machinery.



We connect GPEDC's various programs to cohesively communicate our activities, initiatives, opportunities, regional assets and achievements across the region and beyond.

## Highlights

### GP2030 Talent Attraction Initiative

We worked hard with our partners to ramp up our efforts to market our region as a great place to live. We hosted two seminars to educate real estate and human resources professionals on a newly created toolkit for newcomers and potential newcomers. We also coordinated two welcome mixers to introduce our new residents to each other and what the region has to offer. Look for even bigger things in 2023!



### Promoting the Big Table CEDS

We executed various strategies to promote the Big Table Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to remind the region of the progress made so far and also serve as a reminder of the importance of the CEDS. We developed a dedicated website to serve as a synthesized version of the document and a progress tracker for the goals of the strategy. To highlight one of the core strategies around talent attraction and to showcase how ordinary citizens can play a role, we created a short video featuring Angie Ostaszewski who utilized her TikTok platform to attract over 200 people to move to Greater Peoria. We also produced a four page progress report on the CEDS to use in conjunction with this year's Big Table event.



## QUICK HITS

- Completely overhauled our [www.greaterpeoriaedc.org](http://www.greaterpeoriaedc.org) website, aligning it with industry standards and optimizing it for search engines.
- Made strategic changes to our digital media platforms and tested out new initiatives that gave our social media presence a huge boost in 2022. We had over 370,000 impressions on LinkedIn and gained over 1,700 followers across all our social media platforms.
- Led marketing and promotion efforts for the Big Table event held in October that was attended by over 500 people.

**370K+**  
ORGANIC LINKEDIN  
IMPRESSION

**108%**  
INCREASE IN FACEBOOK  
REACH FOOTPRINT

# THANKS TO OUR INVESTORS

## LEADERSHIP LEVEL INVESTOR



## PLATINUM LEVEL INVESTORS



## GOLD LEVEL INVESTORS



## SILVER LEVEL INVESTORS

**Ameren | Bradley University | City of East Peoria | City of Washington | Good Energy | Mason County  
West Central Illinois Building and Construction Trades Council | Woodford County**

## BRONZE LEVEL INVESTORS

**Advanced Medical Transport | Bard Optical | Busey Bank | Cullinan Properties | Heartland Bank  
Illinois Central College | Komatsu America Corp | Logan County | Morton Community Bank  
River City Construction | RLI Corporation | Village of Peoria Heights | Wabash Valley Power Alliance**

## OUR FRIENDS

1060 Machine  
American Water Works Co  
ARi Global  
Cast Technologies  
CGN & Associates, Inc  
City of Chillicothe  
City of El Paso  
City of Elmwood  
City of Eureka  
City of Havana  
City of Lincoln  
City of West Peoria  
Comcast  
Commerce Bank

CORE Construction  
DSMH Consulting  
Enercon  
Farnsworth Group  
G&D Integrated  
Goodwill Industries of Central IL  
Hanson Professional Services  
Heart of Illinois United Way  
Heart Technologies, Inc.  
Inland Tool  
Integris Engineering  
Keith Electrical Design  
Kemp Manufacturing  
Manusis4

Metamora Industries  
Morton EDC  
Morton Industries  
O'Shea Builders, Inc.  
Pearl Technology  
Peoria Production Solutions  
Phillipi Hagenbuch  
Quality Metal Products  
SMF  
Terracon  
TMW, Inc.  
Trajectory Energy Partners  
TRIGO - SCSi  
Village of Germantown Hills

*A special appreciation to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) for their continuous support and "investments" in us and the region.*



U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION





**GREATER PEORIA**

Economic Development Council

# WORK WITH US

The Greater Peoria EDC is both a regional economic development planning organization and a traditional public-private partnership charged with executing on the region's plan. The organization is funded by investments from our counties and cities, as well as the leading businesses located in Greater Peoria. Together, we're a catalyst for creating a vibrant economy that is sustainable, diverse and globally competitive. Together, we are more effective at sharing our story, taking advantage of opportunities and voicing issues of a collective concern.

**Together, we maximize our chances of success.**



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