

Program Guide

Greater Peoria Economic
Development Council

Driving regional growth and sustainability through strategic planning, business support, workforce development, and rural and manufacturing initiatives.

Core Programs

Business Attraction

We market the Greater Peoria region to potential investors and businesses looking to expand or relocate. We attract new businesses and investments by showcasing our region's economic strengths and available resources, fueling regional growth.

Details:

- **Marketing:** We build and share the narrative of Greater Peoria's economic assets and strengths.
- **Sites & Buildings:** We maintain an inventory of available industrial and commercial sites and buildings ready for investment.
- **Location Advisors and Requests:** We streamline responses to inquiries from external parties and build relationships with site selectors, foreign consulates and corporate decision-makers.

Business Assistance

We engage and support our existing companies, emphasizing businesses whose markets are not strictly local and provide goods and services across the state, nation, and world. We help businesses navigate and access local, state, and federal resources and programs to thrive and grow. We develop and participate in regional and national initiatives that help us monitor business trends and improve outcomes.

Details:

- **Incentives/Resources:** We connect businesses with local, regional, state, and federal resources and incentive programs. Our inventory of available property is a useful tool when local companies are looking to expand.
- **Partner Referrals:** We refer businesses to key partners and agencies and help connect them with new markets, customers, and suppliers.
- **Foreign-Trade Zone #114:** We manage a federal foreign trade zone for 24 counties in Central Illinois, offering relief from international duties to local manufacturers.
- **Illinois Defense Manufacturing Consortium:** Through funding from the US Department of Defense, we partner with peer organizations across northern Illinois to strengthen the capabilities of manufacturers who provide goods and services to the US military.

Workforce Solutions

We work to continuously evolve and improve Greater Peoria's workforce development system, recognizing that a robust, inclusive, and sustainable talent pipeline is critical to business success. Through our work with the Regional Workforce Alliance, we develop strategies along the entire career development continuum, from K-12 through adulthood and into retirement. Our regional approach builds collective capacity across organizations to support local communities in meeting their most pressing workforce needs.

Details:

- **Emerging Workforce:** We focus on K-12 and college students to equip them for future careers. One of our signature programs, Career Spark, provides hands-on career exposure to thousands of middle and high school students across the region each year.
- **Upskilling & Training:** We support working adults in gaining skills and credentials for career success by working with colleges and institutions such as Illinois Central College, Eureka College, and Bradley University.
- **Barrier Elimination:** We work to remove obstacles that hinder individuals from securing employment.
- **Talent Concierge Service:** We attract highly skilled individuals to the region through relocation efforts.

Rural Development

We work with rural and small towns to identify economic development opportunities and challenges, connecting them with appropriate resources. We aim to increase participation in regional initiatives for workforce development, entrepreneurship and innovation, business development and attraction, and marketing. Additionally, we collaborate with the agricultural community to increase on-farm diversification and innovation and develop regional agriculture supply chains.

Details:

- **Strategic Planning and Policy Development:** We develop innovative strategies that capitalize on community strengths and help create policies supporting rural economic development. Current efforts include preparing our rural communities for broadband expansion opportunities and helping navigate through energy transition as our region's coal fired power plants close.
- **Community Enhancement and Services:** We support initiatives to enhance infrastructure and public spaces, improve service delivery through collaborations, and cultivate innovations in local governance.
- **Regional Partnerships and Resource Connection:** We connect rural communities with regional opportunities, provide data on rural trends and issues, and support planning, business assistance, workforce development, and entrepreneurship in small towns.

Greater Peoria Manufacturing Network (GPMN)

We have created a network of over 20 manufacturers and service providers who work cooperatively to develop new business opportunities, share resources and best practices, and provide input on regional initiatives. By facilitating networking opportunities and providing relevant resources, we support the growth and success of the manufacturing sector in Greater Peoria.

Details:

- **Member Collaboration:** We create an environment for members to share their capabilities, strengths, and challenges, fostering familiarity and collaboration among manufacturers.
- **Resource Connection:** We connect members with beneficial programs within GPEDC and address current concerns affecting their success.
- **Returning to Core Mission:** Our primary focus is to form a collaborative network of manufacturers, leveraging individual strengths to grow a more diverse customer base, and driving incremental sales, investment, and employment growth in the region.

Regional and Local Economic Strategic Planning

We lead the comprehensive economic strategic planning for the Greater Peoria region to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth. By leveraging data-driven insights and collaborative stakeholder engagement, we craft strategies that address current challenges and anticipate future opportunities. Our goal is to create a thriving regional economy that benefits all communities.

Details:

- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS):** In partnership with the US Economic Development Administration, we develop and manage the federally recognized CEDS, a critical tool for guiding regional economic growth through actionable strategies.
- **Data and Research:** We provide in-depth research and data analysis to inform strategic planning and support decision-making processes.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** We convene diverse stakeholders, including public, private, and non-profit sectors, to foster collaboration and align efforts toward common goals.
- **Implementation Support:** We offer guidance and resources to help local communities implement economic development initiatives, ensuring alignment with regional priorities and maximizing impact.

Our Regional and Local Economic Strategic Planning program is designed to create a resilient, diversified, and prosperous economy across the Greater Peoria region, ensuring long-term success and quality of life for all residents.



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. Our mission is to promote economic growth in the region through six core programs:

- Business Attraction
- Business Assistance
- Workforce Solutions
- Rural Development
- Greater Peoria Manufacturing Network
- Regional and Local Economic Strategic Planning

Through collaborations with regional community and economic development partners, we drive economic growth in Greater Peoria by focusing on targeted business and talent development and attraction. Our efforts aim to create a resilient, robust, and equitable economy, ensuring the long-term prosperity of the Greater Peoria region.

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