

THE BIG TABLE: GREATER PEORIA

2021-2025 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2022 Annual Report

Introduction

The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council (GPEDC) is pleased to present the CEDS Annual Report on behalf of Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, Mason and Logan counties in Illinois. GPEDC formally adopted its new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy in March 2021. The [Big Table CEDS 2021-2025](#) was the result of nearly two years of work and the input of over one thousand citizens who participated in Big Table outreach sessions in 2019 (in person) and 2020 (virtual). The strategic action plan of the Big Table CEDS was divided into four goal areas:

- Promote adaptive economic development that encourages innovation and entrepreneurship, supports existing businesses, and attracts new employers.
- Develop a more resilient, robust and equitable talent pipeline in Greater Peoria.
- Foster diverse and inclusive communities where all residents and visitors enjoy active, secure, healthy and fulfilled lives.
- Sustain and expand the economic value of the region's natural resources.

Each goal area is further broken down into four to five strategy areas. The report below describes the progress made within each goal and strategy. The report is reflective of any related activity from October 2021 through September 2022.

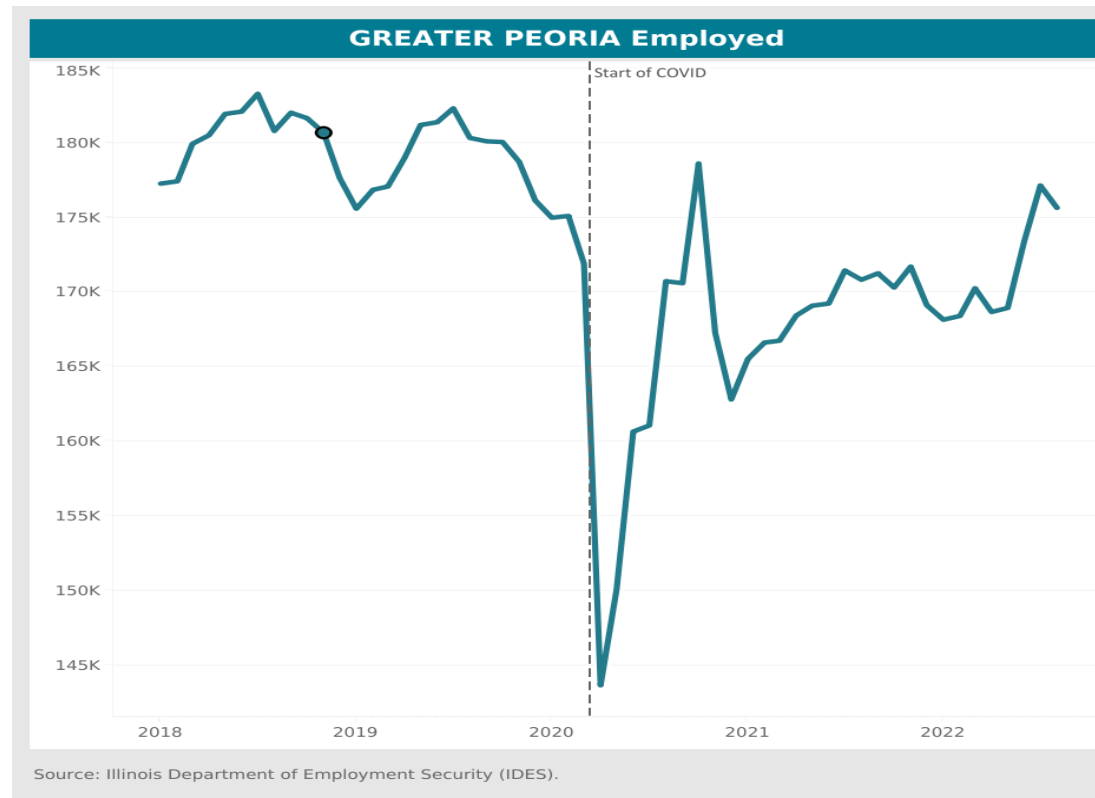
Exhibit 1 at the end of this report includes the full list of Strategy Committee members, and indicates changes in the Committee's membership. Three members have left due to changes in career and/or location and two have been added.

Changes to Regional Economy

The economy in Greater Peoria has remained relatively stable over the past 12 months, with some strengthening numbers over the final few months. The COVID pandemic and resulting recession seem to have faded. Municipalities report strong sales tax receipts, a good indicator of consumer sentiment and local economic conditions. Manufacturing never really lagged during COVID and continues to be a strong foundational element. Caterpillar reported year-over-year revenue growth of 10.5% and remains the region's top employer in this industry. On the agriculture front, local farmers are looking forward to a good harvest with excellent yields. The importance of the intersection of agriculture and manufacturing to the region was evidenced by the announcement of Tremont-based Precision Planting building a 550,000 sf production center in Morton. The medical sector in Greater Peoria is booming. In early 2022, OSF Healthcare administration moved into their newly renovated, historic building in downtown Peoria (a renovation with a budget exceeding \$140M). OSF Healthcare also broke ground on a \$230M cancer therapy center on Peoria's East Bluff that will provide state-of-the-art proton beam therapy for both Peorians and people across the Midwest. UnityPoint Health announced the "Young Minds Project," an in- and out-patient behavioral health center for youth in West Peoria. UnityPoint's three Greater Peoria hospitals are in the process of being acquired by Carle Health, which should lead to greater investment. Of particular note is the emergence of an important and fast growing company in the region. Natural Fiber Welding (NFW) is a Peoria-based startup that is using plants to replace

plastics in the textile industry. They have garnered national and international attention. In the summer of 2022 they raised \$85M in a Series B round of funding. NFW now has over 250 employees in the Peoria area and are planning to increase manufacturing capacity over the next two years. Recently, the Intellectual Property Owners Education Foundation awarded NFW's Dr. Luke Haverhals and Aaron Amstutz the prestigious Inventor of the Year Award.

One of the best measures of economic activity, though certainly flawed, is the local monthly unemployment figures. The graph below measures the number of employed persons in the five county region. The COVID low point in April 2020 had only 143,645 employed persons. Those numbers rebounded by October 2020, only to plunge again by the end of that year. Employment has been generally gaining steam since then, save a dip between November 2021 and January 2022. For the period of this report, employment in Greater Peoria has increased from 171,265 in September 2021 to 175,656 in August 2022.



The table below shows jobs by category in August 2022. (Note: This report is for the Peoria MSA which does not include Logan or Mason County, but does include Stark and Marshall counties.) As compared to the same time last year, the Peoria area had 3,700 more jobs than in August 2021. The largest gains were

in Government (+1000), Manufacturing (+1000) and Professional and Business Services (+1100; this category often includes many “contract laborers” who work in manufacturing).

Peoria MSA Jobs Comparison Table							
Updated: 9/23/2022 6:32:37 PM							
Industry	August 2022	July 2022	August 2021	OTM Change	OTM % Change	OTY Change	OTY % Change
Education and Health Services	31,800	31,500	32,200	300	1.0%	-400	-1.2%
Financial Activities	6,800	6,800	6,900	0	0.0%	-100	-1.4%
Government	19,700	18,800	18,700	900	4.8%	1,000	5.3%
Information	1,600	1,600	1,700	0	0.0%	-100	-5.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	16,800	16,700	16,200	100	0.6%	600	3.7%
Manufacturing	22,800	22,800	21,800	0	0.0%	1,000	4.6%
Mining and Construction	8,700	8,800	8,400	-100	-1.1%	300	3.6%
Other Services	7,700	7,700	7,700	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Professional and Business Services	23,000	22,800	21,800	200	0.9%	1,200	5.5%
Retail Trade	17,800	17,800	17,900	0	0.0%	-100	-0.6%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	6,300	6,200	6,200	100	1.6%	100	1.6%
Wholesale Trade	6,300	6,300	6,100	0	0.0%	200	3.3%
Total Nonfarm	169,300	167,800	165,600	1,500	0.9%	3,700	2.2%

Despite the fact that the unemployment rate is at 4.9%, employers report hundreds of job openings and extreme difficulty in filling open positions. While regional strategies have not changed, extra emphasis has been placed on workforce development initiatives. This has included the launch of a regional job board (<https://jobs.peoria.org/jobs>) and expansion of training programs, particularly at Illinois Central College.

On the following pages, the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council is pleased to share the significant progress made on the strategies and goals outlined in the Big Table CEDS over the last year.

Progress Report

Goal #1: Promote adaptive economic development that encourages entrepreneurship, supports existing businesses, and attracts new employers.

Strategy: Support economic innovation and digitization for the full range of businesses, from startups to legacy corporations.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Distillery Labs project finalized the design and went out to bid, but bids returned much higher than estimated. The team is redesigning the space to reduce costs. progress (EDA award, design, bid, redesign, Exec search) ● Continued development and execution of programming to inspire and support entrepreneurs: two gBeta cohorts (fall 2021, spring 2022), Brave Launch business accelerator (fall 2021), monthly networking socials, “Biz Labs” educational series, Bradley’s Turner Center for Entrepreneurship held 96 events with 1,857 attendees. ● The Peoria NEXT Innovation Center doubled its wet lab tenants and increased overall occupancy by 36%. Peoria NEXT recent graduates raised more than \$135 million in equity funding. ● The Nest co-working space expanded to serve more clients. ● The Illinois SBDC at Bradley University assisted 368 unique clients that comprised 1,450 hours of advising and hired a new Assistant Director to meet increased demand for services. ● The Minority Business Development Center (MBDC) enhanced their entrepreneurship boot camp by adding a pitch competition with a financial reward for the winners. ● City of Peoria used ARPA funds to create business support grants for existing and startup businesses. Peoria County finalized plans to offer startup micro-grants in 2023 using the “Smart Start Dashboard” system (also being used by Morton Chamber). ● Various partners, led by Morton EDC, launched quarterly “AgTech Connect” meetings to support ag innovation ● Peoria County, City of Peoria and Distillery Labs partnered to create the Central Illinois Living Laboratory to support smart mobility and connected cities innovators. 	<p data-bbox="1104 467 1898 721">There was a good deal of momentum and activity behind supporting and expanding the startup ecosystem, with multiple organizations working separately and together. Regional startups received substantial equity investment, hired hundreds of new employees, and received international recognition for their accomplishments. Construction setbacks on Distillery Labs delayed the start of work and opening until 2023. Great programming and more regional awareness of the recent accomplishments and importance of startups.</p> <hr/> <p data-bbox="1104 756 1356 781">Schedule for Next Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Begin construction of Distillery Labs (winter 2023) and open the facility (fall 2023). ● Hire full time Executive Director of Distillery Labs. ● Continue programmatic offerings. ● Recruit new incubation tenants and celebrate new graduates at the Peoria NEXT Innovation Center. ● Improve coordination and partnerships between various aligned organizations. ● Take initial steps to create a regional seed fund to support startups. ● Recruit startups to take advantage of the Central Illinois Living Laboratory (CILL). ● Launch of a retail incubator in downtown Peoria. ● Host an innovation event in partnership with a statewide venture capital association.

Strategy: Develop real estate and infrastructure to make it attractive for investment.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completed EDA-funded study of utility constraints and opportunities in the Mapleton industrial corridor ● GPEDC developed best practices on business attraction and shared with communities across the region ● Identified, developed critical information and continued marketing sites for potential industrial development (Morton, Goodfield, Pekin Bottoms, Medina Plains, Pekin Industrial Park) ● Historic levels of local, state and federal investments in roads and bridges ● The Heart of Peoria Regional Port District reformulated itself and increased activity and viability. Illinois DCEO awarded \$500K grant to stand up operations and Illinois DOT awarded \$465K for port master planning. ● Illinois Waterway Port Statistical Area designation received. 	<p>Good progress on goals. Robust federal, state and local funding for public infrastructure.</p> <hr/> <p>Schedule for Next Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formalize operations of Port District. ● Launch port master plan initiative. ● Identify at least one new potential industrial site and begin developing marketing materials.

Strategy: Grow existing businesses with a focus on ones that provide goods and services beyond the region.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GPEDC and partners conducted 50+ Business Retention & Expansion visits and made dozens of referrals to resources ● The Illinois Defense Network was named one of five new “Defense Manufacturing Communities” and will receive funding over next five years to support defense industry ● GPEDC organized first networking meeting of regional supply chain and procurement professional ● Bradley’s Turner Center for Entrepreneurship hosted 30 educational sessions on topics like exporting and government contracting ● GP Manufacturing Network refocuses its marketing strategy ● GPEDC organized a network of 10 partners to assist businesses understand and apply for state “Back to Business” grants, resulting in 136 local businesses receiving over \$5M in grants ● Expanded Peoria Urban Enterprise Zone to incentivize investment ● Created an Alternative Site Framework for Foreign Trade Zone #114 ● MBDC Minority Contractor Development program partnered w/ a minority general contractor to provide on-site assistance and training to clients. 	<p>Local interregional businesses mostly reported strong growth and success over the past year. The region built a strong network of local organizations to help ensure businesses could access critical financial assistance. Notable successes include expansions for Precision Planting (Morton), Corbion (Peoria) and OSF Healthcare (Peoria).</p> <hr/> <p>Schedule for Next Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formalize work to be conducted under the Defense Manufacturing Communities designation and grant ● Continue “Community Navigator” work to help businesses access new DCEO programs (B2B Startup and REVAMP, plus others on the horizon) ● Finalize new amendment of Peoria Urban EZ ● Develop new tracking method for BRE visits and capturing good news, investments ● More fully market FTZ 114 so more businesses can be assisted

Strategy: Attract investments to the region from national and international companies that lead to job growth.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Helped coordinate a site selector familiarization tour of Greater Peoria and Bloomington-Normal with Intersect Illinois that focussed on the electric vehicle industry ● Planned a separate site selector familiarization tour to be held October 2022 with a focus on pharmaceuticals and life sciences ● Began utilizing GIS Planning software to better market sites in the region ● Reinvigorated the “Greater Peoria Attraction Team” to advise on business attraction studies ● Conducted outbound marketing to site selectors and consulates via quarterly postcards and monthly emails ● Continued developing strategies around attracting biomedical manufacturing through Peoria Bio-Made ● Attended SelectUSA conference to connect with international companies looking to do business in US 	<p data-bbox="1094 305 1906 407">Excellent work to refine the message and methods around business attraction. Notable successes include Regal Industries (Tazewell Co), Amazon Fulfillment Center (North Pekin), and Manusis4 (Peoria)</p> <p data-bbox="1094 435 1352 459">Schedule for Next Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Host a life sciences site selector tour (Oct 2022) ● Refine GPEDC website to better market the region’s assets ● Utilize supply chain gatherings to identify suppliers to local businesses who might be interested in establishing operations in Greater Peoria ● Develop and share messaging around region’s workforce pipeline

Goal#2: Develop a more resilient, robust and equitable talent pipeline in Greater Peoria.

Strategy: Remove barriers that prevent people from connecting to family-sustaining employment.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launched the Greater Peoria Job Board to connect job seekers to a curated list of job openings ● Organized the GP Hiring Extravaganza, a one-day hiring event across the region ● Illinois Central College celebrated the 2nd year of their Workforce Equity Initiative which links low income individuals with job training ● Regional partners (Tri-County RPC, Morton EDC) held conversations around regional transportation systems being improved so people can get to work ● Formed a partnership with PCs for People to get free computers to low income families; MBDC designated as a distribution site. ● Illinois Central College, City of Peoria and CEO Council submitted an application for a Promise Neighborhoods grant that would fund the “Cradle to Career” initiative 	<p data-bbox="1094 982 1906 1149">Employers are struggling to find people to take open jobs, but we know there are people that need jobs. Lots of good efforts towards connecting people with these jobs, but lots of work yet to be done to break down barriers. Transportation between poorer neighborhoods in Peoria and employment centers outside those areas continues to be a problem.</p> <p data-bbox="1094 1177 1352 1201">Schedule for Next Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create more structure around the Regional Workforce Alliance ● Begin working on a regional plan to address transportation issues. ● Develop more opportunities for people with disabilities to find employment ● If awarded, begin work on Cradle-to-Career

Strategy: Develop opportunities and mechanisms to provide citizens with the skills they need to be gainfully employed.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Illinois Central College led a coalition including Bradley and Eureka and was awarded a \$14.5M EDA Good Jobs Challenge grant to develop IT pathways ● ICC Workforce Center (funded by EDA) started construction ● GPEDC adopted the Talent Pipeline Management approach to help better develop workforce systems for the manufacturing industry ● EDA awarded \$990K grant to ICC for facility improvements at Pekin and East Peoria campuses that will expand training ● MBDC established an in-house Regional Workforce Solutions Center to provide training in IT programs and life skills prior to placement. ● The GPEAK essential skills training program expanded ● DCEO awarded grants to develop solar installation and repair technicians, with a focus on re-entry 	<p>Significant funding, especially from EDA, will help create more robust training opportunities.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launch Good Jobs Challenge programming. ● Extend TPM methodology to IT jobs ● Open the Workforce Sustainability Center (summer 2023) ● Expand vocational offerings at public high schools

Strategy: Increase the graduation rate for regional high schools and assist schools in meeting college and career expectations.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hosted another year of virtual CareerSpark, a career expo for 8th grade students. ● Added the virtual “You’re Hired” program to connect high school students to jobs, internships and apprenticeships ● The SkillsUSA state-wide conference was held in Peoria for the first time ● Emerging Workforce Alliance assisting schools to implement the PACE framework (now extending to 6th grade) ● Data projects measuring postsecondary credentialing rate and dual credit programs ● OneGoal implementation: streamlined data collection process for GP region (supported by NIU and EdSystems) 	<p>The pivot to virtual CareerSpark was a success and helped keep momentum in this area. The addition of You’re Hired was excellent.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Return CareerSpark to an in-person event (Oct 2022) ● Increase internships/apprenticeships for youth ● Implement Illinois Manufacturers Association’s Scaling Transformative Advanced Manufacturing Pathways (STAMP) grant ● Host Manufacturing Month events to expose youth to careers in this industry

Strategy: Address talent gaps and population loss by positioning Greater Peoria as a desirable place for people to relocate.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A regional partnership including GPEDC, PACVB, CEO Council, 4 chambers of commerce and others launched the GP 2030 Talent Attraction Initiative ● GP2030 launched a digital marketing campaign in the Chicago area and hosted 2 local seminars for realtors and HR professionals to share new marketing tools ● GP2030 held three “newcomer mixers” to welcome transplants to the region ● CEO Council and GPEDC hosted a luncheon networking opportunity for summer interns in the area ● Young Professionals of Greater Peoria monthly gatherings ● GPEDC hosted a roundtable discussion on the legal issues with immigration ● GP2030 received a \$500K state grant to support talent attraction 	<p>The GP2030 talent attraction initiative is a strong partnership between multiple local and regional groups. The first year of the effort saw great work in formulating and executing strategies.</p> <hr/> <p>Schedule for Next Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Host in-person Big Table to help highlight talent attraction work ● Hire staff to help manage GP2030 ● Continue to develop financial incentives to attract people to move to Greater Peoria ● Launch marketing campaign outside Illinois

Goal #3: Foster diverse and inclusive communities where all residents and visitors enjoy active, secure, healthy and fulfilled lives.

Strategy: Foster and facilitate healthy lifestyle choices for improved health outcomes and individual prosperity.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Partnership for a Healthy Community (Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford) conducted their Community Health Needs Assessment survey & prioritization ● Finalized 2020-2022 strategies around substance abuse, mental health, cancer and healthy eating/active living ● Mason County Health Department pursuing strategies around social determinants of health, cancer and cardiac disease ● Community Foundation of Central Illinois continued funding collaborations thru Ending Hunger Together ● MBDC used its WPNV radio station to broadcast a weekly health show targeting minority community; funded by Peoria City/County Health Dept. ● Tri-County Regional Planning Commission updated the regional bicycle plan ● Tri-County RPC also provided education and assistance to communities for improved walkability thru walk audits ● OSF Healthcare constructing state of the art cancer therapy center (open 2023) ● UnityPoint purchased a Peoria County facility and is developing the “Young Minds Project,” an in/out-patient behavioral health program for youth ● Peoria piloting a program where social workers will “co-respond” with police 	<p>Major investment by the region’s two largest healthcare systems will greatly improve physical and mental health. Excellent coordination between partners around nutrition, health outcomes, and activity.</p> <hr/> <p>Schedule for Next Year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Launch gun violence reduction initiatives. ● Complete OSF cancer therapy center. ● Break ground on Young Minds project. ● Develop new strategies for Partnership for Healthy Community. ● If awarded, use funding from the Peoria Promise Neighborhood grant to help address social determinants of health.

Strategy: Increase investment in the region's town centers.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● City of Peoria leading multi-community and multi-region effort to create passenger rail to Chicago. Market and feasibility studies completed. Planned and completed local streetscape improvements in various communities, including Pekin and Havana ● Funding secured for restoration of downtown Peoria one-way streets Riverfront master planning in Peoria (Rebuild Illinois Implementation funding \$15 million - phased) ● Tri-County Regional Planning Commission awarded IDOT planning grant to conduct comprehensive plans to five communities ● Peoria Civic Center had a record year, bringing thousands of people to downtown Peoria ● Germantown Hills developing an athletic complex ● UIUC conducted an arts asset mapping project 	<p>Continued emphasis by communities large and small on the importance of downtown/Main Street development. Significant federal, state and local investments in infrastructure.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Begin reconstruction of downtown Peoria one-way streets. ● Take advantage of Illinois REVAMP grants to support businesses who occupied vacant commercial structures ● Develop “pop-up retail” opportunities in vacant spaces to demonstrate potential viability ● Consider strategic plan around arts

Strategy: Actively promote the region's assets to residents to improve perceptions of quality of life in the region.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning for annual Big Table event (Oct 2022) ● GP2030 Talent Attraction initiative simultaneously develops internal messaging about value of the region ● Created a video to showcase how one person could help recruit people to the region ● Discover Peoria (CVB) continued work to highlight local assets ● Peoria Outdoors developed website and marketing around the region's amazing natural resources and outdoor activities 	<p>GP2030 project has helped to improve perception. Transplants to the region provide evidence of the area's value. Need to solidify strategy going forward.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Host first in-person Big Table event since 2019 (October 2022) ● Create “good news” channel to capture regional successes and communicate to general public

Strategy: Provide high-speed internet to every home, business and institution.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accelerate Illinois broadband planning grants awarded and completed for Tazewell, Peoria and Woodford counties ● Planning teams began engaging telecommunication companies to assess interest and ability to serve rural areas ● Formed a partnership with PCs for People to get free computers to low income families ● Peoria, Tazewell, Logan and Woodford counties have all dedicated financial resources to address broadband issues ● Via a grant from Heartland, provided digital literacy training to primary school teachers in the region ● MBDC licensed by AARP to provide computer literacy to people over 50 	<p>Strong and coordinated work over the past year to better understand gaps in service and plan for upcoming capital funding opportunities</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct engineering feasibility study in Peoria County, and hopefully Tazewell and Woodford counties ● Engage Mason county in discussion surrounding rural broadband ● Continue and expand partnership with PCs for People ● Complete an asset map of resources to support digital literacy training opportunities for all ages.

Strategy: Ensure residents have quality, income-appropriate housing choices.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peoria Opportunities Foundation completed East Bluff affordable housing project ● Phoenix Community Development Services completed Madison II project to provide permanent supportive housing; planning underway for Madison III to focus on homeless youth ● Redevelopment of Taft public housing project announced and started ● Homeless Continuum of Care continued strengthening connections between service providers ● City of Pekin and Phoenix CDS engage in dialog about homelessness in Pekin ● Center for Prevention of Abuse expanding services in Pekin ● Illinois awarded City of Peoria \$10M to advance MacArthur Corridor, including the development of affordable housing 	<p>Good progress on individual projects, but homelessness and lack of affordable housing continue to worsen. Lack of sense of “shared responsibility” across region for supporting affordable housing.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete Taft redevelopment ● Start work on Phoenix Madison III project ● Expand use of federal and state financing programs to develop additional affordable housing units outside of City of Peoria

Goal #4: Sustain and expand the economic value of the region's natural resources.

Strategy: Develop a supportive and equitable business development environment for beginning farmers and other enterprises sustainably utilizing or enhancing the region's agricultural, water, or other natural resources.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Heart of Illinois Regional Port District reinvigorated and connecting to other organizations along the Illinois River. DCEO award for \$500K for operational support of Port District and Illinois Waterways (Mason to Grundy County). IDOT award for \$465K for master planning. ● IDNR officially rebrands the invasive “Asian Carp” to Copi ● Peoria area participating in a Center of Excellence for this resource, including harvesting (Midwest Fish Coop), processing (Sorcer Freshwater) and academic research (UC-Davis, Missouri, UIUC) ● AgTECH Connect quarterly networking sessions connected farmers with innovators, researchers and entrepreneurs ● Increase in farmers’ markets across the region (Peoria Heights, Germantown Hills) 	<p>Restarted port district and Port Statistical Area designation was a big win. State funding will help with planning and operations and provide strategies for making progress on this goal.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Begin master plan work ● Set up port district operations ● Expand regional promotion of Copi ● Advance work on finding beneficial uses of river sediment and seek commercial applications and related businesses

Strategy: Implement existing conservation and sustainability plans for the region's key natural resources to maintain their availability for responsible economic development uses.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Convened conversations regarding impact of coal plant closures ● Developed response to Illinois DCEO request for information on community needs regarding recovering from coal plant closures in Mason and Peoria County ● Increase in solar and wind farm developments ● See activity and progress above related to invasive carp and sedimentation issues ● City of Eureka and Peoria Park District submit grants to expand outdoor activities and preserve natural assets 	<p>Good coordination of efforts regarding coal plant closures, but not much coordination of wider natural resource issues.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peoria and Mason county communities apply for economic resiliency and recovery funding from state in connection with coal plant closures ● Increase adoption of C-PACE legislation at county level ● Tazewell county revision of wind farm ordinances

Strategy: Create and promote commercial opportunities and experiences connected to the region’s natural assets that are valued and used both by residents and visitors.

Activities	Evaluation of Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discover Peoria created marketing campaigns to highlight region's natural assets ● “Bridge-to-Bridge” festival highlighted communities along the Illinois River ● Peoria Outdoor Adventures launched a website to catalog outdoor activities and experiences across the region (https://www.rivervalleyoutdoors.org/) ● Developed campaigns around road trips for Illinois state marketing efforts ● University of Illinois and City of Havana continue to refine plans for an expanded Illinois River Biological Station ● Development of disc golf courses across region yield economic success with the attraction of national and international tournaments 	<p>Excellent work by Discover Peoria and individual communities to highlight and promote natural resources and outdoor activities.</p>
	<p>Schedule for Next Year</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secure funding for Havana IRBS ● Identify opportunities to develop more nature-based activities and assets and utilize state funding via coal-impacted communities legislation

Diversity Equity and Inclusion

The Big Table CEDS 2021-2025 committed to applying an equity lens to all of its goals and strategies to ensure that economic success is equally available to all people in the region. Greater Peoria, particularly the more urban areas of Peoria County, has pockets of persistent poverty, often among its Black population. The CEDS purposefully did not establish any strategies or goals particular to this area, but will incorporate the goals and initiatives developed by the Peoria City-County Joint Commission on Racial Justice and Equity. The vision of the Joint Commission, established in late 2021, is to achieve racial equity and justice across our community. Its mission is to accelerate efforts to institutionalize racial justice and equity within county and city governments and to advance its adoption throughout the region. The Commission is broken into eight subcommittees: Economic Development and Jobs, Justice, Child and Youth Development, Quality Housing, Transportation and Mobility, Information Technology, Health and Human Services, and Environment and Climate.

CEDS partners, including the Greater Peoria EDC, are involved in these subcommittees, whose individual mandates overlap with broader CEDS goals. In the first year, the Commission’s subcommittees focussed on understanding their respective areas, researching problems and potential solutions, and conducting outreach to impacted groups and partners. In this coming year, the subcommittees will begin formulating their recommendations around policy and program. Each subcommittee will also develop indicators to measure baseline and progress. The indicators will be based on reliable data which are updated on a regular basis, and wherever possible the data will be broken down by race. The baseline report will be done by the end of 2022. In addition, both the City and County of Peoria plan to adopt ordinances that require an assessment of the impact of enacting or repealing any actions they take on all racial groups.

In addition to the work of the Joint Commission, there were a number of other developments in this area, including:

- The City of Peoria created an MBE/WBE business certification program to facilitate commerce with minority-owned businesses.
- The Peoria CEO Council launched the Black Leadership Initiative to connect Black community members with leadership opportunities on local nonprofit boards of directors.
- The region hosted its first Peoria Pride Fest on the Illinois River.

EXHIBIT 1: BIG TABLE CEDS 2021-2025 STRATEGY TEAM MEMBERS

Deletions and Additions

Chair: Clint Heinold, CORE Construction

Amanda Beadles, City of Chillicothe
Dave Blankenship, Logan County Board
Bill Blessman, Mason County
Leigh Ann Brown, Morton Economic Development Council
Rueben Cummings, Nerevu Group
JD Dalfonso, Peoria Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
Jimmy Dillon, West Central Illinois Building Trades
Jim Drew, Logan County Farm Bureau
Matt Fick, City of Pekin and Village of Delavan
Nicole Frederick, Heart of Illinois United Way
Jane Genzel, Peoria Opportunities Foundation
Patti Gratton, Community Workshop Training Center
Mike Hinrichsen, Private Citizen
Curt Jibben, Mason County Health Department
Jim Johnson, Private Citizen
Michael Joseph, UnityPoint Health
Audrey Kamm, CEO Council

~~Paul Leamon, Distillery Labs~~
Ray Lees, Tri County Regional Planning Commission
Yvonne Long, Hawk-Attollo, LLC
Leslie McKnight, Peoria County Health Department
Denise Moore, Minority Business Development Center
Paula Nachtrieb, Illinois Central College
Chuck Nagel, Woodford County Board
Rachael Parker, Sweet Cakes by Rachael
Kimberly Richardson, City of Peoria
Mark Roberts, Community Foundation of Central Illinois
Ann Sasso, Village of Germantown Hills
~~Fred Stewart, LISC Peoria~~
Michael Stubbs, Bradley University/Peoria NEXT
~~Cesar Suarez, City of Peoria~~
David Vaughn, CareerLink
~~Jonathan Williams, Commerce Bank~~
Mike Waight, Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center

* Names in **bold** represent new members of the Strategy Team since adoption of the CEDS. Strikethrough represents former members