

Request for Proposals Organizational Strategic Plan

Greater Peoria Economic Development Council

The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council (GPEDC) is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms to lead a strategic planning process that will result in a three-to-five-year organizational strategic plan. Having nearly finalized the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (due October 2026), GPEDC now intends to focus inward to establish programmatic priorities, optimize resource allocation, and strengthen its position for future growth.

Organizational Overview

GPEDC is a public-private partnership serving a five-county region in Central Illinois, including Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, Mason, and Logan counties. As a federally designated Economic Development District, GPEDC provides planning services via the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). In addition to its role as EDA's Partnership Planning Grantee, GPEDC offers the robust programming of a traditional Economic Development Organization (EDO). Program areas include:

- **Business Attraction:** Actively market the region to investment from companies located outside the region. This work is accomplished through relationship building with state, federal and international organizations; identification and development of industrial sites; and developing and delivering targeted messaging centered on the region's strengths and assets.
- **Business Assistance:** Assist local businesses to overcome obstacles and take advantage of growth opportunities. This work includes managing [Foreign-Trade Zone #114](#), partnering with the [Illinois Defense Manufacturing Consortium](#), and hosting the [Greater Peoria Manufacturing Network](#).
- **Workforce Development:** Serve as a connector between the business community and the workforce development system. GPEDC manages a number of key initiatives in this area, including the [Regional Workforce Alliance](#) and [Healthcare Education Consortium](#). GPEDC is also the co-organizer of the annual [Career Spark](#) program.
- **Rural Development:** Ensure the smaller and more rural communities in Greater Peoria are connected to the wider regional economy and have access to resources that improve local economies. This is broad work that includes rural broadband readiness, housing strategy, and building connections between agriculture and technology.

More details about GPEDC can be found at www.greaterpeoriaedc.org.

GPEDC currently has nine full-time employees plus a number of part-time contractors. The staff is a mixture of very seasoned professionals with 20-30+ years of experience and more early-career individuals. The FY2026 budget is \$1.3 million and generally in line with budgets from previous years. The organization's funding comes from a mix of private sector investment, public sector investment, grants, and program revenue.

GPEDC is a 501(c)(6) organization and draws its Board leadership from its investor-members. The full Board of Directors, currently with 34 members, meets quarterly. An Executive Board (16 members) meets in the intervening months. The Executive Committee, composed of the Board Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary, only convenes when necessary. Current Board Chair Songo Dede is serving his second year as Chair but has been on the GPEDC Board for over 10 years.

Project Objectives

The organization is currently at a critical juncture characterized by:

- **Shifting Funding Landscape:** Navigate evolving budget pressures, competition for private and public investment, and opportunities and challenges presented by grants.
- **Programmatic Focus:** Align internal operations with the newly completed regional CEDS and how to engage with important economic development topics that are outside of GPEDC's traditional work.
- **Potential Staff Changes:** Plan for potential retirement of key, long-tenured employees in next five years.

The primary goal is to develop a "light" but impactful strategic plan that provides a clear roadmap for the organization without becoming overly bogged down in granular data analysis.

Key objectives include:

- Defining a clear vision and mission-aligned priorities for the next 3–5 years.
- Engaging the Board of Directors, investors, and community leaders in a collaborative visioning process.
- Developing an implementation framework for resource allocation and fundraising support.
- Ensuring organizational sustainability through leadership succession planning.

Scope of Work

The selected consultant will be expected to facilitate the following components:

Discovery & Internal Assessment

- Review current organizational structure, financial health, and existing programmatic outcomes.
- Conduct internal workshops or interviews with GPEDC staff and leadership.

➤ Stakeholder Engagement

- Facilitate sessions with the Board of Directors to align on strategic direction.
- Engage key investors and community partners (e.g., chambers of commerce, higher education institutions, and local government leadership).
- Gather input through interviews, focus groups, or surveys to ensure the plan reflects the needs of the broader ecosystem.

➤ Strategy Formulation

- Identify core programmatic priorities that differentiate GPEDC and add maximum regional value.
- Establish measurable goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) to track progress.
- Develop a high-level roadmap for resource development and fundraising strategies.

➤ Final Deliverables

- A concise, professionally designed Strategic Plan document suitable for internal and external stakeholders.
- An implementation matrix detailing timelines, responsible parties, and necessary resources.
- An executive presentation for the Board of Directors and regional partners.

Timeline and Budget

GPEDC anticipates a two to three month process, but is open to a schedule that preserves urgency and momentum but ensures a complete process and valuable outcome.

Milestone	Estimated Date
RFP Release	July 27, 2026
Proposal Deadline	August 17, 2026
Consultant Selection	September 11, 2026
Project Kick-off	October 5, 2026
Final Plan Delivery	December 4, 2026

Budget: GPEDC seeks to balance thoroughness with cost consciousness. Cost proposals will be a competitive factor, but the total should not exceed \$50,000, inclusive of travel or other ancillary expenses. Any costs of onsite facilitation, such as meeting space, will be paid separately by GPEDC.

Proposal Requirements

Interested firms should submit a proposal (maximum 15 pages) including:

1. **Firm Qualifications:** Experience guiding similar EDOs through organizational transitions.
2. **Project Team:** Bios of the primary consultants who will lead the engagement.
3. **Methodology:** A detailed description of the proposed facilitation and engagement approach.
4. **Timeline:** A proposed schedule for meetings and deliverables.
5. **Budget:** A clear breakdown of fees and estimated expenses.
6. **References:** At least three references from similar EDO or nonprofit strategic planning projects.

Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted via email to:

Christopher Setti, CEO
Greater Peoria Economic Development Council
201 SW Adams St., Peoria, IL 61602
csetti@greaterpeoriaedc.org

Deadline for Submission: August 17, 2026 at 5:00 PM CDT.