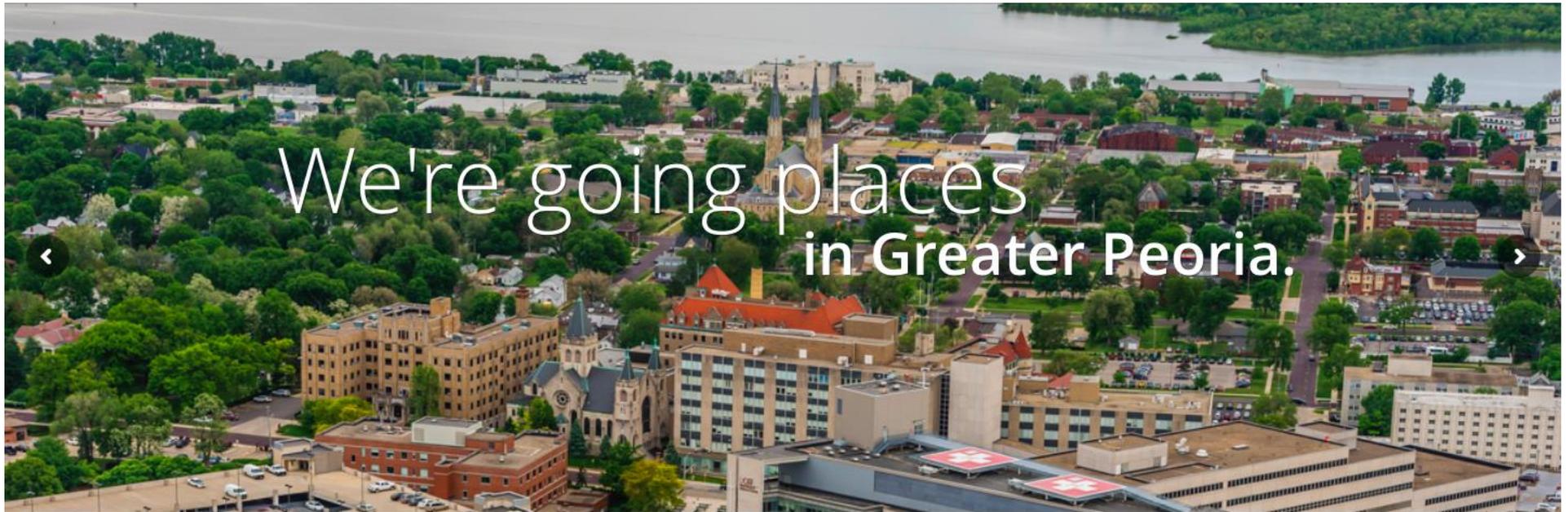


# Focus Forward Greater Peoria



A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update  
Greater Peoria Economic Development Council  
A Five Year Strategy 2015 - 2019



[greaterpeoriaedc.org](http://greaterpeoriaedc.org) | 309-495-5910

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## Greater Peoria Economic Development Council Board of Directors

Name	Company or Organization	Board Office
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Diana Hall	Bard Optical	Vice President
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Mike Hinrichsen	Woodford County Board	Secretary
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Mayor Jim Ardis	Peoria City Council	
Meredith Bunch	Midstate College	
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William Thomas	Logan County Economic Development Partnership	

Henry Vicary	Caterpillar
Senator Chuck Weaver	State of Illinois
Jan Wright	Peoria Magazines
David Zimmerman	Tazewell County Board

## Focus Forward GP CEDS Strategy Committee

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Cara Allen	Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau	Director of Marketing
Cesar Suarez	City of Peoria Economic Development	Senior Development Specialist
Clint Drury	West Central Illinois Building & Construction Trades Council	Executive Director
Denny Kief	Farnsworth Group	Planning
Eric Miller	Tri County Regional Planning Commission	Acting Executive Director and GIS Program Manager
Gail Owen	Regional Office of Education: Tazewell, Mason, Woodford Counties	Superintendent
Jake Hamann	OneFire, Inc.	Owner
Jane Genzel	Peoria Opportunities Foundation	Director
Jeffrey Griffin	Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce and CEO Council	President
Jennifer Daly	Greater Peoria Economic Development Council	CEO
Judy Dietrich	Illinois Central College	Education and Business Liaison
Larry Weinzimmer	Bradley University	Caterpillar Inc. Professor Management
Leigh Ann Brown	Morton Economic Development Council/Chamber of Commerce	CEO/Executive Director
Mark Rothert	Peoria County	Asst. County Administrator and Economic Development
Melissa Adamson	Peoria County Health Department	Director of Community Health Policy & Planning
Meredith Bunch	Midstate College	President
Michael Stephan	Heart of Illinois United Way	President
Mike Hinrichsen	Woodford County	Board Member
Nancy Proehl	Village of Manito Citizen	Citizen
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Stan Glazier	Woodford County Citizen	Citizen
Talbert Houle	Presidio	Solution Architect
William Blessman	Mason County	Administrator
William Thomas	Logan County Economic Development Partnership	Executive Director

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Contributing Consultants
Resilient Community Collaborative, Inc.
VITAL Economy Alliance

## Acknowledgements

We want to express our thanks to the *Focus Forward GP* Strategy Committee who spent countless volunteer hours to secure the voices of thousands of concerned residents, employers, and interest groups. The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council staff continues to do quality work for the region, and is to be commended for leading the effort in both developing and implementing this strategy. Finally, thank YOU residents and business leaders for continuing to collaborate on advancing prosperity and celebrating Greater Peoria.

## Executive Summary

### *Focus Forward GP and Greater Peoria Economic Development Council*

It's no longer a secret: **something big** is happening in Greater Peoria. Private and public organizations are connecting and inspiring new growth from collective strengths and skills. Beginning in 2012, for the first time in history, over 1,200 volunteers gathered, brainstormed, dreamed and envisioned a bold new strategy for Greater Peoria. We call this strategy ***Focus Forward Greater Peoria (GP)***. We see explosive potential in high tech manufacturing, and our young adults are getting excited as high school and college-level programs fuel their thirst for technological innovation. Residents and businesses are touting pride as they invest in state-of-the-art museums and medical facilities. The Illinois River, our most unique and prominent natural resource has never been more primed for commercial fish production as new species are available in unlimited quantities. Something big is happening in Greater Peoria and this economic development strategy is the core of our efforts.

Why do we plan?

Meet Community A. Community A has many businesses and well-meaning organizations that focus on community improvements. Community A only works within their own organizations, and all foreseeable growth must happen from within the limits of their own

### **Focus Forward GP**

capabilities. If an unexpected event or disaster occurs, members of Community A are only capable of reaching into their own pot of resources to recover. Community A *reacts* to changes in the economy as opposed to driving the change.

Now meet Greater Peoria. Private and public organizations meet regularly to identify and celebrate all the regional resources that we offer collectively. We understand that while healthy competition drives our ambition, **we are all in this together** and through collaboration, we can and will grow by providing our goods and services and by supporting initiatives that capitalize on our strengths. In the case of an unexpected event or disaster, Greater Peoria is economically robust and is aware of federal, state, and local programs to absorb the shock and rebound with a new commitment to growth. This level of coordination only happens through planning, and our strategy, *Focus Forward GP*, is a result of years of intensive planning.

In 2012, we vowed to create an economic development strategy unlike its predecessors. Unfortunately, we learned the hard way that isolated industries and organizations yield economic stagnation. We knew **we could do more**. By contracting with ViTAL Economy, a federally recognized consultant in economic development, we committed to creating an economic development strategy inclusive of the strengths of our diverse cultures and our diverse industries. Rest assured, sophisticated planning strategies and analysis were put to work in the creation of this strategy, but this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document is written for everyone. We've tempered the economic lingo in lieu of solid communication that clearly illustrates where we are and where we are headed. The secret is out. Greater Peoria is creating something big and we are happy to create with you!

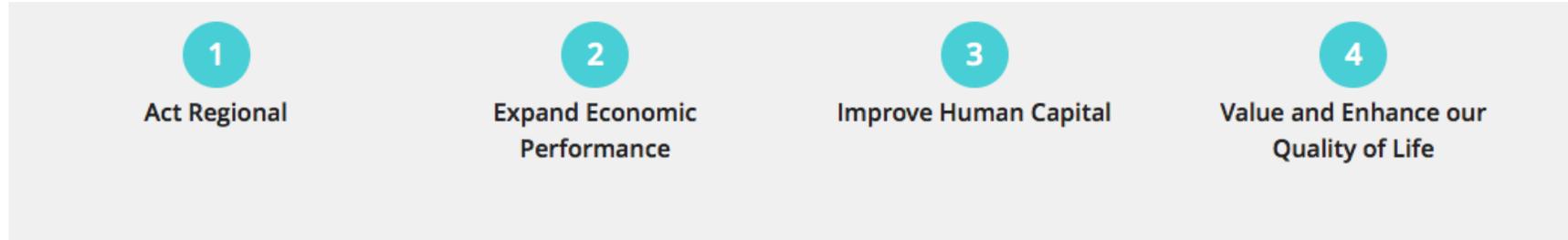
The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council (EDC) is the central agency monitoring the progress of *Focus Forward GP* while also implementing key aspects of the strategy including business and workforce development initiatives and regional marketing. The CEDS document is important, not only because it guides the regional economic development strategies of the EDC and partnering organizations, but it also can provide access to funding opportunities through the U.S Economic Development Agency (EDA). Strategies and projects included in *Focus Forward GP* are more likely to successfully receive EDA grants.

### Greater Peoria EDC Mission

The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council, in collaboration with our local economic and workforce development professionals, drives economic growth in Greater Peoria through targeted business and talent development and attraction.

## Focus Forward GP Economic Growth Strategy

The *Focus Forward GP* strategy was completed in 2014 and the priorities expressed by the community are divided into four core areas where improvement has great potential to positively drive Greater Peoria's economy. These core priorities are: act regionally, expand economic performance, improve human capital, and value and enhance our quality of life.



Each priority is supported by a set of goals and actions to advance economic opportunity in Greater Peoria. *Focus Forward GP* established the following aspirational goals to inspire our collective effort and to monitor our accomplishments.

*Focus Forward GP* metric indicators include:

Metric	2014 Benchmark	5 Year Trend
Population	405,857	406,572
Workforce Population (25-44 year olds)	103,460	103,652
Jobs	181,706	181,901
Average Wage	\$50,656	\$59,715
Bachelor and Graduate Degrees	95,412	104,066

## Key Economic Industries

*Focus Forward GP* emphasizes the following economic industries in this strategy:

## Manufacturing

Greater Peoria has an extensive history in heavy metal manufacturing. This five county region represents a population of 408,266. Over 15% of the workforce is employed in the manufacturing industry, which is 50% higher than the national average.

Greater Peoria's large Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) have stimulated the development of a robust supply chain of manufacturers with expertise in metal fabrication, electrical equipment, and machining to support the earthmoving industry. Over 70% of the manufacturing jobs are within this industry. The concentration of earthmoving OEMs and suppliers has positioned Greater Peoria as the Earthmoving Capital of the World.

This concentration has benefited the region in many ways including the availability of higher income jobs, extensive logistics systems, and well-developed international infrastructure. In 2014, Greater Peoria invested over \$2 billion in research and development and in 2012 we exported more merchandise per capita than any other place in the country.

## Healthcare

The region's largest employment sector in Greater Peoria is healthcare. Greater Peoria has 717 healthcare establishments that employ 32,201, 36% above the national average. This cluster is responsible for 18% of Greater Peoria jobs. The Greater Peoria healthcare industry employs over 4,300 registered nurses, and graduates over 320 nursing students per year. Graduates have an 85% NCLEX-RN pass rate, 3% higher than the national average.

## Logistics

Selling product and services overseas is a great strategy for increasing sales in markets that are often growing at a faster rate than those in the United States. As the home of a Fortune 50 company, Greater Peoria already has the global logistics network to get products and services where they need to go. The Illinois SBDC International Trade Center (ITC) at Bradley University, for example, has helped hundreds of Illinois companies take advantage of the opportunities in the international marketplace. The ITC expanded in 1994 to include specialized assistance to ensure exporters obtain the benefits associated with Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), including NAFTA. Working together, more than 500 companies have expanded their export sales by more than \$400 million. The region is also served by Foreign Trade Zone 114, a multi-modal zone (rail, air, river, road) serving the West Central, Central and East Central Illinois Region and providing over 2 million square feet of warehousing and distribution space available for General Purpose Zones usage and four Sub-Zone sites.

## Agri-business and Agri-science

The Greater Peoria region is located in the agricultural heartland of the world and is notably home to the National Center for Agriculture Utilization Research (NCAUR). Work at the NCAUR focuses on inventing new uses for agricultural crops as both food and industrial products and to develop new technology to improve environmental quality and food safety. To do this, researchers call on cutting edge techniques such as metabolic

engineering, fermentation, and processing technologies. The region produces high-quality agricultural products including corn, soybeans and other important crops. Commodity processing involves transforming these agricultural products into useful items such as fuels, chemicals and feeds, and component items for other products. The growth of these value-added agriculture markets represents huge economic development potential for the region. For example, activity in the biofuels sector has skyrocketed, and there is considerable interest in new nutrients or healthier foods and cosmetic products. Local vineyards and wineries are also experiencing significant expansion.

### **Professional and Technical Services**

The Greater Peoria region is an environment ripe with opportunities for entrepreneurs and business investors. Fueled by multiple knowledge communities, business, and discovery forums, the wealth of intellectual property creates an environment where ideas become reality. The research and innovation created through Caterpillar, Inc., the nation's largest federal agricultural research services laboratory, the University of Illinois College of Medicine, OSF Health Care, Unity Health Point - Methodist, and nationally-recognized universities and colleges brings together all the necessary components for the successful commercialization of knowledge into products, services, and emerging technologies.

### **Asian Carp Market: An Emerging Market Opportunity**

Asian Carp is as a major invasive fish species that affects the health of the Illinois River and threatens the ecological vitality of the Great Lakes. Greater Peoria's economic approach to reducing invasive species population numbers is the result of nearly two years of extensive research and analysis of the Peoria, IL region with a goal of identifying market opportunities for Asian Carp products. Asian Carp represents a potential harvest of 30 – 40 million pounds of sustainable annual harvest from the Illinois River.

### **About this CEDS**

This strategy serves to refine and focus economic development efforts of all partner agencies within the five counties of Logan, Mason, Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford of Illinois. The planning process brought communities together to set goals and prioritize actions to cooperatively drive economic progress for the region as a whole. This CEDS is divided into five sections with the major findings indicated below:

#### **Section 1: Summary Background**

The summary background provides a clear picture of the local economic conditions by providing relevant data on demographics, natural resources, infrastructure, innovation assets and more. Slow population growth and an aging population continue to encourage regional leaders to invest in innovation and business startups in order to attract a talented and creative workforce. Accelerated growth in non-white populations and foreign-born residents indicates cultural diversification, a strong factor for business growth and development. Housing remains affordable indicating a low cost of living, and commute times continue to be lower than state and national averages. Top-notch educational institutions focused in engineering and healthcare support Greater Peoria, and the region's ingenuity is demonstrated by higher concentrations of patents than what is seen at state and national levels.

## Section 2: SWOT Analysis

The SWOT was compiled through extensive interviews and thoughtful dialog with over 1,200 volunteers. The findings are summarized in a table of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Strengths include strong leadership and strong private sector support for large-scale community initiatives. From museums to hospitals, our community can get things done in a big way! Existing elements of innovation including coworking space and a supportive startup community network combined with a culturally diverse community present unlimited opportunity for generating new products and services. The community noted a weakness in connecting business startup programs to make it easier for new businesses to flourish. An aging workforce, concentrated poverty in urban areas, and state regulation inhibiting business growth are the biggest threats to Greater Peoria.

## Section 3: Strategy Direction/Action Plan

The strategic direction and action plan is summarized in a list of goals and objectives and is the heart of *Focus Forward GP*. This section answers the questions “where do we want to go?” and “how do we get there” by using the information compiled in the SWOT.

### *Focus Forward GP Vision*

The Greater Peoria showcases the power of regional public and private collaboration by celebrating a diverse manufacturing and farming industry, a leading edge healthcare industry supported by a talent-rich workforce, and a culturally rich quality of place that supports innovation and entrepreneurship and attracts permanent residents in the working age population and tourists alike.

Goals are broad outcomes or general intentions that build upon the vision. The four goals for *Focus Forward GP* are:

#### **Goal 1: Act Regional**

Implement a regional asset-based Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely (SMART) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which expands public, private and non-profit collaboration with a common strategic vision.

#### **Goal 2: Expand Economic Performance**

Implement community economic development strategies and action plans which will increase total regional wages, raise the regional average wage, and generate new state and local tax revenue.

#### **Goal 3: Improve Human Capital**

Ensure a plentiful workforce supply by increasing total population; the prime workforce demographic of 25-44 year old citizens; and the labor force participation rate.

#### **Goal 4: Value and Enhance the Quality of Life**

Quantify, communicate and embed the importance of the unique rural and urban values of the way we live, work and play to all who live in the region. Enhance the way of life to attract others to the region through a focus on healthy and livable communities.

#### **Section 4: Evaluation Framework**

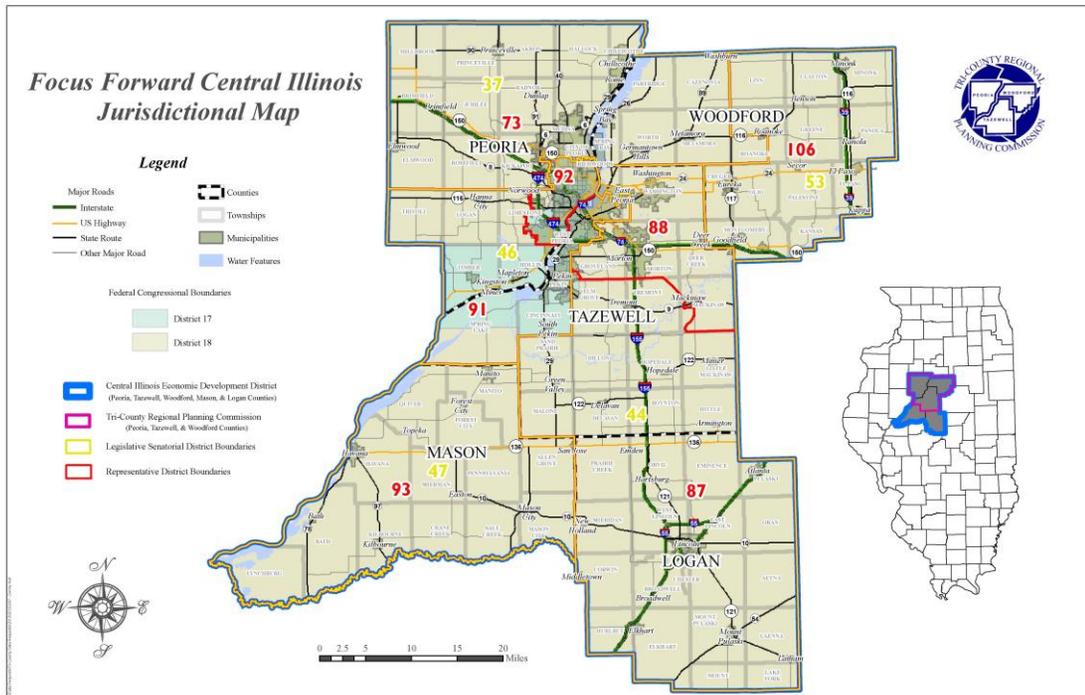
The only viable way to gauge success is to measure it. The evaluation framework identifies specific metrics (ex. average income) that will be analyzed on an annual basis to determine if goals are being met. Evaluation metrics are so important that the Economic Development Agency requires that EDC submit an annual report demonstrating progress. If the data shows that goals are not being met, then the entire strategy is re-evaluated to better serve Greater Peoria.

## Section 1: Summary Background

### Regional Overview

Greater Peoria packs tremendous diversity in people, culture and landscape in a five-county area. The City of Peoria is the largest city within Greater Peoria, is the seventh largest city in the State of Illinois, and is the third largest city outside of Chicago suburbs. More than 400,000 residents claim home in Greater Peoria in the counties of:

- Peoria
- Tazewell
- Woodford
- Mason
- Logan



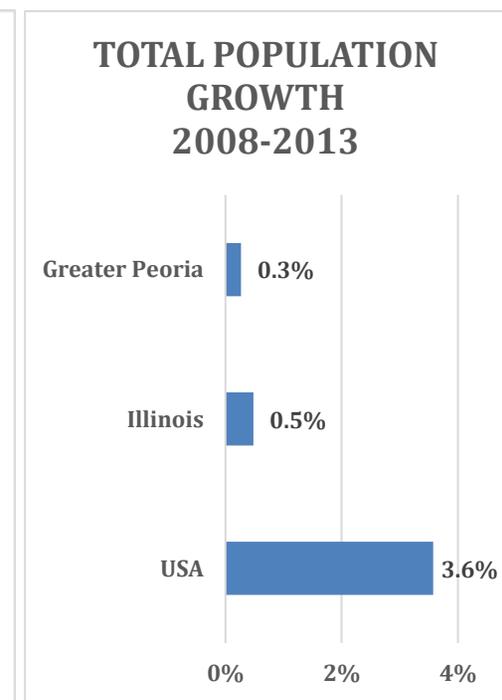
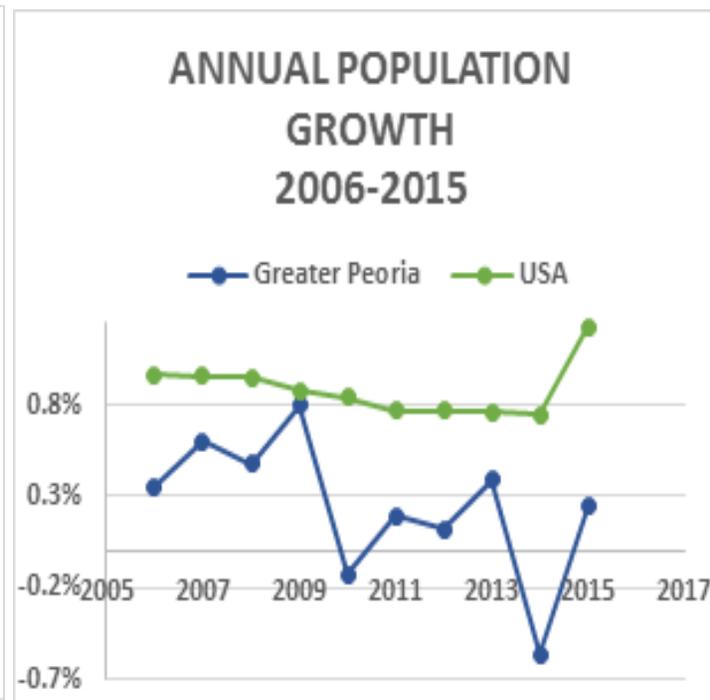
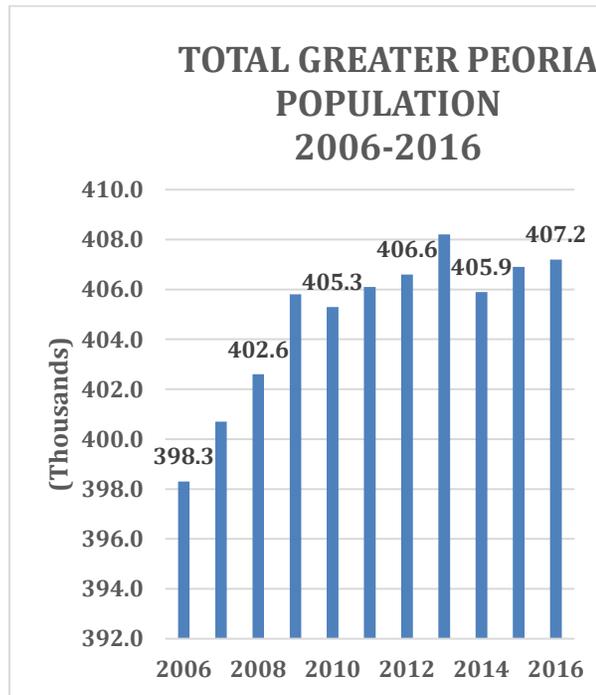
The following pages examine the demographic and economic characteristics of Greater Peoria.

## Regional Analysis

### Population

**Greater Peoria population growth has remained stable.** From 2008 to 2013, Greater Peoria population grew by 0.3% with 2010 and 2014 experiencing an overall loss in population. During this timeframe, the State of Illinois grew by 0.5% and the United States added 3.6% in overall population. Greater Peoria is experiencing less population growth than state and national estimates.

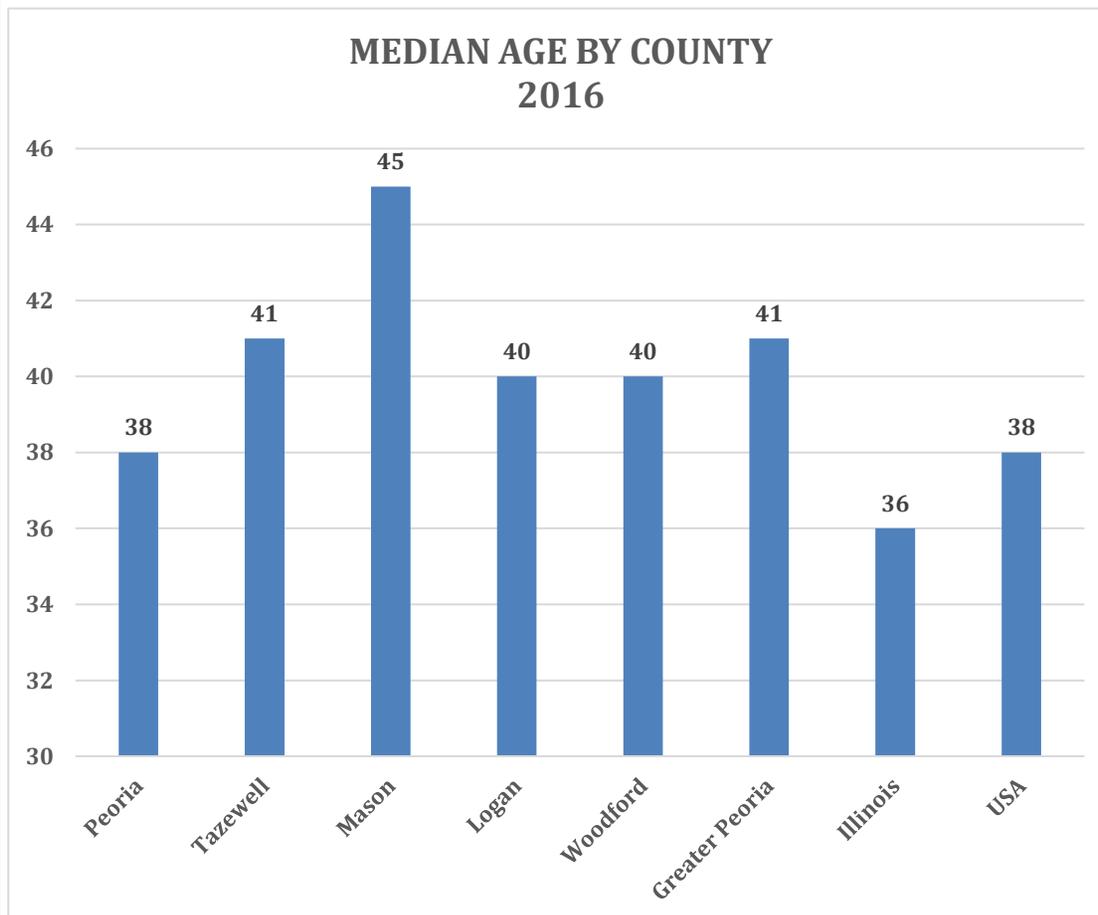
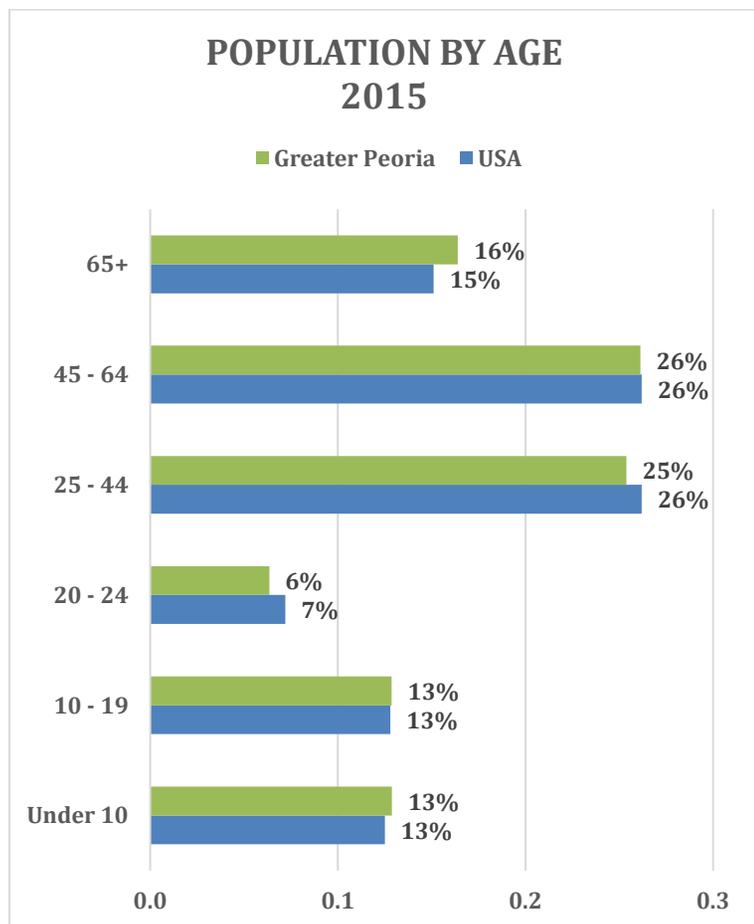
Population decline in mid-west manufacturing towns is not uncommon as these urban areas struggle to adapt to new economies, thus emphasizing the importance of regional action and planning. With a smaller population base, it can be challenging for mid-size regions to create urban centers that attract new residents.



Source: US Census

Greater Peoria has a slightly older population than the U.S. In 2016 the median age was 41 compared with the State of Illinois (36) and the U.S (38). Every county in Greater Peoria is characterized by median ages at or above national and state medians with the youngest median in Peoria County (38) and the oldest in Mason County (41).

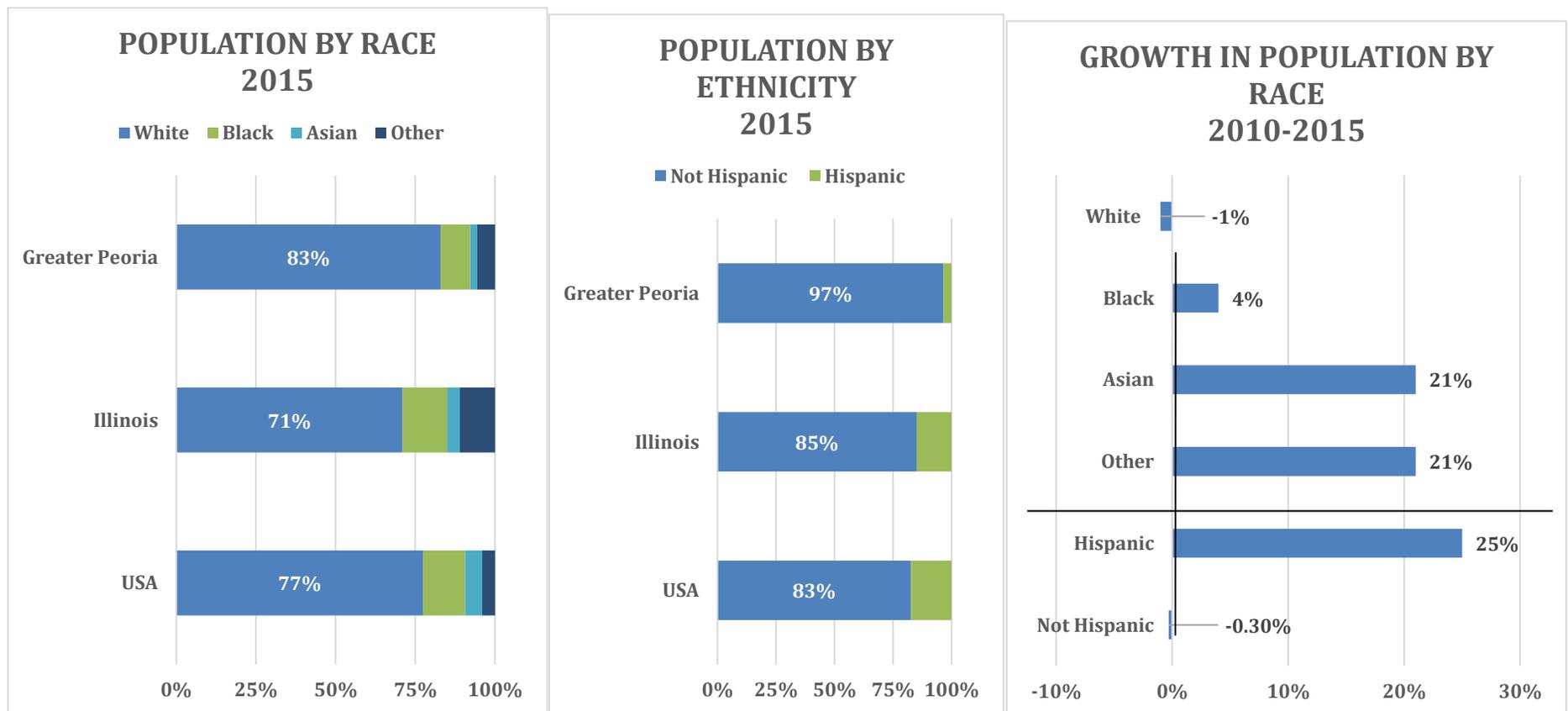
Overall, Greater Peoria age demographics largely mirror that of national percentages with the exceptions of 1% differences in ages 20-24 and 25-44 (Greater Peoria has less). The lower percentage in the 20-44-age range is significant as companies look for high concentrations of this age group to signify a strong workforce of young professionals.



Source: US Census

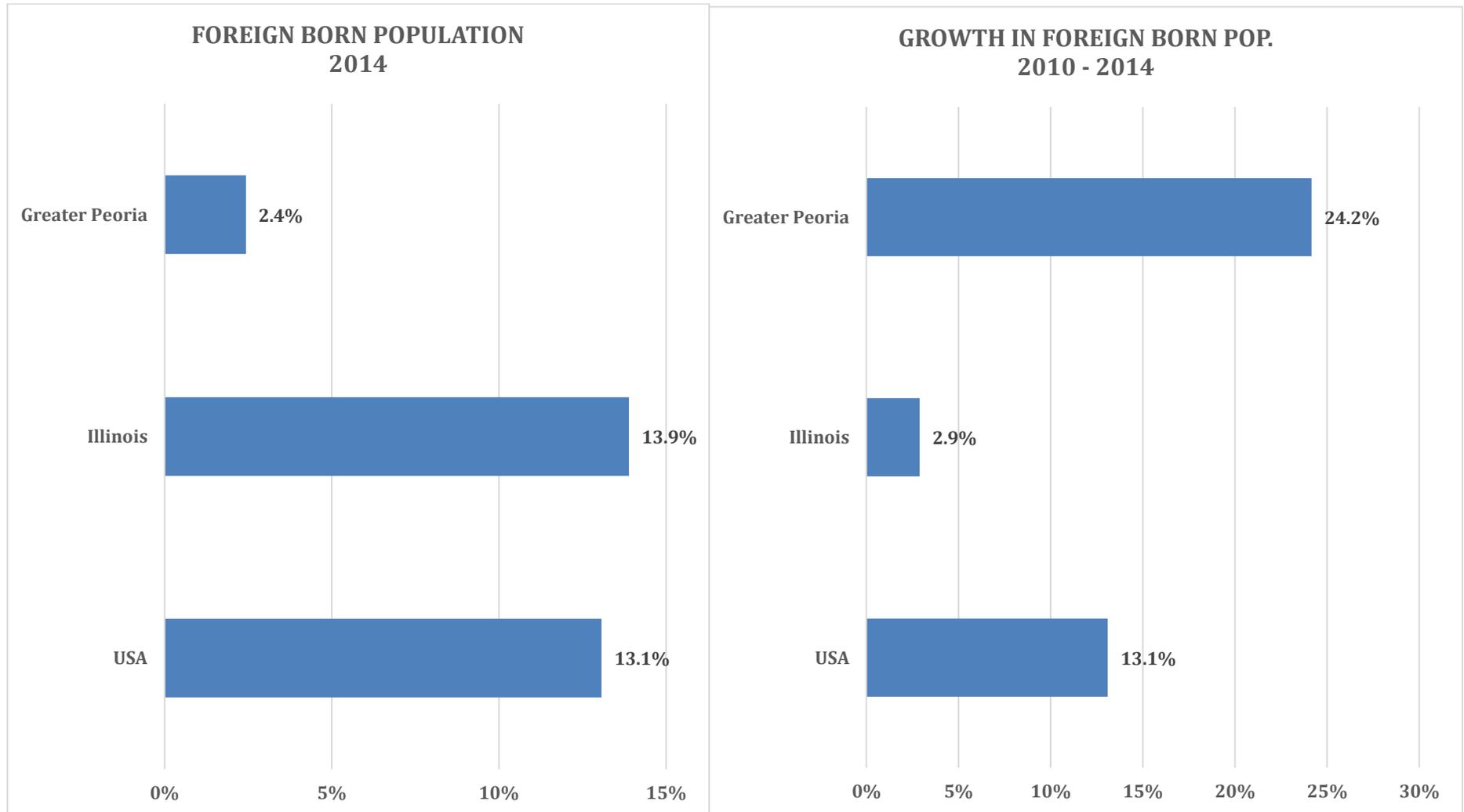
**Greater Peoria is less diverse than state and national averages but ethnic populations are growing.** In 2015 the Greater Peoria population was 83% white, 9% black, 2% Asian, and 6% other races. In comparison, the U.S was 77% white, 13% black, 5% Asian, and 4% other races. Greater Peoria is 3% Hispanic compared with the State of Illinois (15%) and the U.S. (17%).

Non-white populations are growing rapidly in Greater Peoria. From 2010 to 2015, Asian and Hispanic populations grew most rapidly at 21% and 25%, respectively. The black population grew by 4% and the white population shrank by 1%. Racial diversification of the population is healthy growth as businesses seek locations with a diverse workforce offering a variety of perspectives, talents, and skills. Cultural diversity also adds to the urban vibrancy that tends to attract the working age population much needed in the region.



Source: US Census

**Greater Peoria is becoming more internationally diverse but the percent of foreign born population lags behind national and state percentages.** In 2014, foreign-born residents made up 2.4% of the population, which is well below the 13.9% in the State of Illinois and 13.1% in the U.S. The foreign born population in Greater Peoria, however, grew 24.2% from 2010 to 2014, which is more than eight times the rate of the State of Illinois. Greater Peoria is becoming more diverse with time. This growth in foreign-born population far exceeds the overall population growth for Greater Peoria.

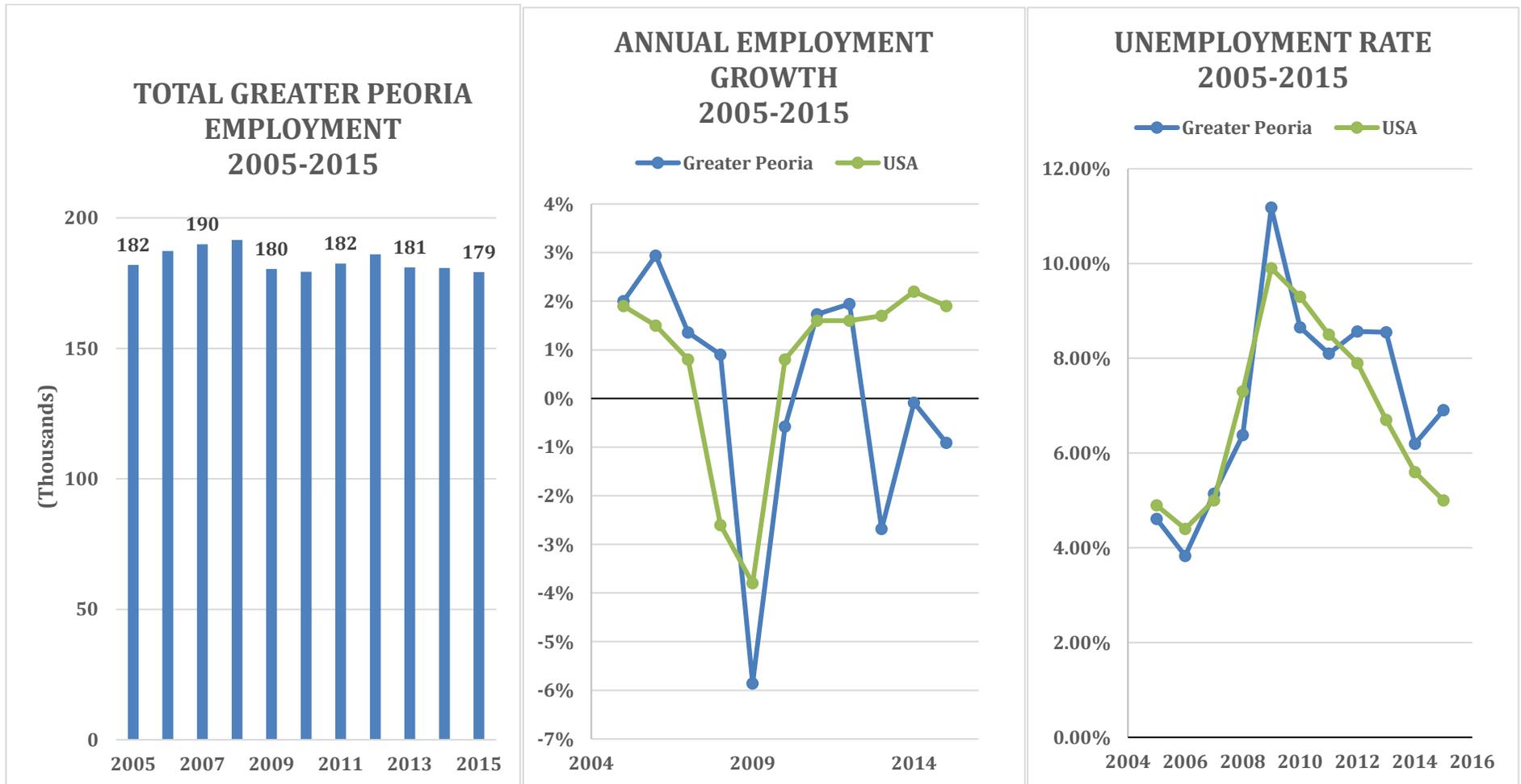


Source: US Census

## Economy

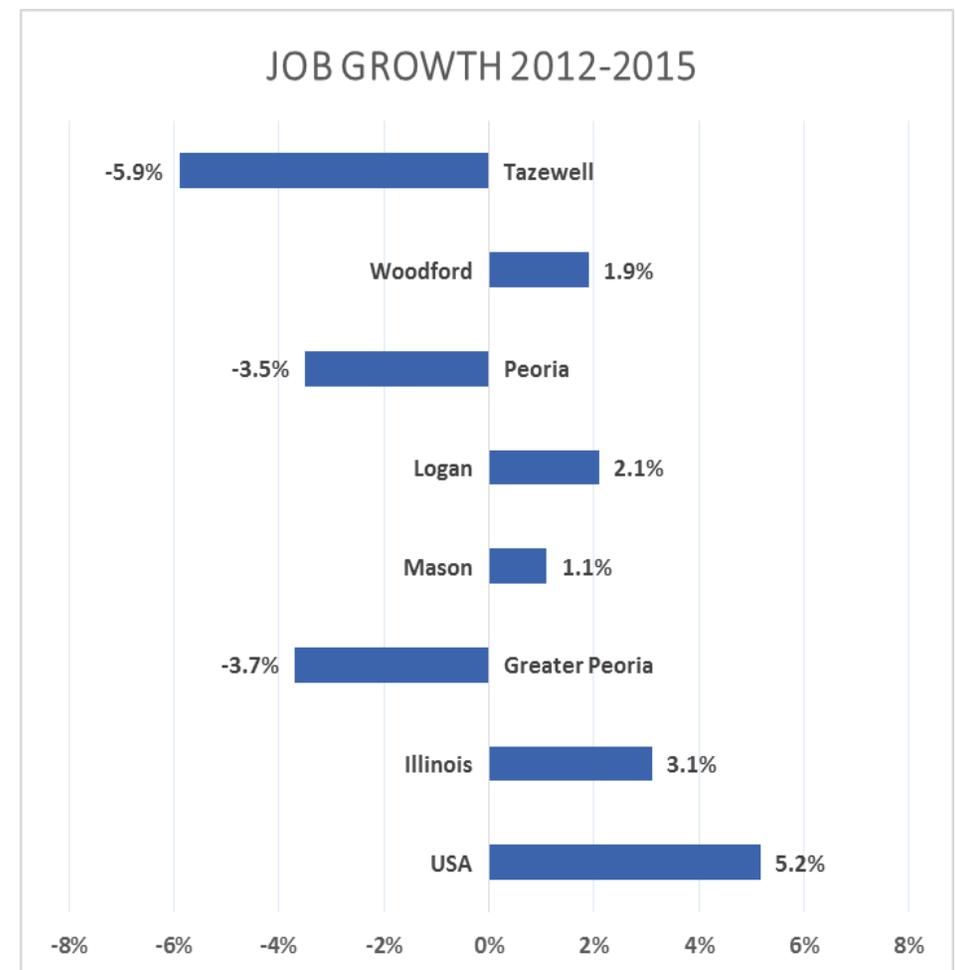
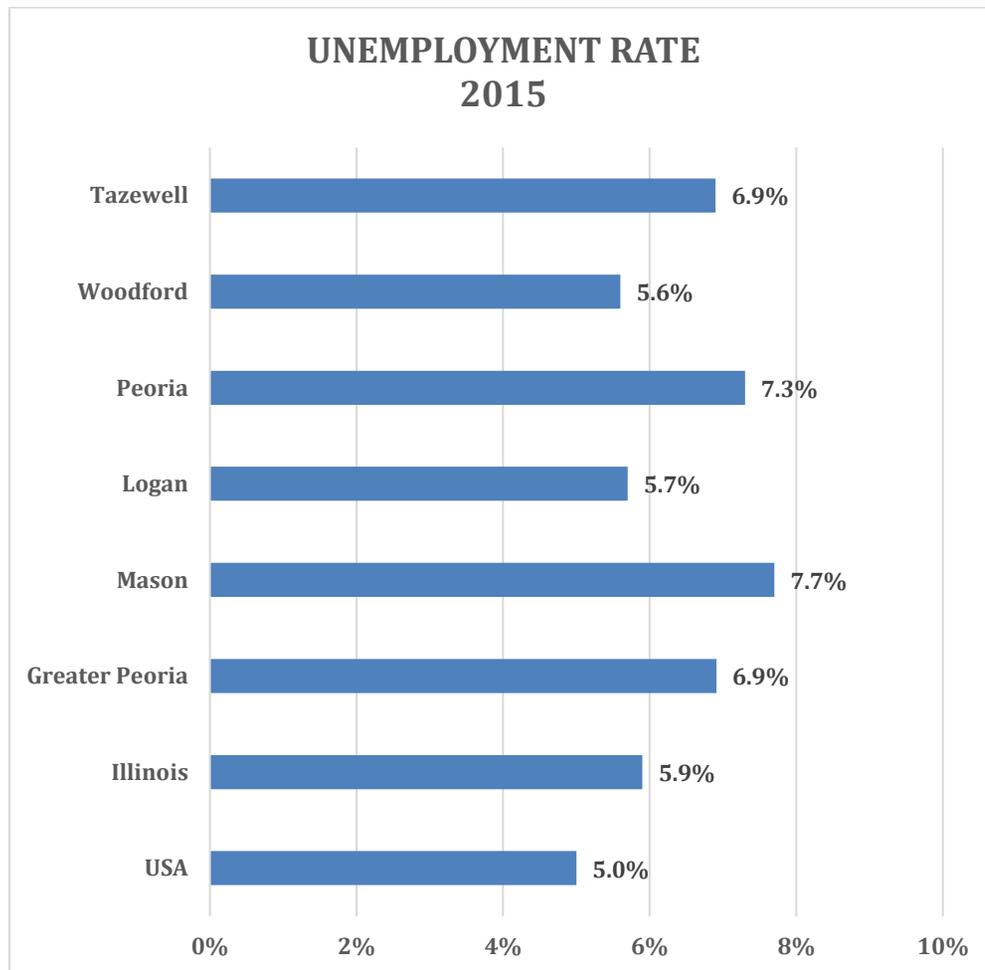
From 2004 to 2012, Greater Peoria employment growth was reflective of U.S. averages with slightly higher growth from 2004 to 2007 and greater loss in 2008 and 2010. Growth has remained negative since 2013 in Greater Peoria while U.S. averages reflect positive growth. The largest job losses in Greater Peoria were seen in 2009 at 3.8%. While recovery from 2009 was initially on par with U.S. averages, Greater Peoria has remained well below U.S. employment growth since another downturn in 2013.

Greater Peoria experienced a higher unemployment rate than the U.S. in six of the 11 years analyzed from 2005 to 2015 with the greatest difference seen in 2015 where Greater Peoria's unemployment rate was 1.91% higher than the U.S.



With the exception of Woodford County at 5.6% and Logan County at 5.7%, Greater Peoria counties had greater unemployment rates than the State of Illinois rate in 2015 (5.9%) Peoria and Mason Counties had the greatest unemployment rates at 7.3% and 7.7%, respectively. All counties had greater unemployment rates than the U.S. rate of 5.0% in 2015 and the Greater Peoria rate was almost 2 percentage points higher than the U.S. rate.

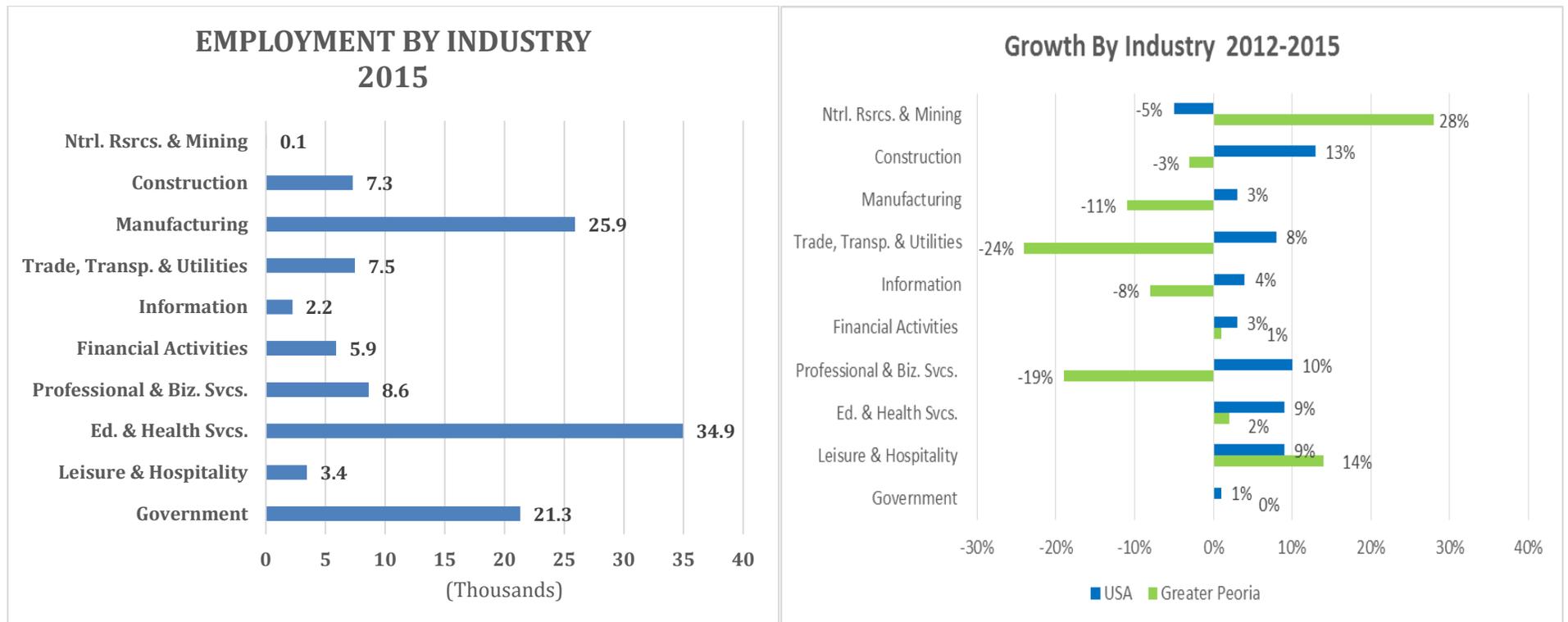
Overall, job growth was negative in Greater Peoria from 2012 to 2015 with Tazewell County experiencing the greatest loss of 5.9%. Logan County saw the greatest job growth for this time period at 2.10%. While the nation was growing jobs by 5.17%, Greater Peoria experienced an overall loss of 3.70%.



Source: US BLS

Greater Peoria is clearly weighted in specific industries in terms of employment. **Manufacturing, education and health, and government dominate employment at 25.9%, 34.9%, and 21.3%, respectively.** Known as the heavy equipment manufacturing capital of the world and home of Caterpillar Inc., it is no surprise that manufacturing is a dominant employment industry. Eight hospitals including the fourth largest medical center in Illinois and the Children’s Hospital of Illinois combined with five healthcare training centers including a Peoria campus of the University of Illinois College of Medicine makes the Greater Peoria healthcare industry a top employment sector that employs over 4,300 registered nurses and graduates over 320 nursing students per year.

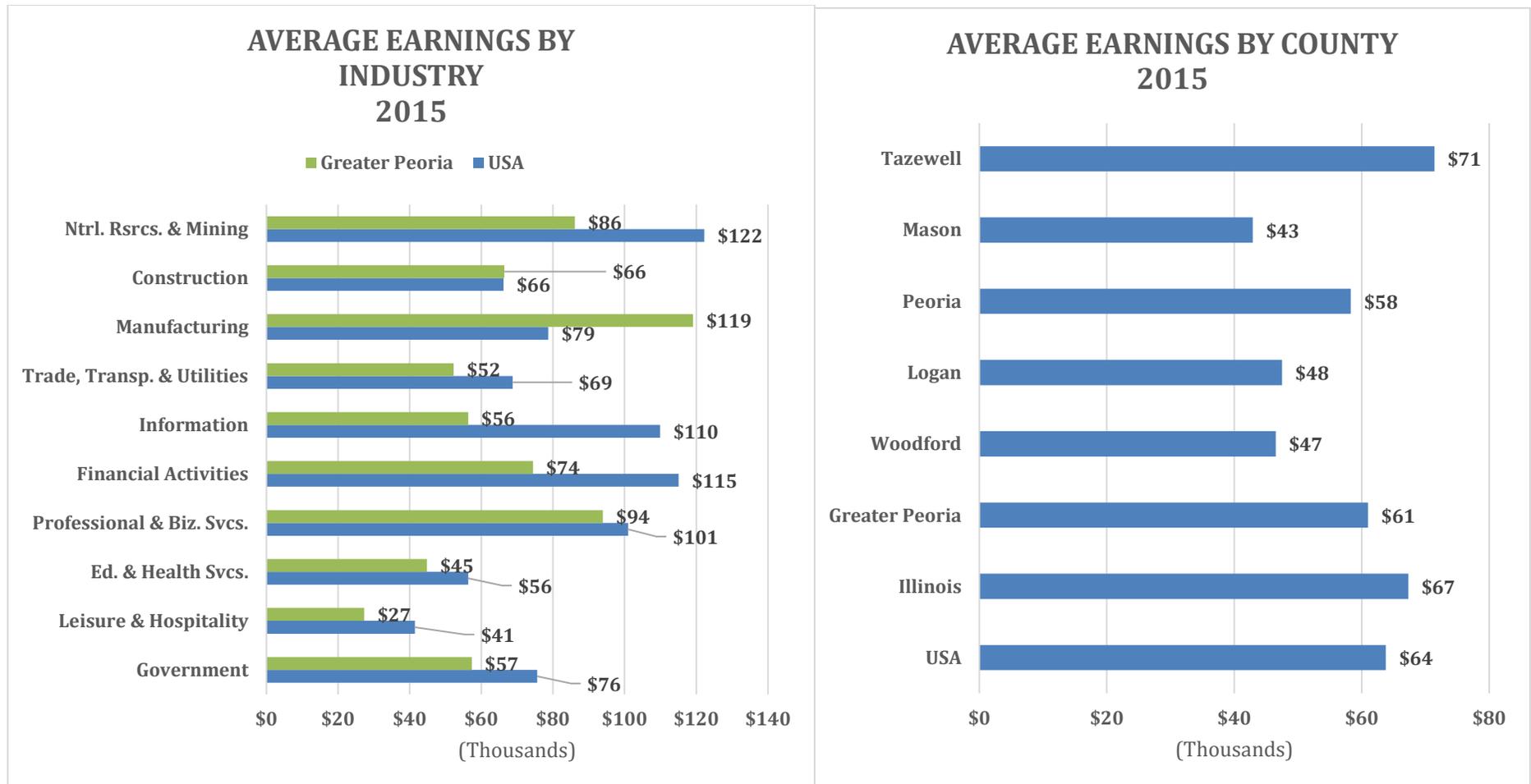
From 2012 to 2015, Greater Peoria experienced zero and negative growth and a loss in employment in all but three industries analyzed. Three industries supporting growth included leisure and hospitality (14%), education and health services (2%), and financial activities (1%). The large growth in leisure and hospitality is reflective of the investments made through public-private partnerships to expand a downtown Peoria historic hotel, expand the Peoria Zoo, and build a Peoria Riverfront Museum and Caterpillar Visitors Center. The largest losses per industry were seen in natural resources and mining (28%), trade, transportation, and utilities (24%), and professional and business services (19%). The one industry where growth exceeded U.S. growth from 2012 to 2015 was government (14%).



Source: EMSI

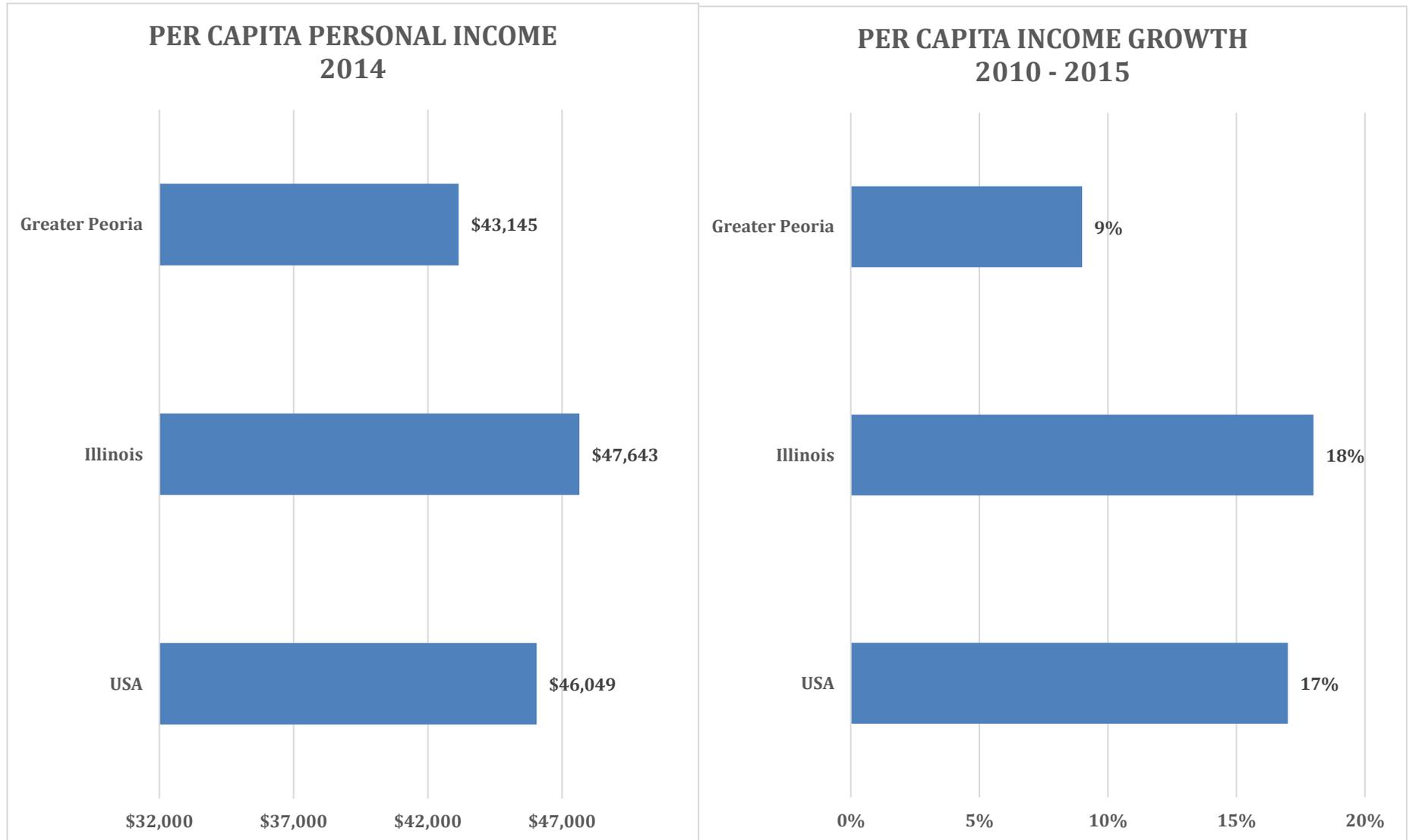
The average wage in Greater Peoria (\$61,000) is below the State of Illinois (\$67,000) and U.S. averages (\$64,000). All wages by industry were lower than U.S. averages in 2015 with the exception of manufacturing. Manufacturing is truly a strong industry in Greater Peoria as the headquarters for Caterpillar, Inc. The Greater Peoria industries with the highest average wage in 2015 were manufacturing (\$119,000), professional and business services (\$94,000), and natural resources and mining (\$86,000).

Tazewell County demonstrated higher than State of Illinois and US average wages in 2015 at \$71,000 and all other counties demonstrated lower average earnings than the State of Illinois and the U.S. Lower than average earnings create challenges when recruiting and retaining a talented workforce. Cost of living, however, can offset the differences noted in earnings.



Source: EMSI

Per capita personal income is a measure of the average income per person in a year. Per capita personal income is an indicator of prosperity because it is used to measure one region's wealth against another. Greater Peoria per capita personal income (\$43,145) was below the State of Illinois (\$47,643) and U.S. averages (\$46,049). Greater Peoria also experienced approximately half the growth (9%) in per capita income than the State of Illinois (18%) and the U.S. (17%) from 2010 to 2015.



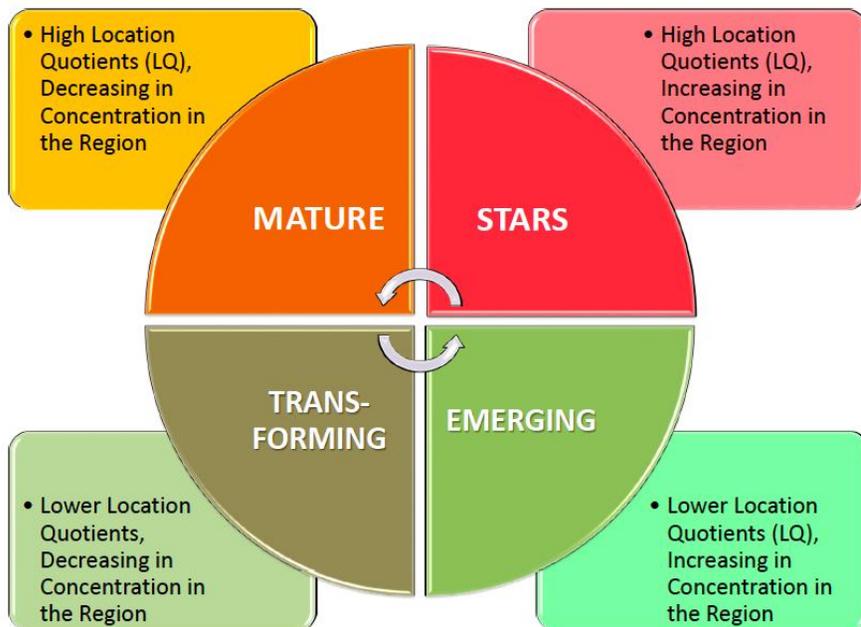
Sources: BEA and ESRI

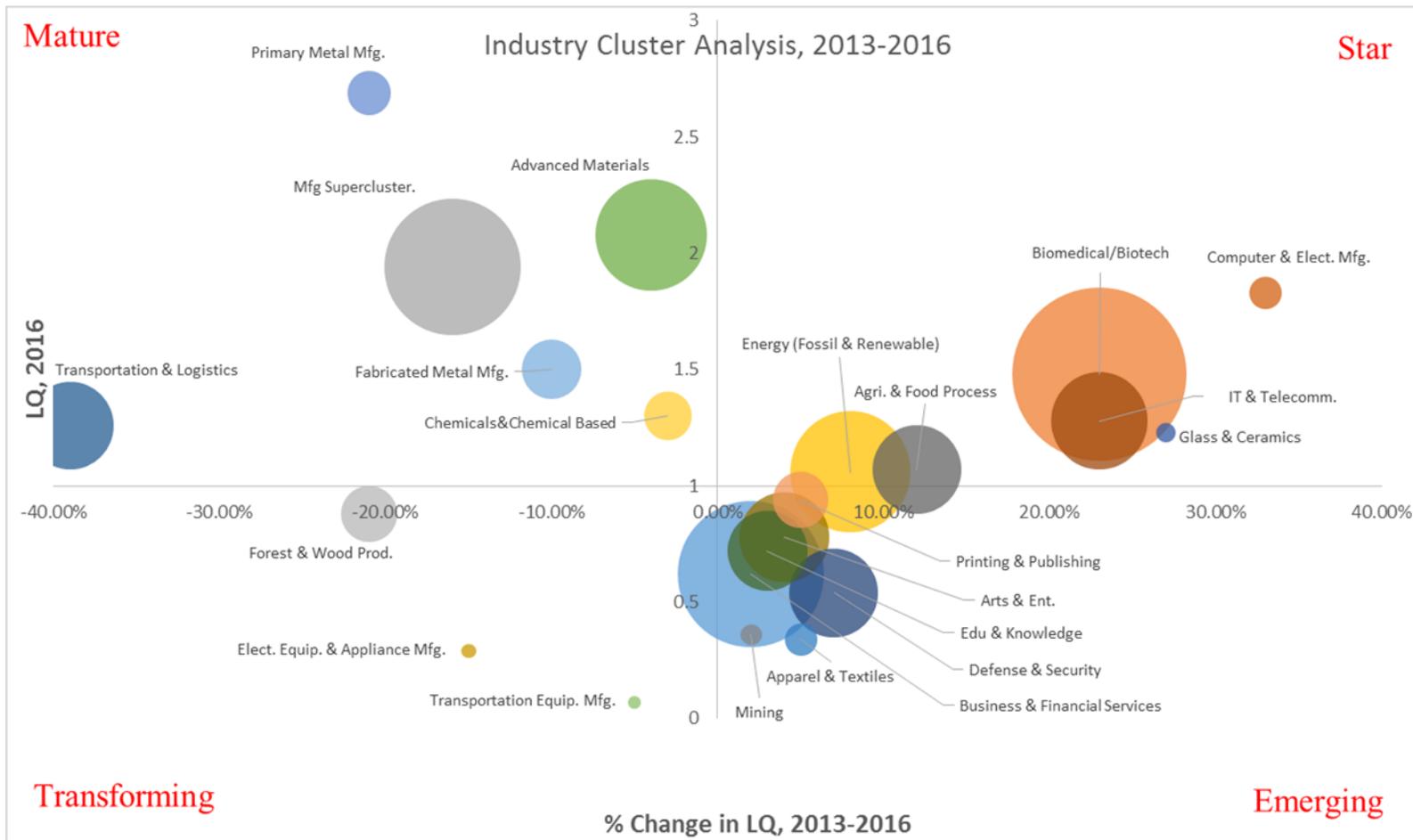
## Industry Cluster Analysis

It is important to understand the concentration of specific industries in Greater Peoria and compare these industry “clusters” to the nation so that we can reveal what makes Greater Peoria unique. Location Quotients (LQs) compare the concentration of an industry in a local economy to that seen at the national level. LQs are calculated by comparing an industry’s share of the regional employment with the industry’s share of national employment. An LQ of 1 indicates that the local industry has the same jobs per capita as the same industry on a national scale. An LQ of 1.5 indicates that the local industry has 50% more jobs per capita than what is seen on a national scale, and an LQ below 1 indicates less jobs per capita in that industry sector compared to national trends.

When LQs are charted against five-year percentage growth, the results can tell a story of the region. Industry clusters with positive growth over a five-year period and positive LQs are strong and advancing industries (stars). Industry clusters with positive growth and negative LQs are weak but emerging (emerging). Industry clusters with negative growth and positive LQs are strong but declining (mature), and industry clusters with negative growth and negative LQs are weak and declining (transforming). Finally, analysts can provide additional information on the local number of jobs in each industry by creating a bubble chart where the size of the bubble is directly proportional to the number of jobs held by that industry.

### Cluster Bubble Chart Interpretation



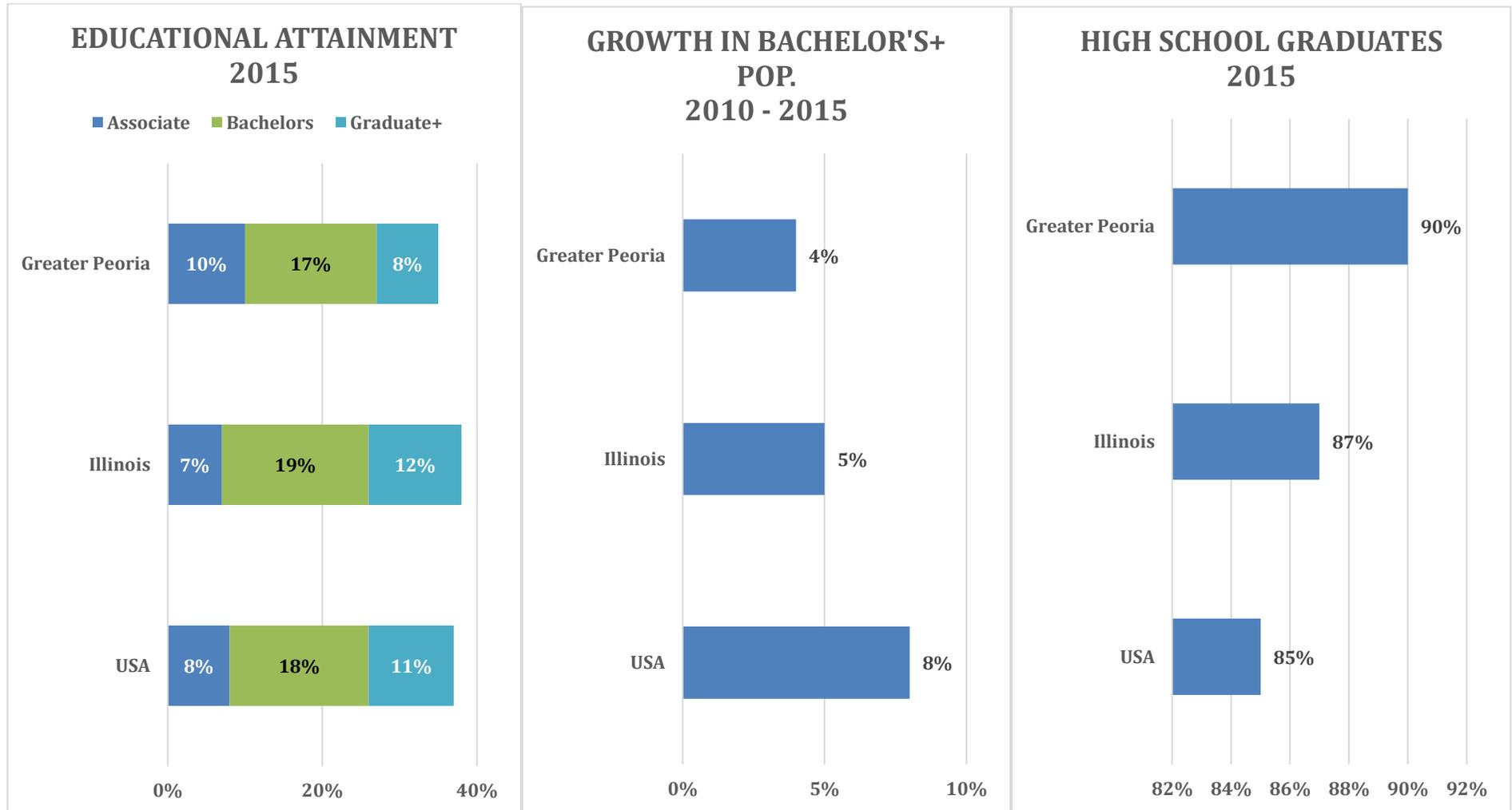


In analyzing the 2013-2016 Industry Cluster Bubble Chart for Greater Peoria, it is notable that biomedical/biotechnical, energy, information technology and telecommunications, agribusiness and food processing, computer and electronic manufacturing, and glass and ceramics serve as strong and advancing “star” industry clusters for the region. Biomedical had the greatest number of jobs estimated for 2016 at 29,078 with 1,282 establishments recorded for 2015. Emerging industries that demonstrated growth but have LQs less than 1 include business and financial services, arts and entertainment, defense and security, education and knowledge, printing and publishing, apparel and textiles and mining. Mature industries with a LQ above 1 but declining in growth include our manufacturing supercluster, advanced materials, transportation and logistics, fabricated metal product manufacturing, chemicals and chemical based products, and primary metal manufacturing. Forest and wood products, transportation equipment manufacturing, and electrical equipment and appliance manufacturing are weak and declining, thus transforming. The Industry Cluster Analysis for 2013 – 2016 is demonstrated in table format below.

Industry Cluster	Jobs 2016	LQ 2016	LQ % Change, 2013-2016	Establishment 2015	Classification 2013-2016
Business & Financial Services	20,596	0.62	0.02	1,282	EMERGING
Biomedical/Biotechnical (Life Sciences)	29,078	1.48	0.23	352	STAR
Manufacturing Supercluster	17,907	1.94	-0.16	192	MATURE
Energy (Fossil & Renewable)	14,049	1.06	0.08	602	STAR
Machinery Manufacturing	11,285	4.16	-0.56	45	MATURE
Advanced Materials	11,945	2.08	-0.04	151	MATURE
Transportation & Logistics	7,278	1.26	-0.39	335	MATURE
Information Technology & Telecommunications	9,053	1.28	0.23	299	STAR
Agribusiness, Food Processing & Technology	7,516	1.07	0.12	304	STAR
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & Visitor Industries	7,739	0.78	0.04	278	EMERGING
Defense & Security	7,638	0.54	0.07	193	EMERGING
Education & Knowledge Creation	6,230	0.72	0.03	100	EMERGING
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	3,384	1.5	-0.1	102	MATURE
Printing & Publishing	2,969	0.94	0.05	170	EMERGING
Forest & Wood Products	3,093	0.88	-0.21	221	TRANSFORMING
Chemicals & Chemical Based Products	2,265	1.3	-0.03	69	MATURE
Primary Metal Manufacturing	1,848	2.69	-0.21	9	MATURE
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	153	0.07	-0.05	12	TRANSFORMING
Apparel & Textiles	1,005	0.34	0.05	59	EMERGING
Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing	1,033	1.83	0.33	15	STAR
Mining	444	0.36	0.02	18	EMERGING
Electrical Equipment, Appliance & Component Mfg	205	0.29	-0.15	10	TRANSFORMING
Glass & Ceramics	364	1.23	0.27	12	STAR

## Workforce Development and Use

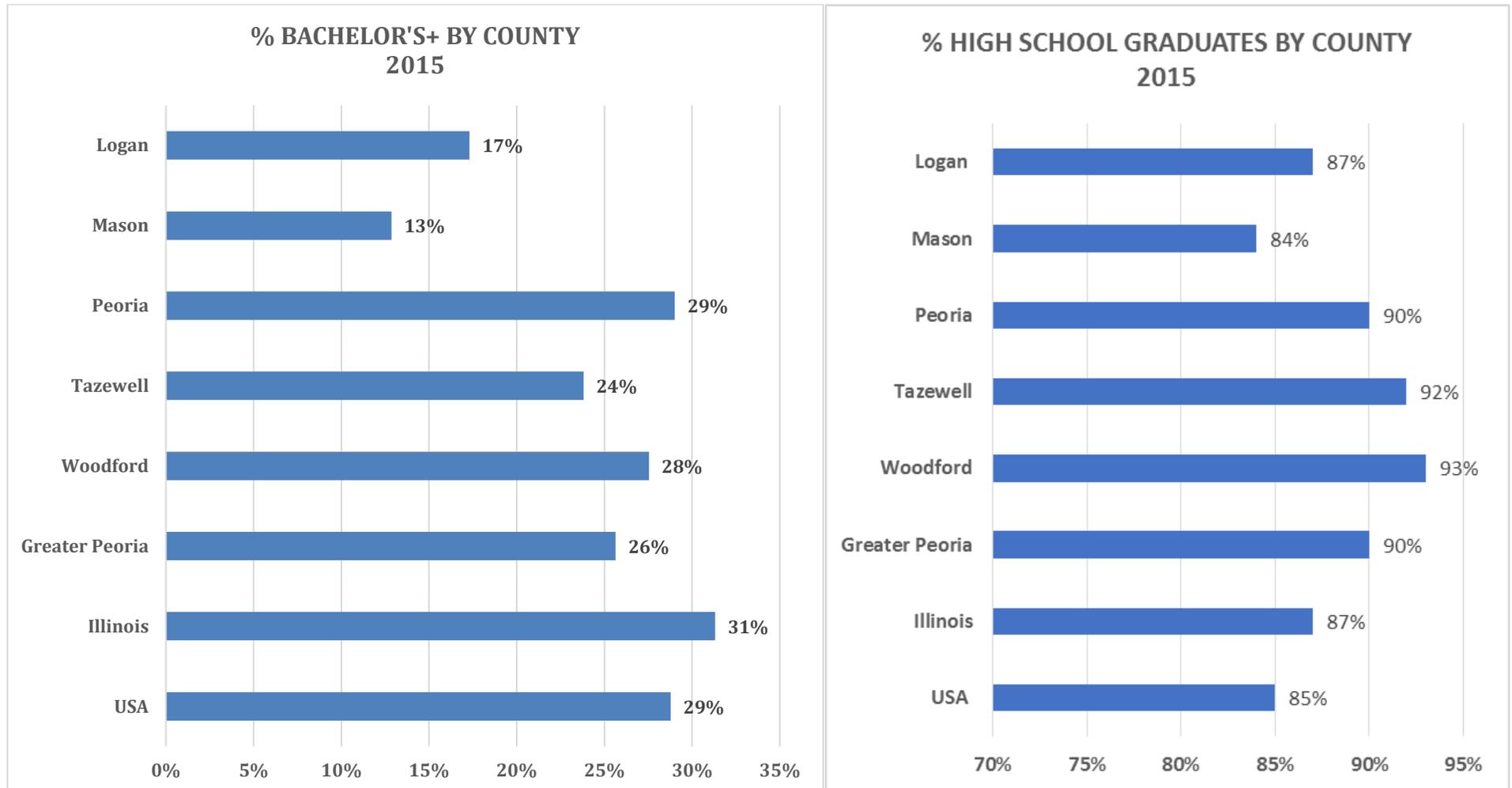
Educational attainment is an important factor in developing a workforce capable of addressing the needs and wants, challenges, and opportunities of a changing economy. Overall, Greater Peoria educational attainment was slightly less than the state and nation. The rate of growth of Bachelor's degrees and higher from 2010 to 2015 was 4%, slightly less than the state rate (5%) and less than U.S. rate of growth (8%). **Overall, Greater Peoria high school graduation rates are well above the national average at 90%, however several of our high schools have graduation rates below 60%.**



Source: US Census

Education levels are highly varied across Greater Peoria with greater educational attainment in urban areas. In 2015, no counties had education levels above the state level of 31%, and Peoria County was the only county on par with the U.S. level of 29%. Woodford County had the second highest attainment at 28%. Mason and Logan Counties had the lowest level of Bachelor's degrees and higher at 17% and 13%, respectively.

All counties demonstrated high school graduation rates at or above national and state rates with the exception of Mason County (84%). Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford Counties had the highest high school graduation rates at 90%, 92%, and 93%, respectively.

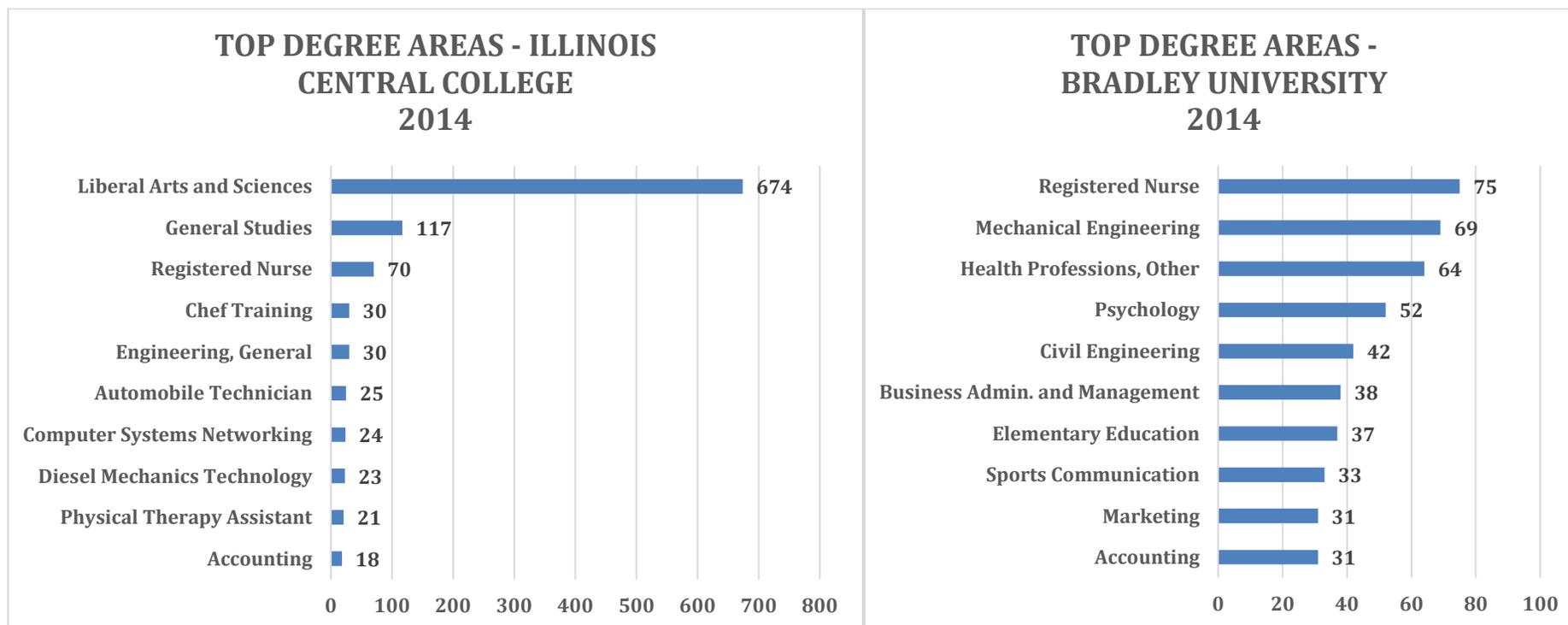


Source: US Census

Bradley University and Illinois Central College are Greater Peoria’s two largest post-secondary education institutions. Bradley University is a private, mid-sized university that enrolls approximately 5,000 students annually and is named the #4 university of its type in the mid-west in U.S .News & World Report’s publication *Best Colleges*. Illinois Central College is a large community college that enrolls approximately 13,000 students annually and offers associate’s degrees and certificate programs. These educational institutions provide the region with hundreds of skilled graduates in a variety of fields each year. The top degree area awarded at Illinois Central College in 2014 was liberal arts and sciences (674). Top degrees at Bradley University in 2014 were registered nurse (75), mechanical engineering (69), and health professionals (64).

Other educational institutions in the region include:

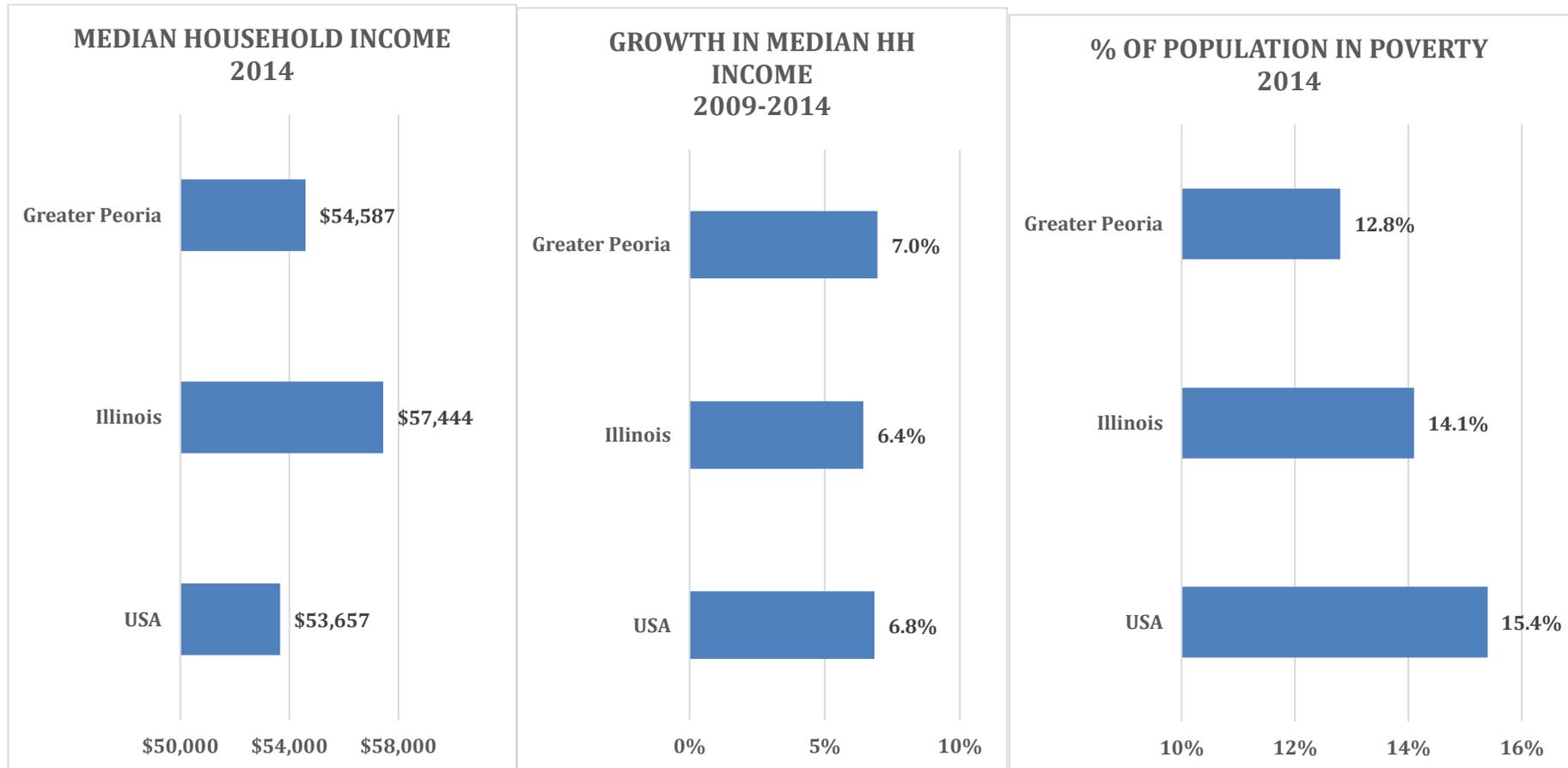
- Jump Trading Simulation and Education Center – a state-of-the-art center that provides training in simulated settings that look and feel like a real hospital.
- Midwest Technical Institute - a year-round technical and vocational school for mechanical trades and allied health programs.
- University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria - one of four campuses that make up the nation’s largest public medical school.
- Methodist College and OSF St. Francis College of Nursing – offers nursing degrees in cooperation with local hospitals.
- Eureka College, Midstate College, and Robert Morris College.



Source: IPEDS

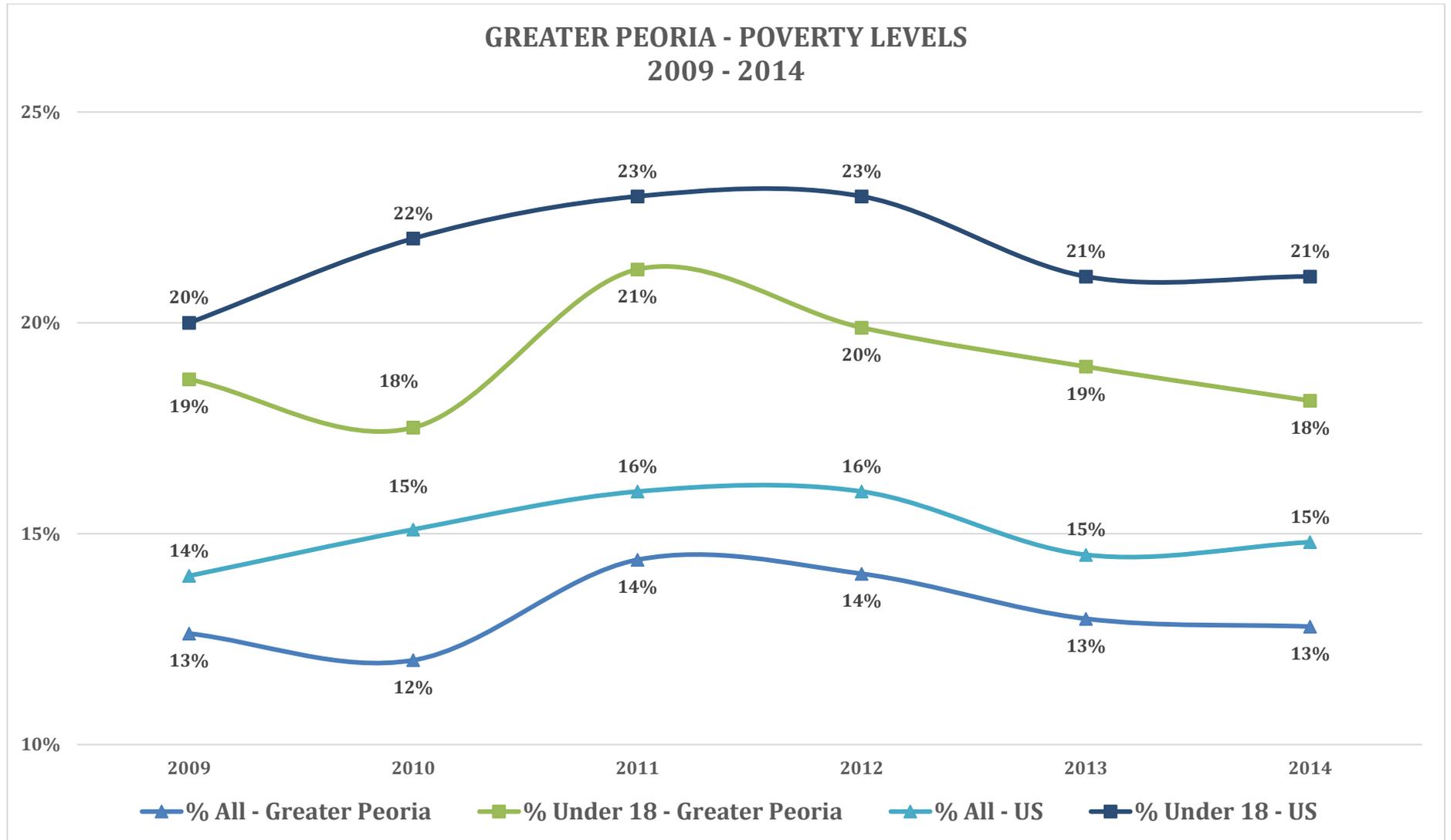
Household income levels are strong indicators of the prosperity of a region and higher poverty levels indicate a strain on local government resources. Household income is often displayed as median income. Median is not the average, rather if one were to list every income in the population in order of least to greatest; the median would be the number at the center of this list. The population has a 50% chance of being above or below the median. The median Greater Peoria household income (\$54,587) is less than the State of Illinois median (\$57,444) and more than the U.S. median (\$53,657). Growth of the Greater Peoria median from 2009 to 2014 (7.0%) was greater than growth in the State of Illinois (6.4%) and U.S. (6.8%).

**Low poverty levels in Greater Peoria means more resources for growth and prosperity.** Poverty levels are lower in Greater Peoria (12.8%) than state (14.1%) and U.S. levels (15.4%).



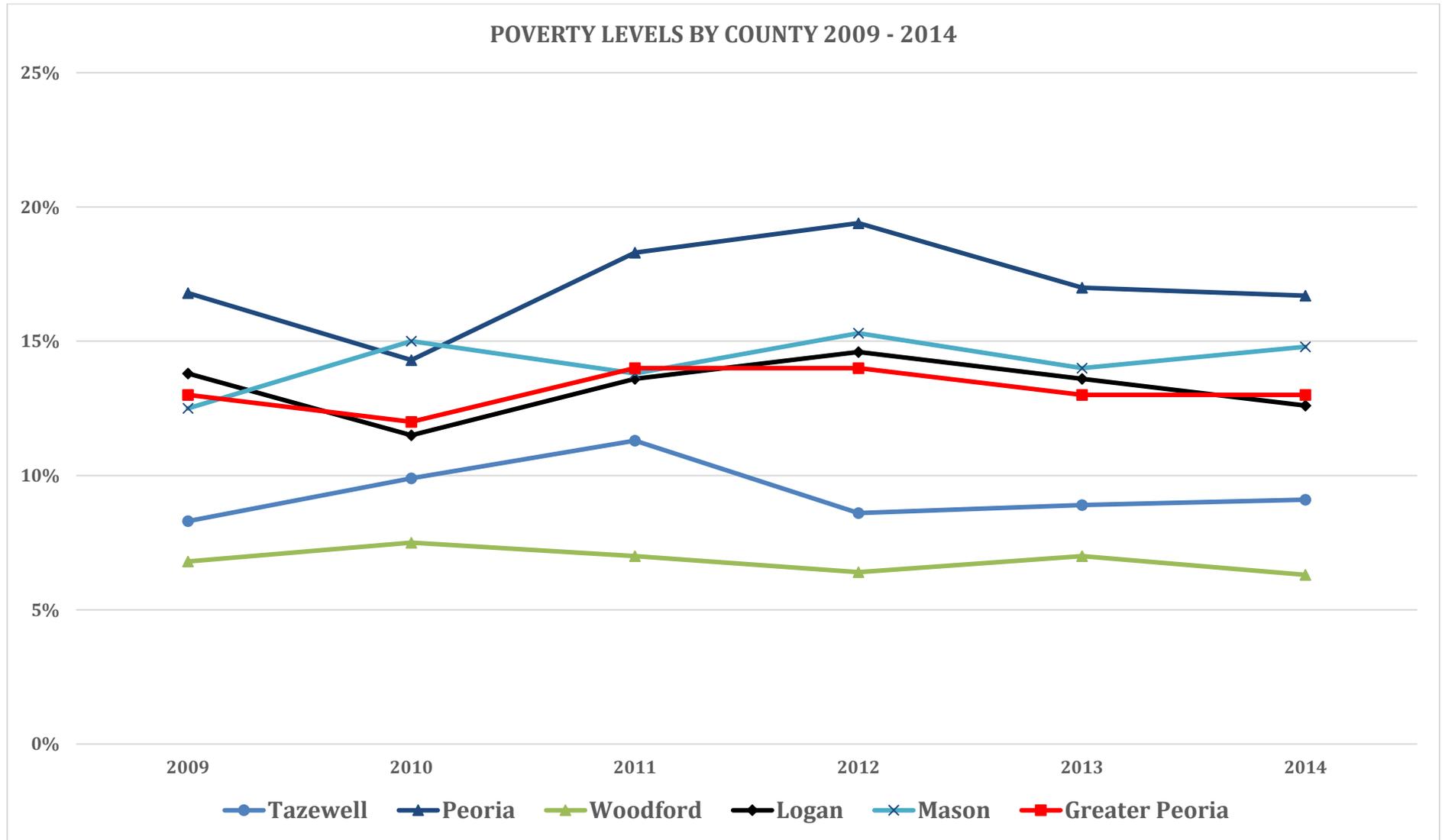
Source: US Census

From 2009 to 2014 poverty levels in Greater Peoria consistently remained below U.S. poverty levels. While poverty levels were rising in the nation in 2010 to 22%, levels dropped in Greater Peoria to 12%. From 2011 to 2014, poverty levels remained relatively constant at 14% and 13% with 14% being the highest poverty level in Greater Peoria during the six years analyzed. The percent of children in poverty during this timeframe fluctuated from 18% in years 2010 and 2014 to 21% in 2011.



Source: US Census

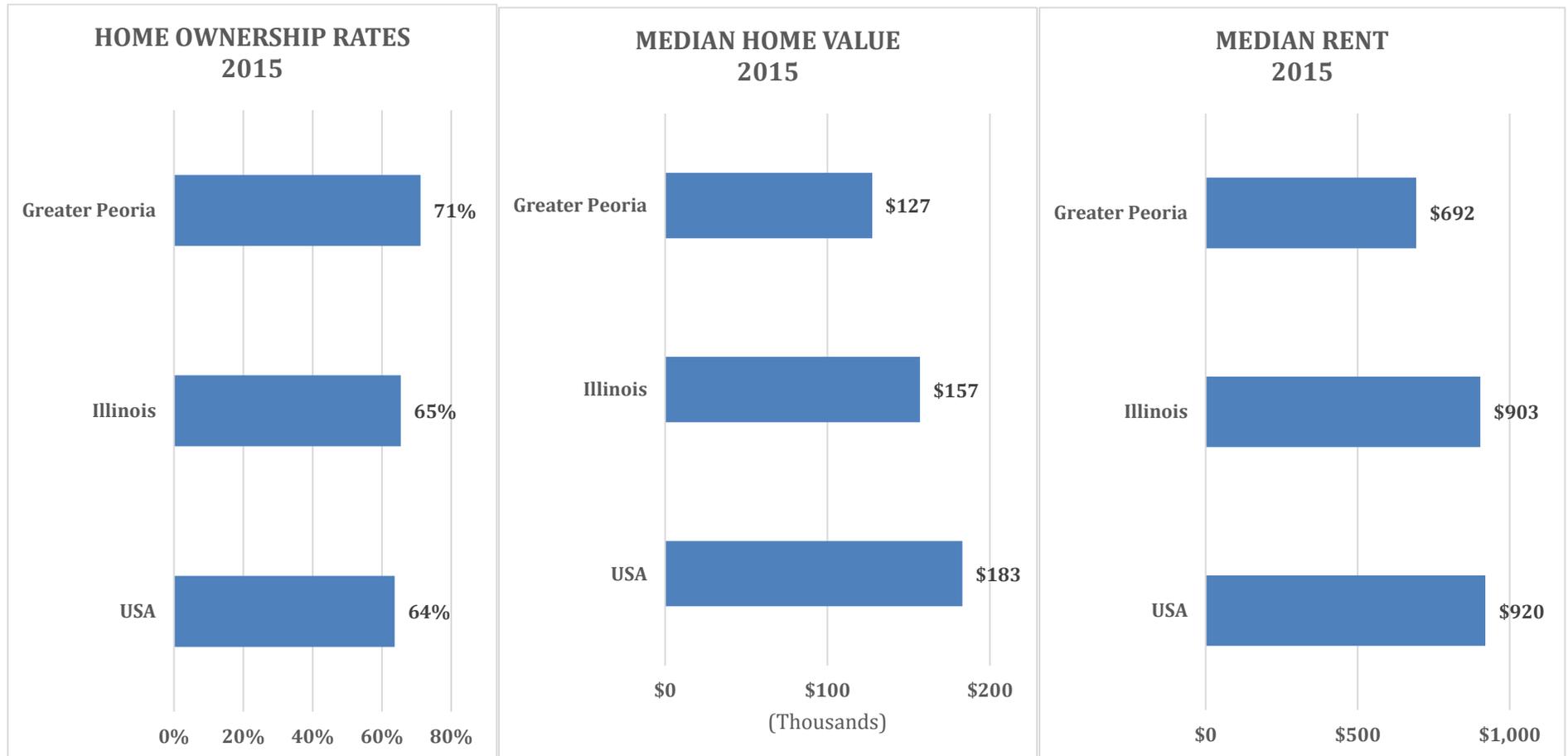
**The geographic distribution of poverty is apparent in the region with highly urban and rural areas demonstrating greater poverty levels.** Regional comparisons reveal that Woodford and Tazewell Counties constantly demonstrated the lowest poverty levels from 2009 to 2014, Mason and Logan Counties remained slightly above or at the regional levels, and Peoria County remained 2 – 5% above regional poverty levels during this time period.



Source: US Census

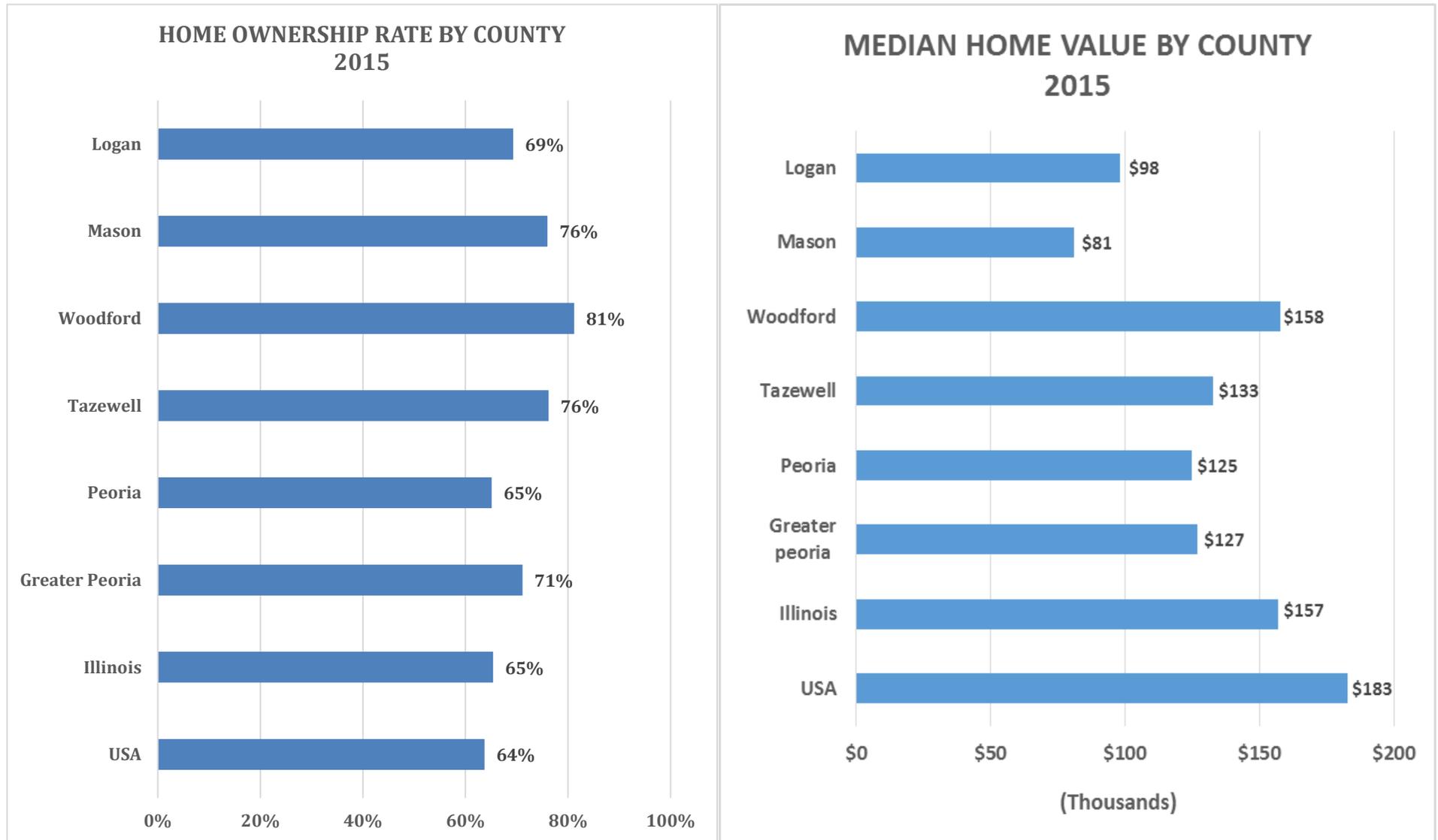
Information on home ownership, home values, and the cost of renting homes provides valuable insight into a community’s cost of living as well as providing an overall picture of prosperity. An economically strong community likely has high ownership rates and high home values. In analyzing home values and rental costs, however, it should be noted that high numbers indicate a barrier to homeownership for young professionals and low-income residents. This information is often taken into account when employers seek to attract and retain employees, and job seekers will often compare the costs of housing to proposed salaries.

**Greater Peoria is well known for its quality housing stock at a great price. Salaries go farther in Greater Peoria.** In 2015 Greater Peoria had higher homeownership rates than the State of Illinois and the U.S. with a rate of 71%. The median home value in Greater Peoria was \$127,000 and the median rental rate was \$692/month.



Source: US Census

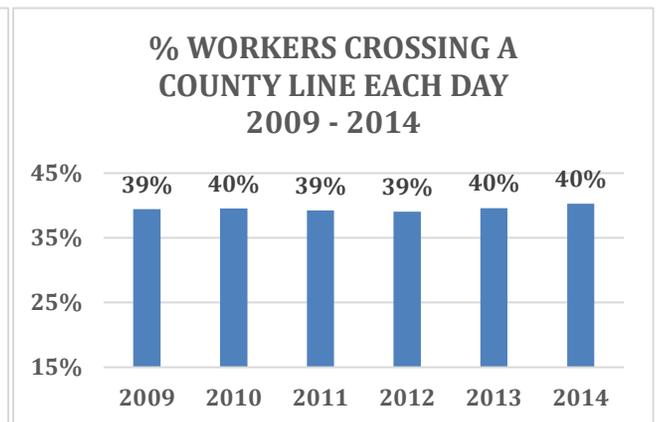
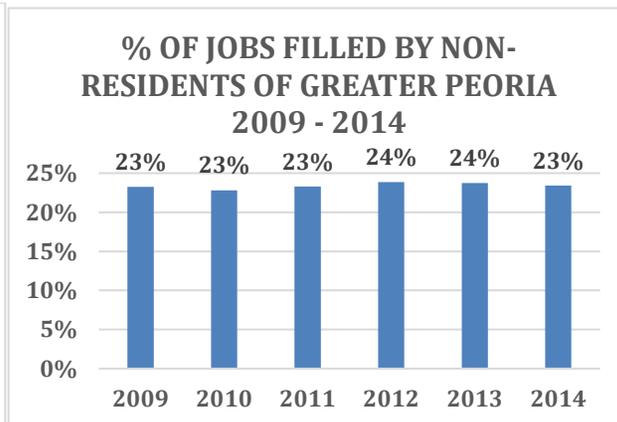
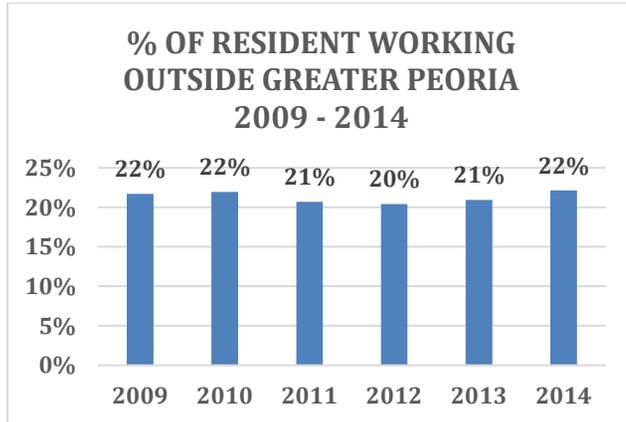
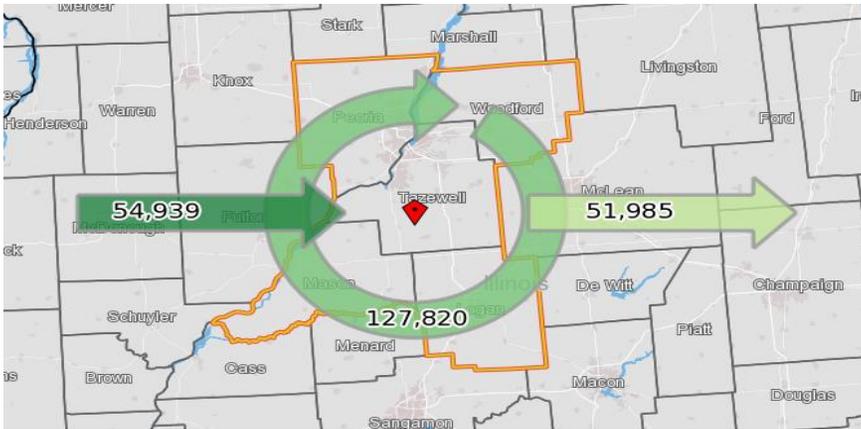
Home ownership rates were consistently above the State of Illinois (65%) and the U.S. (64%) rates for all counties in Greater Peoria with the greatest rate in Woodford County (81%) and the smallest rate in Peoria County (65%) in 2015. All counties fell below the median home value of the U.S (\$183,000) and the region demonstrated diversity in housing costs ranging from \$81,000 in Mason County to \$158,000 in Woodford County. Woodford County is the only county that fell slightly above the state median of \$157,000.



Source: US Census

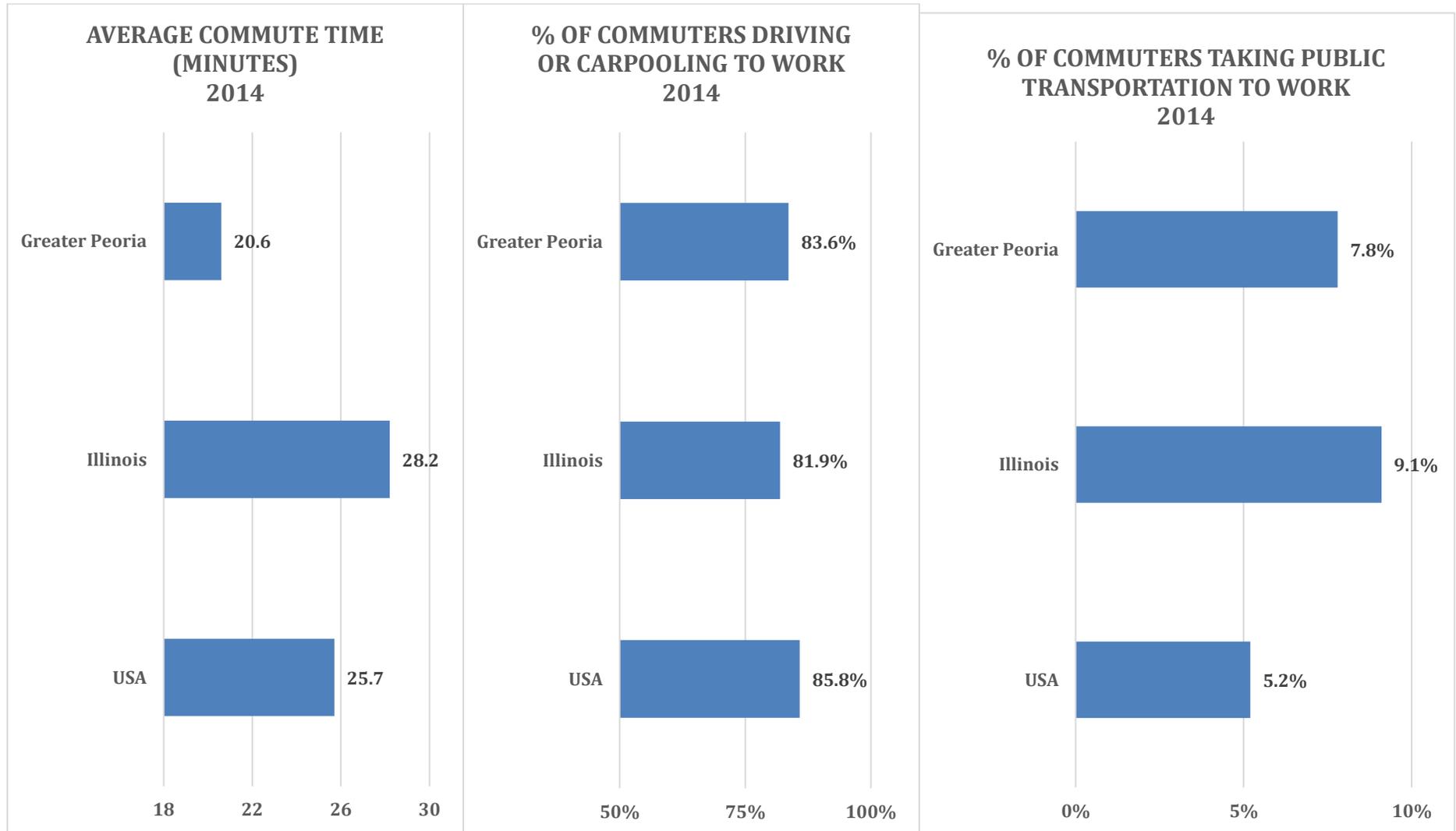
## Workforce Movement

Many are familiar with the daily commute to and from work. By considering the extent to which residents are commuting into and out of the region, the data can lend an understanding of the size and mobility of the local workforce. Approximately 127,820 people reside in and work in Greater Peoria. On a daily basis, an estimated 54,939 commuters enter the region to work and an estimated 51,985 people that live in Greater Peoria travel outside the region to work. Over a six-year period from 2009 to 2014, the percentage of residents working outside of Greater Peoria remained relatively constant fluctuating between 20% and 22%. The number of jobs filled by non-residents in Greater Peoria also remained relatively constant between 23% and 24%. The percentage of workers that cross a county line each day was between 39% and 40%.



Source: US Census

**Greater Peoria has significantly shorter commute times than what is seen at the state and national scale.** It is often said that you can get about anywhere in Greater Peoria in 20 minutes or less and this holds true with an average commute time of 20.6 minutes. Greater Peoria rates of driving and carpooling were between the state rate (81.9%) and the national rate (85.8%) at 83.6% in 2014. A larger percentage of Greater Peoria residents use public transportation (7.8%) than what was seen nationally (5.2%) in 2014, and the State of Illinois was higher than both national and Greater Peoria rates at 9.1%.

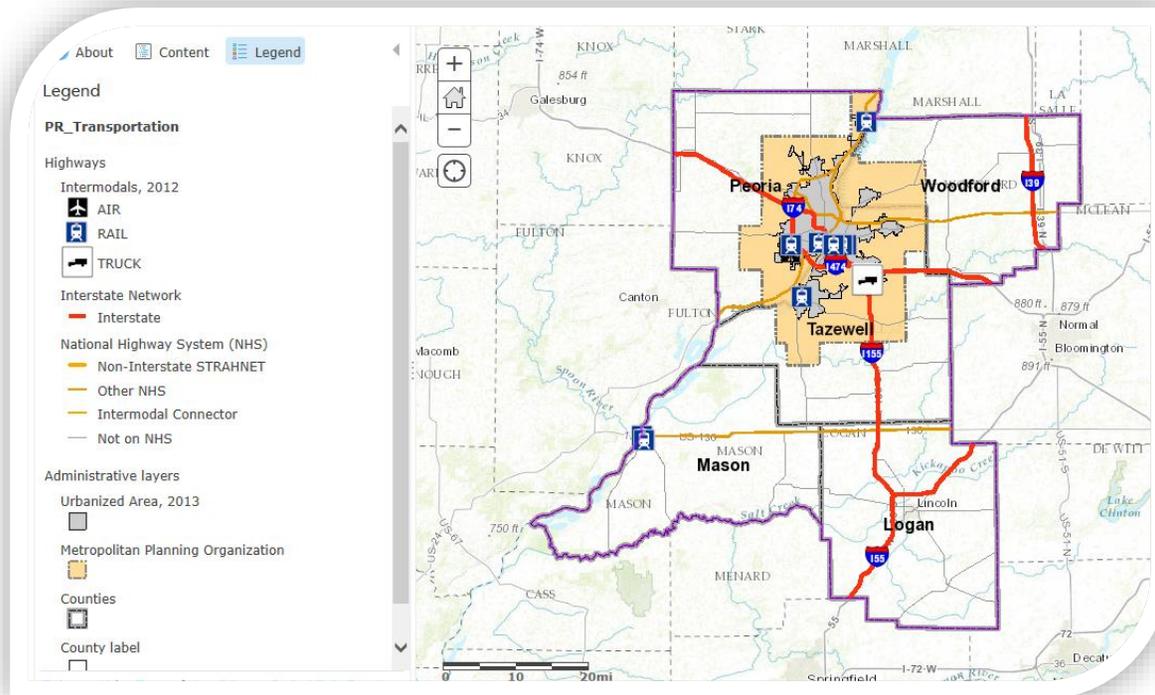


Source: US Census

## Transportation Access

Greater Peoria has a world-class transportation system to move passengers and freight. Significant rail, road, water, and air resources serve the region including: the Illinois River, the one inland navigational waterway connecting the Great Lakes at Chicago with the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico; three U.S. Interstates, two U.S. Routes and two State Routes; four Class I Railroads, five Regional Railroads; one civil/military public airport, and one private airport. Transfer facilities move cargo from rail to barge and rail to truck. Barge activity at the Peoria Lock and Dam was over 33.6 million tons of cargo in 2001, more than what is seen on the Upper Mississippi River. Alternative fuel stations including E8, LPG and electric stations are also becoming more available in every county in the Greater Peoria Region.

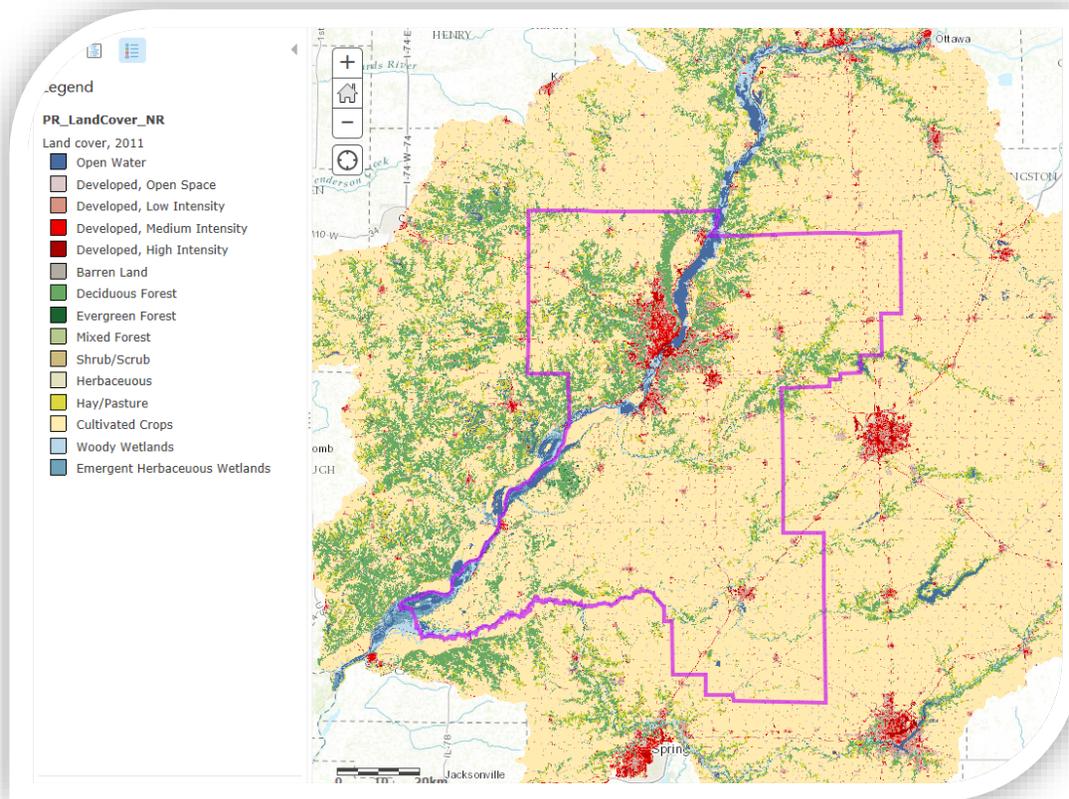
The General Wayne A. Downing Peoria International Airport directly connects to 11 cities including Chicago O'Hare International Airport on four airlines: Allegiant, American, Delta and United. The airport served 249,595 passengers in 2010, and has since been setting annual records serving 641,477 passengers in 2015. The construction of a new terminal earned the Metropolitan Airport Authority of Peoria a 2013 Outstanding Achievement Award by the Illinois Public Airports Association. In March of 2016, the General Wayne A. Downing Peoria International Airport achieved a perfect score from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) during a rigorous annual certification and safety inspection.



## Natural Resources

It is important to identify critical natural resources and evaluate potential impacts and protective strategies for natural resource protection. Land cover shows the actual state of earth surface as identified from satellite or airborne imagery. National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD) by USGS shows land cover snapshots from 2006 and 2011. The Illinois River is the most distinguishing natural resource of the region. The Illinois River bisects the State of Illinois as it flows from the headwaters of Lake Michigan and the Chicago River to the Mississippi River confluence at Grafton, Illinois. The River supports diverse habitats and endangered wetland species and is a major flyway for migratory waterfowl. From the lowlands of the river valley, glacial moraines rise to provide picturesque topography in an otherwise flat landscape. The wooded bluffs provide forestland and fantastic views of the placid Illinois River.

To acknowledge and protect local natural resources, local governments partner in stormwater/watershed planning, environmental corridor planning, and municipal and county land use planning that incorporates environmental corridor identification and protective land use policy.



## Foreign Trade

Selling product and services overseas is a great strategy for increasing sales in markets that are often growing at a faster rate than those in the United States. **As the home of a Fortune 500 company, Greater Peoria already has in place a strong global logistics network to support foreign trade.** Greater Peoria touts a robust global transportation network that includes capacity in air, barge, and inter-state highways. A local resource, the Illinois SBDC International Trade Center (ITC) at Bradley University, helps hundreds of Illinois companies take advantage of the potential of the international marketplace. The ITC expanded in 1994 to include specialized assistance to ensure exporters obtain the benefits associated with Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), including NAFTA. Working together, more than 500 companies have expanded their export sales by more than \$400 million.

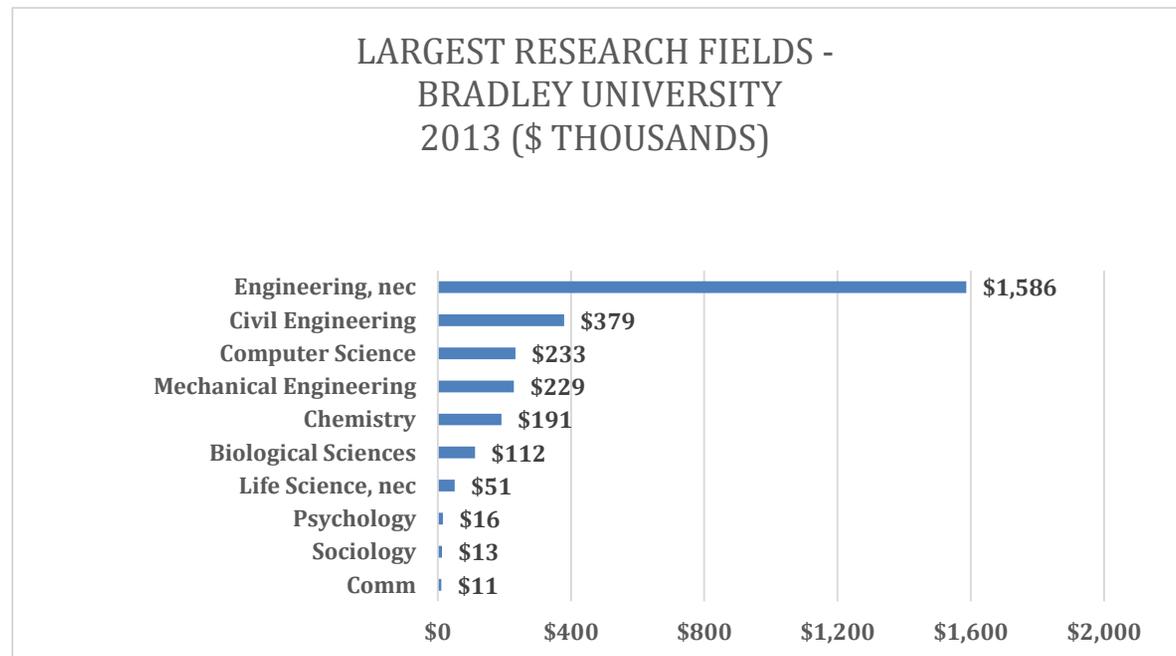
Foreign-Trade Zones (FTZ) are secure areas under U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) supervision that are generally considered outside CBP territory upon activation. Located in or near CBP ports of entry, they are the United States' version of what are known internationally as free-trade zones. Foreign Trade Zone 114 is a multi-modal zone (rail, air, river, road) serving the West Central, Central and East Central Illinois Region, providing over 2 million square feet of warehousing and distribution space available for General Purpose Zones usage and four Sub-Zone sites.

## Innovation

Innovation is the art of creating new or improved products, services, or way of doing things. It is argued that innovation and technological advancement is at the heart of economic growth. Creating an environment that supports knowledge, awareness, creativity, and business development can put any region ahead of the game in launching new business starts. Universities play an important role in creating a talented local workforce that not only supports existing business, but spurs private innovation to expand prosperity.

**Bradley University is named #4 of the top 10 Midwestern Regional Universities of 2016 by the U.S. News & World Report's publication *Best Colleges*.** Bradley consistently ranks as a top school among Midwest Regional Universities providing a full range of undergraduate and master's programs. In its 2015 edition, Bradley ranked as the top university of its type in Illinois and fourth among all universities in its region. The most concentrated research field at Bradley University by a large margin is engineering (\$1.6 million), followed by civil engineering (\$379,000) and computer science (\$233,000). In its *Best Colleges 2015*, U.S. News & World Report ranked the Caterpillar College of Engineering and Technology as one of the 35 "Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs" in the nation as determined by a survey of deans and senior faculty at peer institutions.

Top 10 Midwestern Regional Universities 2016	
#1	Creighton University
#2	Valparaiso University
#3	John Carroll University
#4	<b>Bradley University</b>
#5	Milwaukee School of Engineering
#6	Drake University
#7	Butler University
#8	Xavier University
#9	University of Evansville
#10	Rockhurst University



Source: Bradley University

Business incubators and programs that support business startups are also important in supporting regional innovation. Greater Peoria has several programs that are listed below:

***Peoria NEXT Innovation Center***

The Peoria NEXT Innovation Center is the home to researchers, inventors, and entrepreneurs transforming new technologies and innovations into commercial enterprises. The Center opened its doors in 2007 at 801 West Main Street, Peoria, Illinois, with the Bradley Technology Commercialization Center serving as the property management provider for the Center. The building, which can house up to 27 companies, has 48,000 square feet spread across 3 different levels. Before leasing space, potential tenants must complete a due diligence process to determine their ability to succeed and cooperate in an incubator environment.

***SCORE***

SCORE “Counselors to America’s Small Business” is a nonprofit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide. SCORE has a local Peoria Chapter that is located at the Heartland Partnership on the Peoria Riverfront. Peoria SCORE provides free and confidential business counseling tailored to meet the needs of the entrepreneur. SCORE volunteers are real-world professionals with time-tested knowledge who donate thousands of hours to help small businesses succeed. SCORE Counselors have backgrounds and experience in a wide variety of areas including accounting, finance, marketing, manufacturing, management and business plan preparation.

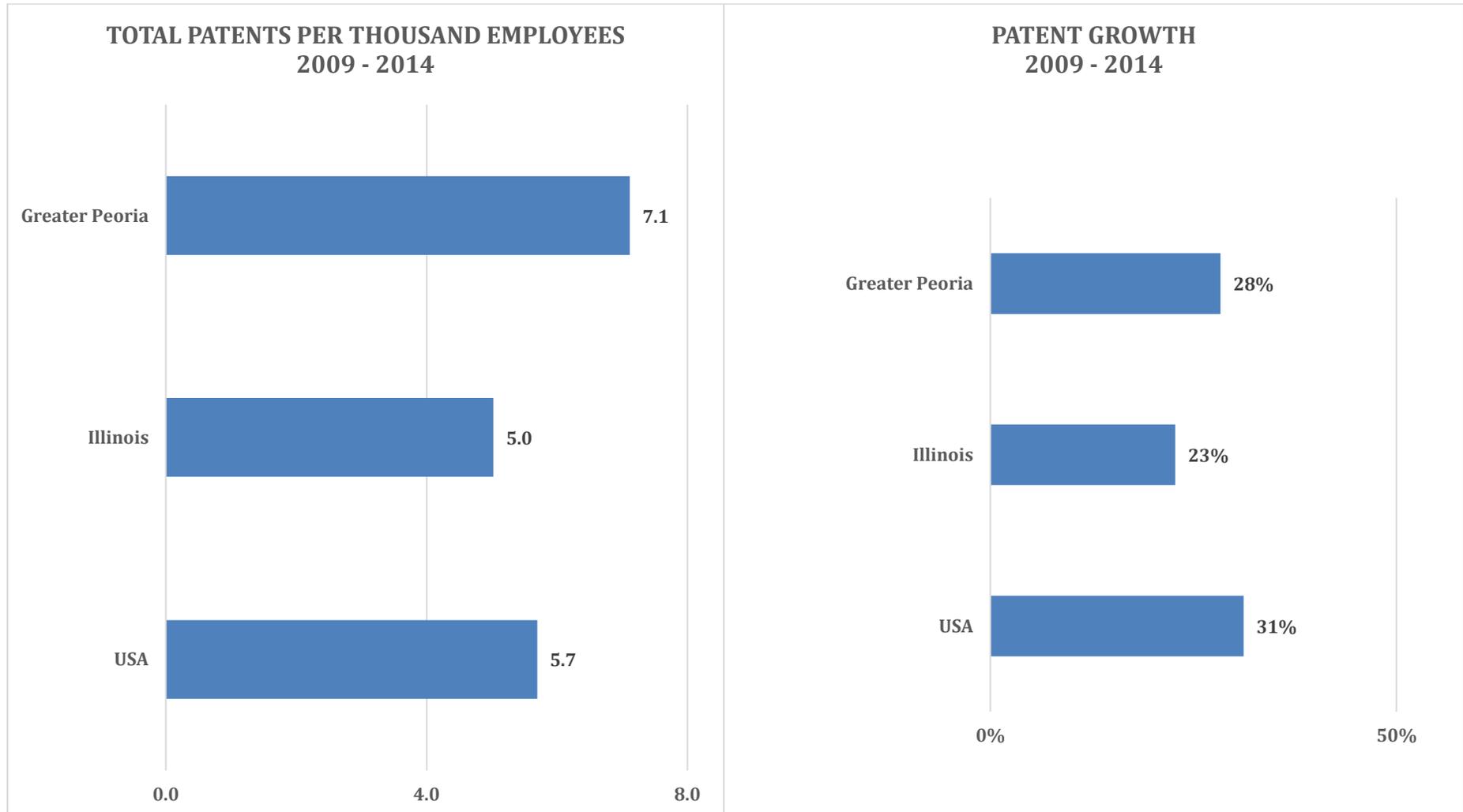
***Turner Center for Entrepreneurship***

The Turner Center for Entrepreneurship is a not-for-profit program located at Bradley University. The programs which make up the Turner Center for Entrepreneurship provide business counseling, technical assistance, training, and educational activities for individuals interested in owning their own businesses. They help existing entrepreneurs and businesses who want to expand or take advantage of new opportunities and technologies, are interested in marketing their products and services internationally, or are seeking to commercialize new products and technologies.

***Startup Peoria***

Startup Peoria is a program of the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council, designed to develop, encourage and promote the entrepreneurial startup community in Greater Peoria. Their vision is to provide entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs with the tools, resources and ecosystem to ideate, collaborate and launch successful businesses that contribute to the long-term growth and prosperity of the local economy. Startup Peoria offers a co-working space called The Nest, 1 Million Cups gatherings, the Keystart Micro Fund, and a variety of networking and learning programs to support entrepreneurs. Visit the [StartupPeoria.com](http://StartupPeoria.com) website to learn more.

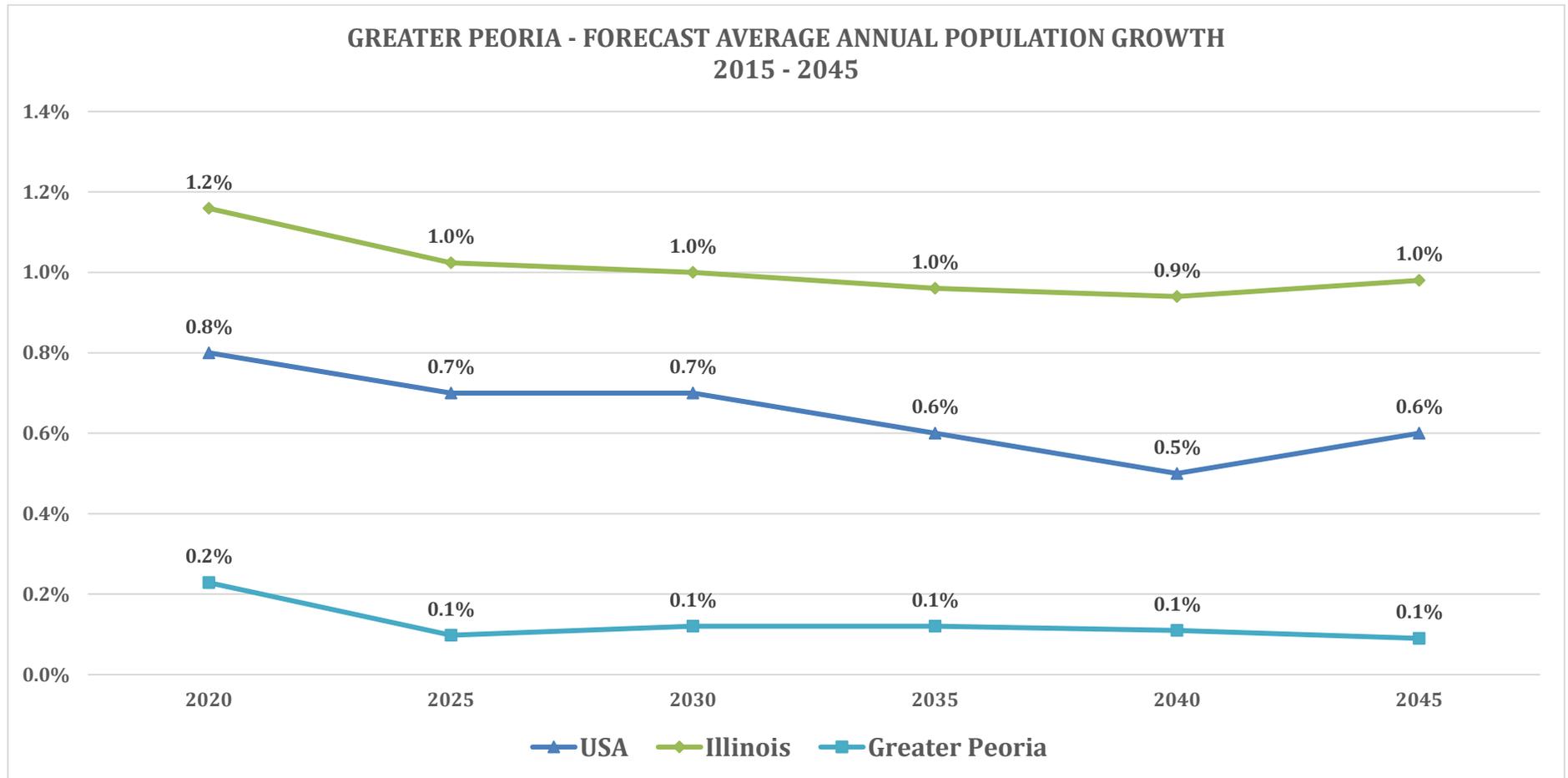
Patents are another important indicator of innovation in a region. **Greater Peoria has a significantly greater concentration of patents than the State of Illinois and the U.S.** This is largely due to the National Center for Agriculture Utilization Research Center located in Peoria, IL. Greater Peoria is proud to be the community that invented the first method to mass-produce the antibiotic penicillin out of this research facility changing the history of healthcare. Patent growth in Greater Peoria was 28% from 2009 to 2014, which is greater than the state and less than the national growth.



Source: USPTO

## Forecast Growth

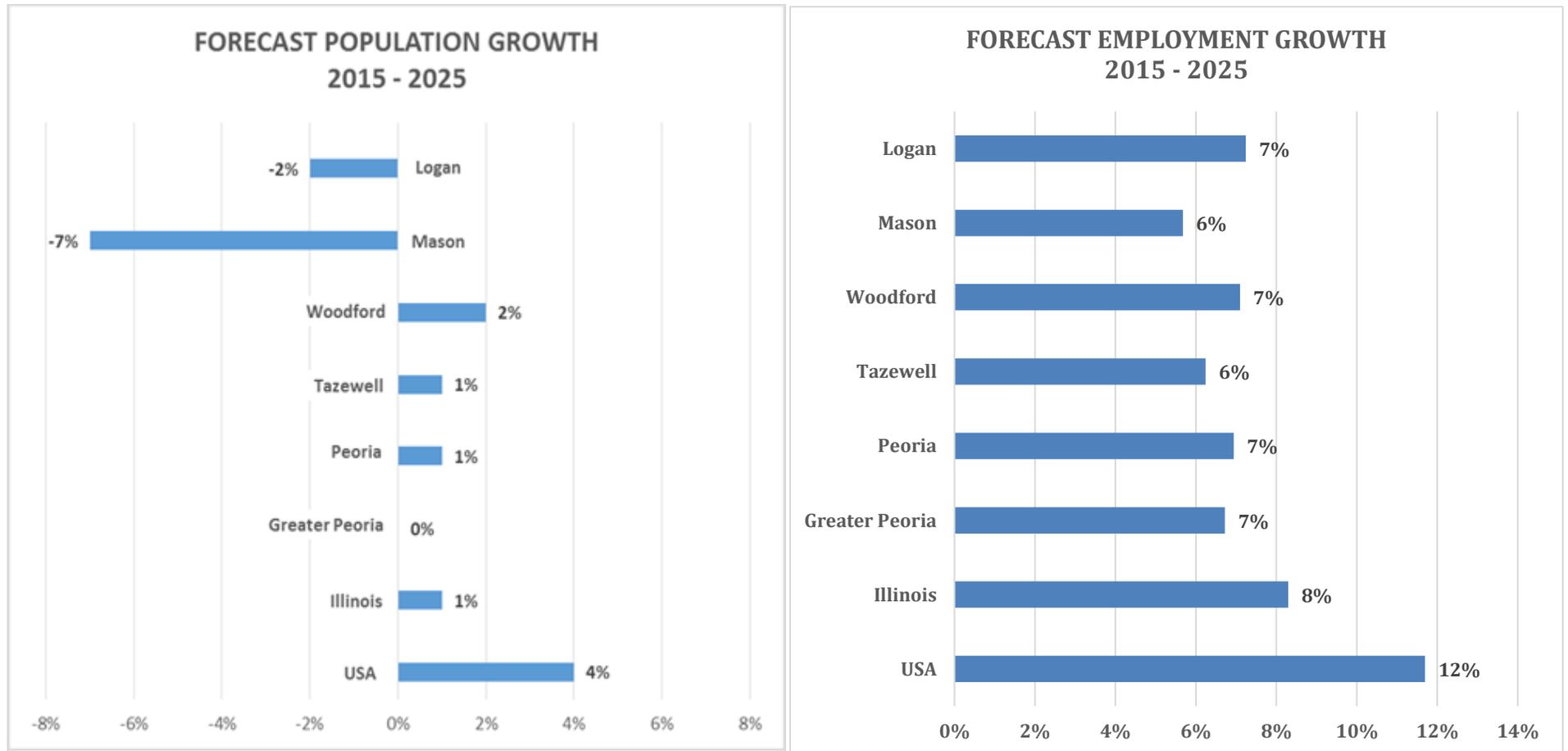
Growth in a population is good for business. It indicates a growing workforce to supply workers and a growing consumer base. In population projections for the years 2020 to 2045, the nation, state, and Greater Peoria are expected to lose a fraction of a percentage in growth. Greater Peoria is projected to remain below state and national percentages in population growth during this period. While the State of Illinois and the U.S. is expected to reduce population growth in 2040, Greater Peoria is projected to remain stable with a small growth rate.



Source: US Census, EMSI, FRED

**Greater Peoria expects to grow jobs at three to six times the rate of population growth indicating a strong economic recovery.** From 2015 to 2025, Greater Peoria expects 0.2% population growth compared with 1% in the State of Illinois and 4% in the U.S. Mason and Logan Counties are forecasted at -7% and -2%, respectively, and Woodford County is forecasted at the greatest population growth during this time period at 2%.

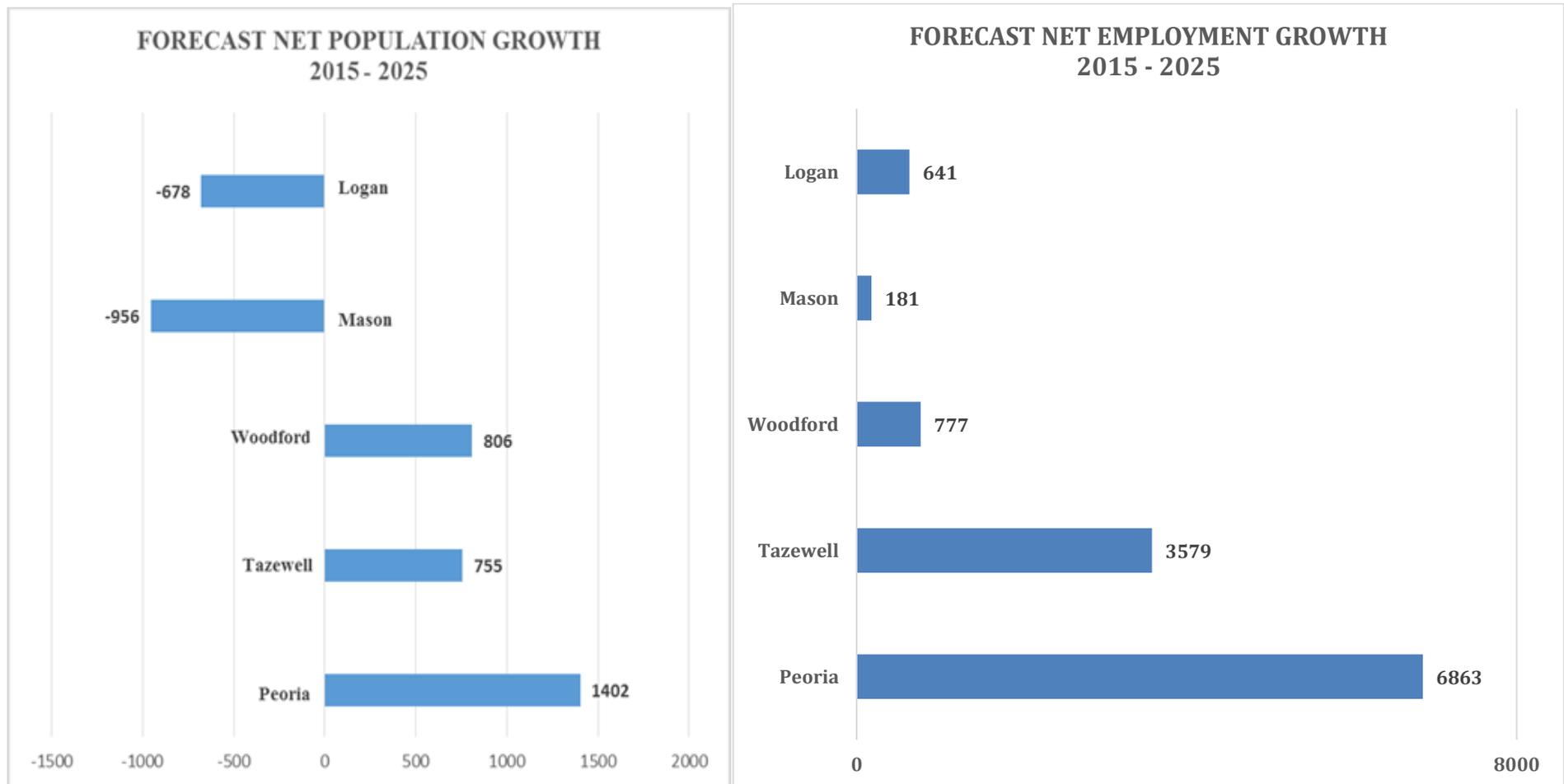
Forecasted employment growth for Greater Peoria from years 2015 to 2025 is 7%, which is less than the state (8%) and national (12%) estimates. Despite the loss in forecasted population growth for Logan and Mason Counties, these counties are expected to grow employment by 7% and 6%. Peoria and Woodford Counties are also expecting a growth rate of 7% and Tazewell is estimated at 6%.



Source: EMSI

Forecasted net population growth provides yet another perspective of the future economy of Greater Peoria. Net population estimates allow employers to see absolute values of new jobs and residents. Estimates for the region indicate that Peoria County will add the most residents between 2015 and 2025 (1,402) followed by Tazewell County (755) and Woodford County (806). Logan and Mason Counties are expected to lose 678 and 956 residents, respectively.

All counties are expected to add jobs from 2015 to 2025. Peoria County is expected to add the most jobs (6,863) followed by Tazewell County (3,579) and Woodford County (777). Despite population loss expected, Logan and Mason County employment forecasts are 641 and 181, respectively.



Source: EMSI

## Section 2: SWOT Analysis

This section provides a summary of Greater Peoria's economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). This analysis was conducted with the input of over 1,200 volunteers in regional meetings, interviews, and surveys. The SWOT feeds the strategy by recognizing the importance of Greater Peoria's assets and by identifying challenges that must be addressed to drive economic prosperity. The following economic advantages are of particular interest in Greater Peoria because they provide a framework for economic expansion and growth:

- **Labor Force Participation:** The labor force participation rate is a measurement of the percentage of people over 16 years of age that are actually working compared to the population that could be working. Woodford County's labor participation rate is higher than the U.S., the state of Illinois, and the rest of the EDD. Additionally, the EDD as a whole has a higher labor participation rate than the U.S.
- **Technology, Commercialization, and Innovation:** The Greater Peoria region is an environment ripe with opportunities for entrepreneurs and business investors. Fueled by multiple knowledge communities and business and discovery forums, the wealth of intellectual property creates an environment where ideas become reality. The research and innovation created through Caterpillar, Inc., the National Center for Agricultural Research, the University of Illinois College of Medicine, OSF Healthcare, UnityPoint Health - Peoria, and nationally-recognized universities and colleges brings together all the necessary components for the successful commercialization of knowledge into products, services, and emerging technologies.
- **Intermodal Logistics:** The Greater Peoria region is poised to thrive in this important industry segment, as the region is within one day's drive of 50% of the U.S. population. Moreover, convenient access to barge, rail, truck, and air modes of transportation gives the region a distinct competitive advantage in the industry.
- **Healthcare Services:** The Peoria area is Illinois' downstate medical center. Eight of the nation's ten "high growth" occupations are in health care services. More new jobs created in the next ten years will be in health care than in any other industry. This industry is currently the region's largest employer.
- **Energy:** Green energy. Wind farms. Biodiesel. Clean coal initiatives. The Midwest stands in an unparalleled position to capitalize on these markets. Innovative policy and incentives at the federal level are creating a unique window of opportunity for growth in the energy industry. In 2012 and 2013, Woodford County netted \$4.1 million in zoning fees from international investors and landowners profiting from yearly lease agreements (Source: [Peoria Journal Star, Wind Farms in Woodford and Livingston Counties](#)). Since 2007, Illinois Central College has incorporated sustainability into the curriculum including courses on photovoltaic systems, solar thermal design, and solar water and

space heating. In addition to wind and sun, access to high quality grains, robust transportation links, and a powerful workforce make Greater Peoria a prime location for energy industry growth.

- **Agribusiness and Agri-science:** The Greater Peoria region is located in the agricultural heartland of the world. The region produces high-quality agricultural products including corn, soybeans and other important crops. Commodity processing involves transforming these agricultural products into useful items such as fuels, chemicals and feeds, and component items for other products. The growth of these value-added agriculture markets represents huge economic development potential for the region. For example, activity in the biofuels sector has skyrocketed, and there is considerable interest in new nutrients or healthier foods and cosmetic products. Local vineyards and wineries are also experiencing significant expansion.
- **Specialized Manufacturing:** The Greater Peoria region has a strong tradition of manufacturing excellence. Manufacturing has become a very global industry; the Midwest remains home to many cutting edge manufacturing operations. Workforce pipeline development is critical to this industry as it grows with innovative new technologies.

In 2012, the Greater Peoria leaders brought in ViTAL Economy, a highly reputable consulting firm that works directly with the U.S. Economic Development Agency on best practices for creating Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies. Under the leadership of ViTAL Economy, the very first planning activity was the development of the SWOT. The tables below list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within each of the four priority areas:

- Act Regionally
- Expand Economic Performance
- Improve Human Capital
- Value and Enhance Quality of Life

## Priority: Act Regionally

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private sector support, in terms of time, talent and investment in community economic development is broader and deeper than most economic regions of this size.</li> <li>• Public sector leadership is at a new level of readiness for regional collaboration.</li> <li>• The region is home to many strong leaders in both key public and private sector organizations.</li> <li>• Private sector support for economic development is substantive and long term.</li> <li>• There are specific project examples of collaboration from the public and private sectors (ex. Peoria Riverfront Museum, Cancer Research Center, and Peoria Zoo).</li> <li>• There are “points of light” at the local GPEDC level showing leadership understands the need for a more balanced approach to community economic development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration between public and private organizations that have required long-term commitments to a common vision have been less successful than those collaborative efforts around individual projects.</li> <li>• There is limited history of public sector effort at regional collaboration around community economic development as well as limited connection of regional and local economic development leaders.</li> <li>• Among those that have been involved, their participation and effectiveness have been hindered by not having clear roles and lines of responsibility within and among organizations, which has lead to a lack of accountability.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many regional public and private leaders are recognizing the need for improved accountability, authority, legitimacy, and transparency, which can empower a broader base of leaders to take ownership of the regional economy.</li> <li>• It is critical that private sector support be preserved and expanded by improving regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) governance, transparency, accountability and outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no evidence that area leaders are empowered to take ownership of the regional economy. Further, there is no evidence of a consistent regional effort to grow leaders with accountability, authority, legitimacy, and transparency to oversee and manage the regional economic strategy.</li> <li>• Lack of coordination</li> <li>• Complacency</li> </ul>

## Priority: Expand Economic Performance

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elements of an innovation ecosystem include the Bradley University Innovation Center, Startup Peoria, Peoria NEXT, Turner Center for Entrepreneurship, and the USDA’s NCUAR.</li> <li>• Private sector innovation assets are strong in the region.</li> <li>• The region has a skilled and highly trained workforce with mid-west can-do tenacity, as well as a geographic location, inter-modal transportation infrastructure, and water assets.</li> <li>• The beginnings of opportunities for building a strong life cycle finance ecosystem exist. Examples include the Central IL Angels, Tri-County Venture Capital Fund, and a variety of traditional private and public sector financing mechanisms.</li> <li>• The region has abundant aquifer and surface water resources to support unique development opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a historic dependence on large organizations as the foundations for the economy.</li> <li>• Although there are emerging assets in the arena of life-cycle finance in the region, they lack the capacity, capability, or diversity needed to support the economic growth potential of the region.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Region has asset strengths that can be better leveraged for growth including advanced engineering &amp; manufacturing, human healthcare, health sciences &amp; health IT, bio-refining and energy.</li> <li>• National trend of the return of advanced manufacturing to the United States provides an opportunity for a region with deep advanced manufacturing knowledge and workforce.</li> <li>• Health services are the largest sector of the U.S. economy undergoing massive structural transformation, an opportunity for growth in a region with an abundance of health assets &amp; innovation.</li> <li>• Intermodal Logistics is one of the fastest growing sectors of the U.S. economy and can be leveraged by a region with significant transportation infrastructure assets and mid-country location advantages especially as relates to short-sea shipping trends and expansion of Panama Canal.</li> <li>• Knowledge workers can choose to live where they want and work where they live. The region is filled with human capital.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of region-wide broadband access limits where innovation can grow in region.</li> <li>• Most community economic development efforts in the region are short-term rather than long-term driven. Community economic development is largely seen in terms of individual economic initiatives rather than as a transformative long-term investment. Interviews indicate that the region has a propensity to focus on small incremental changes rather than larger transformative efforts to be sustained over time.</li> <li>• The state’s regulatory climate and tax structure is perceived as inhibiting business development and growth. In addition, the entire workers compensation system is a major structural impediment to economic growth. The Region needs an industry sector strategy that detours around these challenges, which are outside of the region’s control.</li> </ul>

- Baby Boomer generation is at the beginning of its surge into retirement years. The region has a unique combination of healthcare, education, geographic & quality of life assets it can connect and leverage to grow this opportunity.
- The region has a broadband strategy that will enable the entire region to compete in the 24/7 connected global economy.
- Growing culture of entrepreneurship, innovation, and interest in startup businesses.

## Priority: Improve Human Capital

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Region has diverse opportunities for higher education including the Vocational Education Center at ICC South Campus, Universities, and advanced medical schools.</li> <li>• The region has a skilled and highly trained workforce with mid-west can-do tenacity.</li> <li>• There is a growing population with global multi-cultural experience that is the result of Caterpillar’s movement of international managers in and out of the region, the attraction of health service workers &amp; researchers to the region, and Bradley University’s growth in the number of international students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology has enabled business to shrink its value chain, eliminate geography as a barrier to growth. The region is plagued with organizational and geographic boundary mentality that limits growth and the development of a natural economy ecosystem.</li> <li>• The programs that support an innovation are neither well-connected to each other nor strategically integrated into a comprehensive and regional community economic development strategy.</li> <li>• There is limited integration across the region of the various school districts serving the Peoria MSA with regional economic development strategies. It is critically important to engage schools in the development of an education and training strategy that assures a plentiful supply of qualified workers for tomorrow’s future workforce.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a number of woman-owned and minority-owned businesses and associations. There is also an expanding base of multi-cultural constituencies that are increasing the international character of the region. The region needs to put greater focus on ensuring that the input of these constituencies is sought, valued and connected to regional CED plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The region is experiencing aging of its population, youth brain drain, and workforce retirement. This is reducing the availability of the prime 19-54 workforce age group. This is one of the strongest threats to the ability of the region to grow its economy.</li> <li>• Underserved populations are largely viewed as liabilities rather than assets. This has led to well-meaning but tactical and disjointed fix-it efforts rather than an integrated strategic approach.</li> </ul>

## Priority: Value and Enhance Quality of Life

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The region is rich in quality of life assets such as education, healthcare, parks, and an emerging base of international multi-cultural population.</li> <li>• There are numerous arts and culture resources that create a real creative economy presence in the region.</li> <li>• The Parks District provides one of the largest outdoor recreational offerings in Illinois for a region this size.</li> <li>• Artists are collaborating to engage the public in the arts through events such as First Friday studio tours and Ignite Peoria.</li> <li>• New projects such as the Peoria Playhouse Children’s Museum, Peoria Riverfront Museum, Caterpillar Visitors Center and Peoria Zoo expansion provide a rich experience for families and serve to attract tourists and residents alike.</li> <li>• The region is ideally located along an east-west Lincoln Corridor and a north-south trade corridor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although some materials are available that market the region’s benefits, there are no examples that communicate and deliver a clear brand promise for the region.</li> <li>• Initiatives such as food trucks are viewed as fun and vibrant in many towns but are met with strict regulations in the region, thus prohibiting the growth of these small, creative ventures.</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of fair housing laws. Input received during the process and comments received during the fair housing advocacy training seminar in 2013, suggest that greater awareness of fair housing laws is needed in the region.</li> <li>• There is a lack of quantifiable data and a testing program to determine the extent to which fair housing is available in the region.</li> <li>• Lack of quality rental housing stock that is affordable for a range of income levels</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several key community resources have not been integrated – or even invited – into participating, including those portions of the non-profit sector involved with human and social services and various aspects of the minority community, small businesses (esp. women-owned), the Peoria Area CVB, etc. Their participation will greatly improve quality of life and sense of place in placing initiatives.</li> <li>• A greater awareness of fair housing laws and procedures by the region’s leaders in planning and development would enhance equitable access to resources and employment.</li> <li>• County Health Departments have worked cooperatively with the private medical industry to develop county-wide health assessments and strategies that when implemented, will improve the overall health and quality of life for area residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City of Peoria is experiencing a hollowing out of the urban core and a strategy is lacking to address underlying needs and asset value of underserved populations concentrated in the urban core.</li> <li>• Peoria Public Schools is largely viewed as underperforming and is seen as a continuing threat to economy.</li> </ul>

## Section 3: Strategy Direction/Action Plan

The *Focus Forward GP* strategy direction and action plan is the result of extensive outreach and input from over 1,000 regional volunteers and stakeholders representing a diverse group of public, private, and non-profit organizations. The Greater Peoria EDC and the *Focus Forward GP* Strategy Team strive to build the relationships necessary to integrate these goals into agency strategies for each partnering organization.

### Focus Forward GP Vision

Greater Peoria showcases the power of regional public and private collaboration by celebrating a diverse manufacturing and farming industry, a leading edge healthcare industry supported by a talent-rich workforce, and a culturally rich quality of place that supports innovation and entrepreneurship and attracts permanent residents in the working age population and tourists alike.

### Focus Forward GP Key Goals

The *Focus Forward GP* Strategy has the following key goals by 2019:

#### Goal 1: Act Regional

Implement a regional asset based S.M.A.R.T. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which expands public, private and non-profit collaboration with a common strategic vision. The region will achieve a good to excellent rating for best practices in regional CEDS and collaboration by the end of 2019.

#### Act Regionally Objectives & Strategies

**Strengthen and expand regional collaboration by creating and beginning to implement a regional best practice, performance metric asset-based S.M.A.R.T. CEDS with integrated county strategies that is annually updated.**

- Assist county strategy teams with the development, updating, and implementation of economic development strategies for Logan, Mason, Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford counties integrated with *Focus Forward GP* (CEDS).
- Continue and enhance performance metric-based prioritization process for selection and support of projects included in and connected to accomplishing *Focus Forward GP* goals.

**Build the capacity of local and regional leaders to collectively and collaboratively lead and manage regional economic development strategies and goals.**

- Develop an economic development education program that will build the capacity of regional leaders to collaboratively guide, manage and lead the regional economy.
- Map and share accessible data services and resources with local community economic and workforce development entities and their clients.

#### Partnering Organizations

CareerLink (WIOA)  
CEO Council  
Education for Employment  
Greater Peoria EDC  
Heart of Illinois United Way  
Illinois Central College  
Logan County Economic  
Development Partnership  
LISC  
Morton EDC  
Peoria Area Chamber of Commerce  
Peoria Area CVB  
Peoria Civic Center  
Peoria County Health Department  
Peoria Housing Authority  
Peoria Opportunities Foundation

**Expand regional economic development stakeholders and raise appropriate funding to sustain the implementation of *Focus Forward GP* (CEDS).**

- Develop and launch a communications strategy to promote *Focus Forward GP* (CEDS) regionally.
- Share quarterly briefings on the progress of regional economic development efforts with all stakeholders in collaboration with economic development partners.
- Establish and share performance metrics to communicate the effectiveness of regional economic development initiatives.
- Establish an annual regional event to share and celebrate accomplishments.

## **Goal 2: Expand Economic Performance**

Implement community economic development strategies and action plans that will increase total regional wages, raise the regional average wage, and generate new state and local tax revenue.

### **Expand Economic Performance Objectives & Strategies**

#### **Create new, high-quality jobs.**

- Map and strengthen up to five industry clusters to include Healthcare, Manufacturing, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL), Agri-Business, and Professional and Technical Services.
- Identify how to best leverage the manufacturing and healthcare sector expansions in the region.
- Plan and implement strategies to leverage the region's unique water assets as a community economic development driver.
- Encourage municipalities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of government and regulatory services focused on community economic development activities. This strategy will be based on best practices for single point of entry and one-stop 24/7 government services and lead to an improvement of business and citizen perception of the effectiveness, efficiency and customer service orientation of government services.

#### **Increase the number of mid-size firms.**

- Conduct targeted business retention visits with one hundred (100) firms per year interested in expansion. Focus of the visits will be to identify internal and/or external barriers to growth and take actions to address these barriers.
- Map business life cycle financing and determine regional needs, availability and gaps in expertise, and types of financing and funding levels for Seed, Start-Up, Emerging or Growth, Established, Expansion and Mature Stages of the Business Cycle to enable business expansion opportunities.
- Identify value chain leakage opportunities within targeted industry sectors to attract or grow mid-size firms.
- Identify intellectual property assets within the public or private sector that can be leveraged by existing small businesses to enable them to grow into mid-size firms.

### **Increase the pace of innovation, entrepreneurship and annual business starts.**

- Build an identification system to track and communicate with new business starts within 90 days of formation in the region.
- Map all existing regional innovation and entrepreneur development assets and identify gaps that need to be addressed. Fund and implement recommendations.
- Collaborate with Bradley University, Jump Trading Simulation & Education Center and the USDA Ag Lab to prioritize entrepreneur and innovation development opportunities focused in the areas of Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing, Human Healthcare, Bio-Refining, Energy Technologies, Agra-Medicine, and Ag-Tech.
- Grow and strengthen entrepreneur and innovation marketing and education programs to improve the culture of support in the region for innovation, risk-taking and entrepreneurs.
- Work with regional partners to develop and implement minority business development strategies that increase the number and capacity of those firms in our region.
- Implement the Region's broadband strategy to ensure equitable access in urban and rural areas.

### **Goal 3: Improve Human Capital**

Ensure a plentiful workforce supply by increasing total population; the prime workforce demographic of 25-44 year old citizens; and the labor force participation rate.

#### **Improve Human Capital Objectives & Strategies**

##### **Create a talent pipeline focused on regional career readiness and career pathways.**

- Establish a central, accessible website to assist in the personal development of students, job seekers and employees. The resource will communicate the human skills, talents, behaviors and attitudes required by targeted career and job classifications.
- Develop and deploy a communications campaign for employers, students, parents, job seekers, education and training providers to shift the region's focus towards a broader understanding of the most in-demand career opportunities and the educational and career pathways required to access these opportunities.
- Develop a system of career pathways for manufacturing and healthcare sectors in the region, which includes required human skills, talents, behaviors and attitudes, industry recognized credentials and educational training attainment benchmarks.
- Develop and implement apprenticeship programs that lead to certifications and associate degrees in the region's most critically needed career pathways.
- Design a system of analytics that continuously assesses the capacity and effectiveness of the region's talent supply pipeline to respond to changing trends and meet ongoing market demand.

**Continue regional workforce alliance to effectively connect and align private and public sector workforce development initiatives and resources across the region.**

- Identify and share employment needs, trends and talent gaps with workforce development stakeholders and the community at large.
- Leverage manufacturing and healthcare learning exchanges to identify current and future workforce needs and then align funding and resources to meet those needs.
- Implement targeted talent development strategies that will decrease under-employment and unemployment with a focus in under-served and under-performing rural and urban communities.

**Increase the number of 25-44 year old citizens to meet the increased demand for prime working age employees and entrepreneurs.**

- Collaborate with higher education institutions to develop programs to retain college students after they graduate.
- Design and implement a talent attraction campaign for mapping and communicating creative economy and livable community assets and events of interest to young professionals.
- Engage and support young professional groups in the development of projects that are focused on improving the Quality of Place attractiveness of the region for young professionals.

#### **Goal 4: Value and Enhance the Quality of Life**

Quantify, communicate and embed the importance of the unique rural and urban values of the way we live, work and play to all who live in the region. Enhance the way of life to attract others to the region through a focus on healthy and livable communities.

##### **Value and Enhance Quality of Life Objectives & Strategies**

**Increase the perception of the region as a desirable play destination.**

- Enhance community awareness & appreciation of the visitor industry.
- Work to increase utilization of the Peoria Civic Center.
- Advocate for destination-enhancing development.
- Analyze opportunities to increase the Peoria Area Convention and Visitors' Bureau budget to a competitive level.

**Develop and implement a healthy community strategy to enhance the quality of life and workforce health that addresses improved population health, education, and income in collaboration with the Hearth of Illinois United Way, area Hospitals, and local Health Departments.**

- Identify and focus on improvement in the region's rates for the top three most critical chronic diseases versus state and national benchmarks, attaining best in country performance by 2030. Identify, prioritize and reach consensus on the top three regional population health improvement opportunities (as identified by the Community Health Needs Assessments, Health Department Assessments and United Way Community Assessment). Develop multigenerational implementation plan.

- Develop and implement a healthy community strategy that provides evidence-based recommendations that are most likely to reduce the burden of the leading causes of preventable death and major illness. The seven priorities are: Tobacco Free Living; Preventing Drug Abuse and Excessive Alcohol Use; Healthy Eating; Active Living; Injury and Violence Free Living; Reproductive and Sexual Health; Mental and Emotional Well-Being. Population health improvement goals should align with Healthy People 2020 goals and National Prevention Strategy 2030 goals.
- Develop and implement a collaborative, comprehensive, community health education strategy that focuses on, and measures, behavioral changes and resulting health outcomes. Enhance linkages between clinical care and community health prevention activities, including education programs, screening activities, etc. Improve educational outcomes in targeted underserved communities and/or populations through an integrated approach by identifying, developing, and implementing a pilot Population Health Education Improvement Program for the region. Launch community wide program. Establish a minimum per capita funding level to support community health “prevention” initiatives.
- Develop a comprehensive community health improvement performance tracking and reporting initiative that (1) aligns with the communities’ health improvement priorities, and (2) aligns with generally accepted health metrics as defined by the Health and Human Services Department in the Healthy People 2020 and National Prevention Strategy programs. All goals to meet or exceed goals called out by Healthy People 2020 and National Prevention Strategy 2030.

**Create a collaborative culture of livable communities throughout the region that is based on American Institute of Architect’s Ten Livable Community Standards.**

- Define livable community priorities for urban and rural communities that leverage the planning and design resources of the AIA, University of Illinois and the Urban Land Institute.
- Launch a livable community forum that communicates the value and importance of livable community standards as a magnet for attracting 25-44 year old professionals and firms to the region.
- Complete locally-developed livable community strategies which have a priority focus on creating more vibrant 24/7 urban downtown and rural town centers.
- Define and establish regional capacity-building resources within the Greater Peoria EDC or Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) to assist local community economic development teams to implement and maintain livable community strategies and action plans.

**Develop a comprehensive regional housing market analysis, strategy, and implementation plan that addresses the region’s housing needs and begins to meet those needs.**

- Conduct a comprehensive regional housing market analysis that focuses both on current market supply and demand, as well as future supply and demand. This analysis should consider housing needs and preferences at different income levels in rural and urban communities for owner-occupied, rental, young professionals, special needs, workforce, and active senior living environments.

- In conjunction with the livable community forums, communicate the value of diverse housing alternatives for attracting work and workers to both rural and urban communities, which expands economic development and improves quality of life while meeting the identified demand from the regional housing market analysis.
- Develop a comprehensive regional housing strategy based upon the results of the regional housing market analysis and the SMART job creation goals.
- Define and establish the regional capacity-building resources and tools necessary to stimulate public and private investment to develop alternative housing opportunities in conjunction with rural and urban livable community strategies. Implement at least 15 developments that meet the diverse housing preferences of targeted populations across the region with at least one in each county.

### Section 4: Evaluation Framework

The Greater Peoria EDC is the central agency monitoring the progress of the *Focus Forward GP* Strategy while also implementing key aspects of the strategy including business and workforce development initiatives and regional marketing. GPEDC mines data and reports on progress year-round. The *Focus Forward GP* Strategy Team responds to EDC’s data reports through adaptive management and refining organizational strategies. Dozens of organizations in Greater Peoria are participating in the development and implementation of strategies in support of the *Focus Forward GP* goals.

*Focus Forward GP* has the following core metric indicators:

Metric	2014 Benchmark	5 Year Trend
Population	405,857	406,572
Workforce Population (25-44 year olds)	103,460	103,652
Jobs	181,706	181,901
Average Wage	\$50,656	\$59,715
Bachelor and Graduate Degrees	95,412	104,066

### Section 5: Economic Resilience

EDA urges communities to consider how regional economic prosperity is linked to an area’s ability to prevent, withstand, and quickly recover from major disruptions to the economic base. Disruptions to a regional economy can be created by:

- Downturns or other significant events in the national or international economy which impact demand for locally produced goods and consumer spending;
- Downturns in particular industries that constitute a critical component of the region’s economic activity; and/or
- Other external shocks (a natural or man-made disaster, closure of a military base, exit of a major employer, the impacts of climate change, etc.).

## Industry Diversification

By broadening the range of economic activities, Greater Peoria diversifies its production and distribution of goods and services. In general, diversification stabilizes and helps to ensure long-term sustainability of the region. Communities with a broad and diverse economic base are more robust when faced with the disruptions listed above. *Focus Forward GP* emphasizes diversification of the earthmoving, new business start-ups, and the Asian carp industries. These efforts are described below.

### Earthmoving Industry

Greater Peoria developed industrially in the early 1900s with the establishment of heavy-duty equipment manufacturers such as Caterpillar Tractor and LeTourneau. Since that time, Greater Peoria’s large Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) have stimulated the development of a robust supply chain of manufacturers with expertise in metal fabrication, electrical equipment, and machining to support the earthmoving industry. Over 70% of Greater Peoria’s manufacturing jobs are within this industry. The concentration of earthmoving OEMs and suppliers have positioned Greater Peoria as the Earthmoving Capital of the World. To support diversification for this industry, the Greater Peoria EDC is implementing a series of tactics focused on the supplier network, workforce training, infrastructure, research and innovation, trade and international investment, operational improvement, and access to capital. Examples of such tactics include:

- Form a Manufacturing Network for collective pursuit of new customers with OEMs outside the earthmoving industry and collaborations that drive down cost.
- Attract OEMs to the area who are not in the earthmoving industry but need a similar supply chain. Address infrastructure and site needs to support this effort.
- Develop a community STEAM Laboratory where families, students, and entrepreneurs can have access to materials and tools that allow for rapid prototyping and computer-aided design.

The new Greater Peoria Manufacturing Network, championed by the Greater Peoria EDC, will support continued diversification of the heavy metal manufacturers. The Greater Peoria Manufacturing Network is a co-marketing collaboration established to generate new business opportunities for manufacturers in the region. The network includes a cross-section of metal component manufacturers with expertise in heavy fabrication and machining of metals. The Greater Peoria Manufacturing Network offers a collective solution to OEM needs by providing a group of suppliers with

diverse capabilities and capacities who can work independently or collaboratively to manufacture and assemble a needed product. Participating manufacturers have expertise in everything from design and casting to machining and welding.

### **Startups**

In addition to diversifying the heavy metal manufacturing industry, Startup Peoria initiatives provide an avenue for the development of a healthy business mix in the region in future years. Founded by local entrepreneurs in 2012, Startup Peoria exists to create an ecosystem for entrepreneurs and innovators to launch successful ventures in Greater Peoria that contribute to the growth and sustainability of the local economy. The organization has developed and implemented successful programs for local entrepreneurs including 1 Million Cups from the Kauffman Foundation, KeyStart and Startup Weekend, as well as The Nest Coworking. As of 2015, Startup Peoria has become a permanent part of the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council.

### **Asian Carp**

Another example of regional efforts to diversify the industry is the Asian Carp harvesting initiative. Asian Carp is a major invasive fish species that affects the health of the Illinois River and threatens the ecological vitality of the Great Lakes. Greater Peoria's economic approach to reducing invasive species population numbers is the result of nearly two years of extensive research and analysis of Greater Peoria with a goal of identifying market opportunities for Asian Carp products. The 2010 "Asian Carp Marketing Summit" held by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Louisiana Sea Grant, Illinois Commercial Fishing Association and Shedd Aquarium, clearly stated, "harvesting seems to be a pragmatic method to reduce the numbers". We believe that the value-added market driven approach will be transferable to other river communities resulting in hundreds of millions of dollars of new economic value and jobs across the country. Experts have calculated that Asian Carp represents a potential harvest of 30 – 40 million pounds of sustainable annual harvest from the Illinois River.

### **Disaster Preparation**

The Greater Peoria Economic Development Council engages businesses and units of government in all-hazard preparedness planning and programming. In September 2015, the Greater Peoria EDC held a disaster preparedness workshop to connect businesses and government to strengthen neighborhood disaster resiliency, to distribute and empower participants with a ready-to-use template for their business, and to develop knowledge around hazards and mitigation techniques. The event was well attended with 177 registrants, and EDC continues its work in supporting preparedness planning for local businesses today. In addition to empowering individual organizations and units of government in disaster preparedness, a partner organization, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, developed a regional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan in 2010 that analyzed risk from climactic and geologic factors and provided mitigation strategies for local units of government to alleviate risk.

## Appendix A: Strategic Projects

The following are priority projects for Greater Peoria:

### **1. Madison Block Development** *The Kim Group*

The Kim Group has proposed the re-development of Main and Madison with entertainment venues and office space, renovation of the Madison Theater, and the development of a multi-use facility with residential units, office space, entertainment, retail venues, and parking space.

### **2. Methodist College of Nursing Expansion and Relocation** *UnityPoint Health – Methodist I Proctor*

Methodist College is in the process of renovating a building located at 5801 West War Memorial Dr. for a significant expansion. The new facility will include college classrooms, training laboratories, a library, faculty offices, support space, and other uses. The renovation is valued at \$17.0 million. Adjacent to the main facility, a 56,100 square foot building will be developed by a private developer for Student Housing.

### **3. Fresh Food Hub** *Gifts In The Moment (GITM) Foundation*

The GITM Foundation's Fresh Food Hub regional project seeks to support healthy eating, growth of the small farmer community, resource coordination within an improved food system, and growth of green job opportunities. The Food Hub rests on 10 acres of deeded land, located 4 miles east of the intersection of I-74 and Route 8, dedicated to the development of small veteran farm plots, an education center, and distribution processes. The proposed plan includes the further development of their infrastructure and programs.

### **4. Pioneer Parkway Extension** *City of Peoria*

The extension of Pioneer Parkway from its current terminus at Allen Road westward to Trigger Road will unlock thousands of acres of land for industrial, commercial and residential development and significantly improve the economy of the metropolitan area. The full Pioneer Parkway Extension project budget is estimated at \$72 million.

### **5. Minority Business Enterprise Contractor Development Initiative** *Peoria County*

Peoria County is seeking financial support for the continued growth and development of their Minority Business Enterprise Contractor Development Initiative, focused on supporting and growing minority-owned businesses in the construction field.

### **6. Manito Assisted Living** *Village of Manito*

The Village of Manito would like support for the development of the new Manito Assisted Living Facility which will provide 20 assisted living units and 20 memory care units to be located on S. East Street in Manito, Illinois. The project is expected to generate multiple employment opportunities as well as generate new immediate and long-term revenue for the village.

### **7. Warehouse District Infrastructure Improvement** *City of Peoria*

Over the past 4 years, the City of Peoria been working to improve the infrastructure in Peoria's Warehouse District. While the infrastructure

improvements are near completion, funds are needed to finalize the look and feel of the district. Funding of \$15 million will allow the City of Peoria to complete the reconstruction of roads and sidewalks in the remainder of the district, from Persimmon to MacArthur. It will also support the construction of Commercial Street from Oak Street to Persimmon Street, providing access to the historic buildings along Washington Street and unlocking vacant riverfront land for development.

**8. Front Street Corridor** *City of Pekin*

The City of Pekin would like to improve Front and Distillery Streets by providing better access that safely expedites grain deliveries. The proposed improvements including new curbs and gutters, storm sewers, pavement widening and reconstruction, and the construction of a lane of travel with direct access to the Aventine facility along with truck stacking lanes for CHS and Illinois Corn Processing.

**9. West Bluff Infrastructure Improvement** *City of Peoria*

The City of Peoria has proposed substantial safety improvements in the West Bluff. The \$24 million project includes the replacement of the MacArthur Highway Bridge, which has a structural rating of 3 on a scale of 1-100. The bridge project, along with improvements to the remainder of the main West Bluff arterial streets, will serve as an economic engine for providing construction jobs, immediately improve motorist, bicyclist and pedestrian safety, and facilitate commerce in the West Bluff.

**10. Freedom Parkway/Lakeshore Drive Extension** *City of Washington*

The City of Washington would like to extend Freedom Parkway from its current terminus west of McCluggage Road to N. Cummings Lane, and also Lakeshore Drive from US Business Route 24 to Freedom Parkway. The project would allow for development of a mix of uses on more than 100 acres of property.

**11. Entrepreneurial Center and Programs** *Startup Peoria*

Startup Peoria, now a program of the Greater Peoria EDC, would like to establish a talent and entrepreneurial development center for middle school through adulthood audiences to include a makerspace and STEM lab, coworking spaces, and business accelerator.

**12. Mayor's Summer Youth Program** *City of Peoria*

The City of Peoria would like support for the implementation of their 8-week summer program that employs 40 students, 1 coordinator, 4 lead coaches and 4 temp coaches. The youth group assists Public Works with major projects that impact economic development and improve the infrastructure of the city. The project is budgeted at \$245,000 for a two-year program.

**13. Veterans Drive Improvement** *City of Pekin*

The City of Pekin would like to complete Veterans Drive from Sheridan Road to Fischer Road with an interchange at I-474. This would result in completion of the Veterans Drive Corridor and provide direct interstate access to all major retail and employment centers in Pekin.

#### 14. 5th Street Road Project *City of Lincoln*

The Fifth Street Road Project is an expansion of a current two-lane, rural cross section that conveys traffic east-west between the City of Lincoln and Mason County. The project area is bounded by Lincoln Parkway (Historic Route 66) to the east and I-55 to the west. The project will not only improve traffic conditions for an over-burdened roadway, but will leverage Lincoln’s proximity to numerous Illinois metropolitan areas for economic development purposes.

Other projects to support CEDS include:

PROJECT	COMMUNITY
Nofsinger Road/US Route 24 Intersection	City of Washington
Bass Pro Park	City of East Peoria
Bass Pro Drive Extension	City of East Peoria
University Street Improvement	City of Peoria
Western Avenue Improvement	City of Peoria
MTCO Park	Village of Germantown Hills
Mapleton/Route 24 Infrastructure	Peoria County
Willow Knolls Road Rehabilitation	Peoria County
Germantown Hills to Metamora Trail	Village of Germantown Hills
Wildlife Prairie Park Road Improvements	Wildlife Prairie Park
Route 116 Pedestrian Overpass	Village of Germantown Hills
Industrial Park Infrastructure Expansion	City of Havana